

Capacity Development Activities for

**The Metro Iloilo-Guimaras Integrated Tourism Strategy and Action Plan Project
(MIG 01)**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In a workshop conducted among a multi-sectoral group, tourism stakeholders composed of representatives from business, academe, local government and civil society identified the following as their Vision for Tourism in MIGEDC 2020:

Metro Iloilo and Guimaras is an internationally-recognized destination, known for its attractions that sustain its culture and environment and whole tourism industry shall contribute to the economic growth of all sectors of society

How ready is MIGEDC to attain its vision? Consultations with representatives from the tourism industry revealed a lack of preparedness of the region for tourists. Specifically, lack of tourism awareness, and poor environmental, transportation and heritage management were among the cited weaknesses of the area. An analysis of the root causes of these suggest that at the root of these weaknesses is a lack of HRD capability of both private and public sectors. Hence, a vital component of the MIG-01 project was to identify gaps and build the capabilities of critical tourism stakeholders.

1.2 Overview of Capacity Development Activities as a Deliverable Component of the PoA

Specifically, this component aimed to provide workshops to address the key competency gaps among tourism players and stakeholders. A needs analysis was conducted through focused-group discussions with representatives from tourism sector. A survey was also administered to validate the qualitative data gathered. A capacity building framework was developed that highlighted the leadership and technical skill needs of both the public and private sectors. The capacity building focused on developing tourism the most critical competencies of both the public and private sectors. For the private sector, workshops focused on Tourism Appreciation and Customer Service. For the public sector, the workshop was on Tourism Policy and Planning and Tourism Product Development and Marketing.

2.0 CAPACITY BUILDING FRAMEWORK

2.1 Methodology

There were two approaches to identifying the competencies gaps in MIG tourism institutions and building the capacity building framework. The first approach was by extrapolating from a SWOT analysis the gaps in competencies. This was generated during a multi-sectoral workshop among tourism stakeholders (see Table 1).

Table 1. Analysis of Competency Gaps

WEAKNESSES/THREATS	Competency Gap
Lack of preparedness for international tourists & Entrance of large corporations and non-local businesses	Management skills particularly strategic planning Knowledge of needs of market, characteristics of successful destination International standards in hospitality management Appreciation for tourism industry and attractions Tourism product development and marketing Tour development and guiding Cross-cultural awareness Communication skills Customer service
Price wars in hotel industry	Management skills especially with regards to: Strategic planning Financial management HR management Sales and marketing
Inadequate, expensive and poor quality transportation	Customer service Tourism policy development and monitoring Appreciation for tourism industry and attractions
Poor management of public facilities	Tourism planning Governance Policy development and implementation
Poor environmental management	Environment awareness Tourism planning Governance Policy development and implementation
Lack of locals' awareness of own culture	Appreciation for tourism industry and attractions Policy development and implementation
Unregulated streamers/billboards	Appreciation for tourism industry and attractions Policy development and implementation
Piracy of labor to other regions/countries	HR management, motivating and empowering others, people development
Negative Impacts of Tourism (i.e. sex workers, HIV, exploitation of minors)	Policy development and implementation

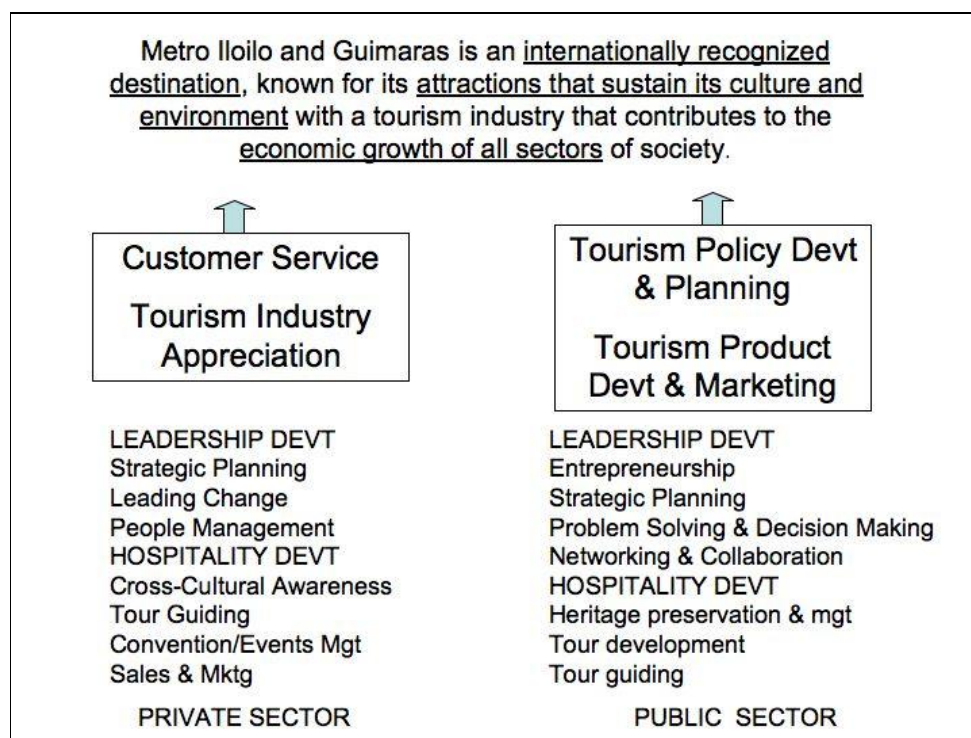
On August 1, 2007, survey was administered to stakeholders from the private (n=9), academe (n=6), civil society (n=1), and government (n=8) sectors to validate the qualitative data. Respondents were given a list of hospitality industry and leadership competencies and were asked to select the competencies their organization needed most. Results were analyzed separately for the private and government sector (see Table 2 below).

