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STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR SK OFFICIALS IN SANCHEZ MIRA, CAGAYAN

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ABSTRACT

Equipping local youth leaders with the right skills is an absolute necessity especially in the ongoing fight against drug abuse and the pursuit of community progress. This study explores the capacity-building initiatives for Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) officials in Sanchez Mira, Cagayan, focusing on their vital role as youth leaders in advancing drug prevention and community development. Anchored on the mandates of the Philippine Dangerous Drugs Board and aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the study employed a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with SK officials, Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) personnel, and the Local Youth Development Office (LYDO). Findings revealed that the Trainers' Training Program was generally effective in enhancing drug abuse prevention education, communication and life skills, and community immersion. However, persistent gaps emerged in the areas of program administration, formulation of action plans, practical application of knowledge, and post-training support. Key challenges included limited resources, lack of autonomy, weak inter-agency collaboration, and inadequate follow-through mechanisms. The study highlights the need for competency-based, participatory, and sustainable training models that foster leadership development, research skills, and strategic planning. By institutionalizing structured and context responsive programs, SK officials can be empowered to become more effective catalysts of community transformation. The study concludes that strengthening the capacities of youth leaders not only enhances their governance and advocacy skills but also contributes to the creation of healthier, safer, and more resilient communities. Ultimately, empowering SK officials through systematic training initiatives positions them as frontliners in promoting drug-free and youth-inclusive local governance.

KEYWORDS: *Capacity-Building, Sangguniang Kabataan (SK), Youth Empowerment, Drug Prevention, Community Engagement*

INTRODUCTION

The welfare of Filipino youth is a top priority, yet many face challenges such as unemployment, drug abuse, poverty, lack of education, teen pregnancy, bullying, and mental health issues. In addressing, programs like the Sangguniang Kabataan Standard Training in Extensive Anti-Drug Preventive Education (SK STEP-UP) train youth leaders to implement anti-drug initiatives and community outreach. The Cagayan Provincial Management Coordinating Committee (PMCC) and the Provincial Anti-Drug Abuse Council (PADAC) have institutionalized reforms and implemented policies to strengthen anti-illegal drugs operations across the province, including Sanchez Mira. These include regular meetings, fund allocation, program implementation, and local innovations to enhance the effectiveness of the campaign according to DILG Region 2 (2021). Despite these efforts, SK officials in Sanchez Mira continue to face challenges related to training, leadership development, budget management, and program execution which limit their full potential in promoting drug-free lifestyles. Studies highlight that both local and international youth programs often lack authentic youth participation, reducing their effectiveness. Strengthening SK officials' capacity through targeted training enhances leadership, decision-making, and program management, which enable them to better prevent drug abuse, support at-risk youth, and contribute to healthier and drug-free communities. This aligns with national policies and Sustainable Development Goals which emphasize youth empowerment, health, education, and active participation in governance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Youth empowerment is widely recognized as a critical factor in promoting societal development, as young people possess the creativity, energy, and digital literacy needed to address contemporary challenges and drive sustainable change. Plan International emphasizes the importance of advocating for the rights of girls and youth giving them grant on agency over their lives while fostering allies to support equity and inclusion. Similarly, Youth Empower (2024) highlights that surveys indicate most respondents view youth as essential drivers of innovation and development so it is necessary to provide opportunities, resources, and mentorship to strengthen their societal role. Young people are increasingly engaged in initiatives addressing education, mental health, climate change, and social justice, often inspired by global figures such as Malala Yousafzai and Greta Thunberg, which encourages them to challenge societal norms and advocate for change as noted by Modi (2023). Programs such

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as "Empowering Youth to Improve Their Communities" aim to unlock leadership potential, promote civic engagement, and enable youth to implement sustainable projects that contribute to local and long-term development (fundsforNGOs, n.d.).