Table 2. Competency Needs

	Private Sector	Government Sector
Hospitality Industry	Customer Service (1) Tourism Industry Appreciation (2) Tourism Product Devt (2) Tour Guiding (3) Communication Skills (3) Events & Convention Mgmt (4) Cross-Cultural Awareness (4) Health & Safety (4) Heritage Management (5)	Tourism Product Devt (1) Tourism Policy Devt (1) Tourism Industry Appreciation (2) Heritage Preservation (2) Tour Devt & Guiding (3) Customer Service (3) Cross-Cultural Awareness (3)
Leadership	Strategic Planning (1) Planning & Organizing (2) People Development (2) HR Management (2) Performance Mgmt (3)	Entrepreneurship (1) Networking & Collaboration (2) Strategic Planning (3)

2.2 The Capacity Building Framework for the MIG Tourism Sector

Based on the needs analysis data, a capacity building framework was created to address the most critical competencies gaps for both private and public sector (see Figure 1 below).



The above capacity building framework highlights two types of competencies needed by the tourism industry. Leadership competencies are those required by

managers, owners and government officials. These include strategic planning, leading change, people management, entrepreneurship, problem solving and decision-making, networking and collaboration. Technical skills on hospitality management include: cross-cultural awareness, tour guiding, conventions & events management, sales and marketing and heritage preservation and management.

3.0 SUMMARY OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

3.1 Overview of Training Methodology and Approach to Training

The design of the workshops was guided by a number of principles. The first principle was that participants were adult learners. Because adults learn best through active participation, the workshops utilized experiential methodologies. Another principle used was the recognition of the wealth of experiences of participants. Hence, workshop methodology focused on eliciting participant views and experiences rather than simply providing input. A third principle was that adults will better appreciate programs where they can immediately link concepts to their own concerns and issues. To address this, workshop outputs and exercises focused on applying concepts to issues salient to participants.

3.2 Schedule and Description of Workshops

Tourism Industry Appreciation (Sept 19) – This one-day workshop aimed to provide participants an awareness of the potentials of MIG as a tourist destination. In this workshop, an experiential activity was used where participants went on an “Amazing Race” exercise as they visited tourist attractions in MIG. Along the way, they were asked to note the strengths and weaknesses of MIG as a tourist destination. This workshop ended with a session on the role of the private sector in making MIG a successful tourist destination. Participants of this were business owners and the tourism private sector.

Customer Service (October 10)- The aim of this one-day workshop was to orient participants to customer service standards in tourism establishments. Utilizing an experiential activity (Mystery Guest), participants evaluated selected establishments and analyzed possible causes for gaps in customer service. Participants of this were business owners of various tourism establishments.

Tourism Policy Devt & Planning (November 7 & 8) – This two-day workshop aimed to hone participants’ abilities in the creation of tourism policies and plans. Participants of this program (were tourism officers, planning officers and private owner representatives from LGUs) were briefed on the various types, formats of legislation. They were then asked to draft tourism related ordinances that were critiqued by a resource person from the DOT Region 6 Office.

Tourism Product Development & Marketing (November 20 & 21) - The aim of this two-day workshop was to orient participants on characteristics of tourism product development and marketing. Participants were oriented on how tourism products are developed and marketed using best practices from other destinations. Participants also critiqued current marketing collaterals being used and generated ideas on promoting and packaging of MIG tourism products. Participants of this were business owners, Chairmen of the Tourism Committees of the MIG *Sangguniang Bayans*, and tourism officers.

3.3 Evaluation of Workshops

The evaluations of the workshops were all quite positive. On a scale of 1 to 5, the ratings ranged from 3.05 to 4.65. All (100%) participants said they would recommend this workshop to their colleagues. Table 2 summarizes the participant ratings for each of the four workshops.

Table 2. Evaluation Results

	Tourism Appreciation	Customer Service	Tourism Policy & Planning	Tourism Product Development & Marketing
Relevance	4.47	4.65	4.00	4.20
Quality of Content	4.42	4.59	4.00	4.20
Facilitators	4.42	4.65	4.00	4.10
Methodology	3.84	4.29	4.00	4.00
Food	3.05	4.41	3.75	3.70
Venue	3.21	4.29	4.13	4.10
Materials	3.84	4.65	4.13	3.90

** scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being Excellent and 1 being Poor*

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Lessons Learned

- a) Need for greater engagement especially from other sectors

Although the workshops were well received by those who participated, we noted that participants from both public and private groups tended to be attended by the same participants. There were also a number of participants who confirmed but did not arrive. Notably absent from the workshops were representatives from travel agencies and civil society. Some participants suggested the need to echo the workshops to a broader base and to bring in more private sector participation such as members of the press in order to strengthen media partnerships and to promote tourism initiatives. Another suggestion was to recognize the role of the Church and to have representatives from the church especially because the festivals are religious in nature.

- b) Need to strengthen private-public partnership and clarify roles in Tourism

The workshop discussions and attendance suggest that the private and public partnership in Tourism appears to still be weak. For many of the LGUs, the tourism councils are still driven by the public sector and there appears to be a lack of clarity on roles and accountabilities. For example, tourism officers appear to be doing work that the private sector should be doing (i.e. tour development, events organizing). This may also be because the private sector (especially tour operators) appear to be deficient in their ability to package inbound tours.

- c) Need to strengthen Industry associations/community organizations

The workshop discussions and participation also highlighted the weakness of the various institutions in the tourism industry. Save for Iloilo Conventions and Visitors Bureau that appears to be quite active, other associations appear inactive, under-represented or divided. If tourism in

Iloilo is to take-off, there is a need to strengthen these institutions and organizations.

4.2 Next Steps – Summary of Capacity-Building Action Plan

Beyond the workshops conducted, there are many other interventions needed to ensure that MIGEDC has the capability it needs to attain its vision.

- a) Provide a structure to strengthen institutional capacity of MIGEDC in Tourism

An important issue is the sustainability of current efforts. In order to institutionalize and further strengthen tourism in MIGEDC, it is vital that there are structures and people who can focus on implementing the tourism plan. This requires that the position of Tourism Officer needs to be institutionalized in each LGU and that each LGU has a functioning tourism council that is public and private in nature.

- b) Development of an HRD Plan for Tourism in MIGEDC

Although this project conducted initial assessment of competencies of public and private sectors, it may be necessary to conduct a more in-depth assessment of the competency needs of MIG. These needs are to be matched with a more in-depth assessment of the curricula and short-courses available in the region. Such information can validate the capacity building framework developed.

- c) Build leadership capacity of public and private tourism institutions in MIG

The analysis of gaps in tourism in MIG point to weaknesses in the capability of both private and public leaders. The lack of competitiveness of MIG tourism businesses suggests the need to strengthen the strategic management and hospitality industry skills of business owners and leaders. The problems on environment and transportation reveal the need for greater competencies in policy development and implementation among LGU officials.

- d) Build tourism skills of public tourism institutions in MIG

There are a number of evident gaps that suggest the need for improved technical skills among public tourism institutions. These include heritage preservation and management, as well as tourism planning.

- e) Build skills capacity of private tourism institutions in MIG

The lack of preparedness and competitiveness of local tourism establishments suggests the need for improved technical skills among workers in private tourism institutions. These include sales and marketing, convention and events management, cross-cultural awareness, tour development and guiding.

- f) Facilitate recruitment & selection of qualified employees in the tourism industry

To complement efforts at developing capability of the tourism workforce, assessment mechanisms may be developed to facilitate the recruitment and selection of qualified employees. This can be done in collaboration with TESDA.

- g) Upgrade capacities of MIG-based artists, crafts people, souvenir manufacturers, and retailers to package, display, and market local products for tourists.

One glaring gap in the preparedness of MIG for tourism is the lack of tourist products. To ensure that tourism benefits all sectors, local communities and NGOs can be tapped as producers for these products. However, they need to be trained in production and marketing. This can be done in collaboration with DTI and Design Center of the Philippines.

- h) Capacities of local government officials, community leaders, natural resource managers, and natural resource developers on the sustainable use of habitats, development of sound resource management structures in the MIG, and mechanisms and procedures for addressing trans-boundary institutional challenges.

A consistent observation among stakeholders is the impact that poor environmental management has on the tourism potential of MIG. Traffic, floods, garbage management were all identified as current barriers. This suggests the need to strengthen the policy development and implementation in these areas.

APPENDICES

A. Documentation Report for Tourism Appreciation Workshop

1. Training design and program
2. Slides presentation
3. Handouts
4. Outputs
5. Highlights
6. Resume of resource persons/facilitators
7. Directory of Participants
8. Evaluation results

B. Documentation Report for Customer Service Workshop

1. Training design and program
2. Slides presentation
3. Handouts
4. Outputs
5. Highlights
6. Resume of resource persons/facilitators
7. Directory of Participants
8. Evaluation results

C. Documentation Report for Tourism Policy & Planning Workshop

1. Training design and program
2. Slides presentation
3. Handouts
4. Outputs
5. Highlights
6. Resume of resource persons/facilitators
7. Directory of Participants
8. Evaluation results

D. Documentation Report for Tourism Product Development & Marketing Workshop

1. Training design and program
2. Training materials-handouts, presentation
3. Outputs
4. Highlights
5. Resume of resource persons/facilitators
6. Directory of Participants
7. Evaluation results

E. 3-Year Capacity-Building Action Plan for MIG Tourism