International agencies, including the United Nations Development Programme (2024), emphasize the essential role of youth in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in areas such as education, employment, and political participation as also highlighted by Nations Unies (2019). Nevertheless, disparities in access to resources, employment, and quality education persist, requiring tailored youth-centered policies, inclusive governance, and active participation in decision-making (IvyPanda, 2024). Education and skill development are essential components of empowerment, with life skills programs, vocational training, and entrepreneurial education fostering resilience, employability, and socio-economic independence, according to Seshadri (2024) and Bet9ja Foundation (2025). Youth involvement in community service and volunteerism strengthens social cohesion, develops empathy, and equips young people with leadership and collaborative skills, enabling them to address local and global issues effectively as noted by United Nations Development Programme (2024). However, barriers such as inadequate policies, limited infrastructure, exclusion from decision-making, and socio-cultural constraints continue to hinder the full realization of youth potential, as discussed by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (2025). Effective empowerment requires supportive policies, resource allocation, recognition of youth perspectives, and collaborative engagement between the public and private sectors (Brodowicz, 2024). Preventing substance abuse is also a critical aspect with evidence-based interventions, peer-to-peer campaigns, and early education proving effective in reducing risks and fostering healthier outcomes for young people as reported by UNODC (2021), NIDA, (2024), SAMHSA (2025), Psychiatric Times (2025) and Woensdregt (2024).

All over the nation, youth empowerment is a paramount, reflected in initiatives of the National Youth Commission and programs aligned with the Philippine Youth Development Plan and Ambisyon Natin 2040 as mentioned by SOS Children's Villages Pilipinas (2024). According to Youth Democracy, financially independent Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) councils have strengthened local youth governance, allowing young leaders to implement programs responsive to their peers' needs. Motte-Muños (2020) observes that despite economic growth, many Filipino youths face obstacles in accessing higher education due to insufficient information, guidance, and opportunities, particularly in rural and disadvantaged areas. Mabulo (2020) highlights that youth participation in sectors such as agriculture, environmental conservation, and entrepreneurship demonstrates the transformative role of empowered youth in addressing societal challenges. Curtin (2024) emphasizes that school-based programs like Safe School Ambassadors cultivate leadership, promote safety, and foster academic and social well-being, while community initiatives and volunteer programs further engage youth in meaningful societal contributions as the United Nations Development Programme (2024) states. Anti-drug campaigns, including forums, university initiatives, and Parent-Youth Resource programs, integrate youth participation with preventive education, skill-building, and community engagement to address substance abuse among vulnerable populations, particularly out-of-school youth and street children as reported by various agencies such as The ASEAN Training Center for Preventive Drug Education (2019), Regional Development Council Cagayan Valley Region, Inter-Agency Committee on Anti-Illegal Drugs Advocacy Cluster (2024), Dangerous Drugs Board (2024), Campus Information Office (2024) and the dilg.gov.ph (2024). These interventions highlight the importance of family, school, and community involvement in shaping positive youth outcomes.

Despite these efforts, challenges remain, including inconsistent political support, limited funding, and socio-political barriers that constrain youth programs as stated by the Youth Democracy Cohort. Additionally, Sugaya (2022) explains that the war on drugs has produced profound social, psychological, and economic consequences, affecting children and families and undermining initiatives aimed at poverty reduction and youth development. These circumstances underscore the need for sustained, holistic, and inclusive strategies that empower youth to actively participate in community and national development while addressing vulnerabilities associated with social inequities. By fostering opportunities for leadership, education, skill development, and civic engagement, youth empowerment can contribute significantly to building resilient, equitable, and sustainable communities both globally and locally.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework/Paradigm of the Study

This study is grounded on the convergence of psychosocial theories. The core is the Empowerment Theory by Zimmerman (2000), which directly aligns with the study's goal of strengthening SK officials by equipping them with the capacity to gain control, critically analyze their environment, and actively lead anti-drug campaigns, thereby fostering safer and more resilient communities. This is supported by the Social Development Theory by Vygotsky (1978) which mandates that the capacity-building program must be interactive, collaborative, and peer-led to effectively enhance social learning and skills acquisition in leadership and advocacy. Furthermore, the Ecological Systems Theory by Bronfenbrenner (1979) reinforces the need for a multi-sectoral approach which acknowledge that the SK officials' ability to implement anti-drug programs is shaped by the support and coordination received from their surrounding environment, including LGUs and partner agencies. These theories provide the foundation for the Conceptual Framework, which is rooted in Philippine policy, specifically Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) Regulation No. 5, Series of 2019 with the youth empowerment initiatives like Barkada Kontra Droga and the National Youth Forum on Drug Abuse Prevention, ensuring the study is theoretically grounded and tailored to produce practical and policy-driven solutions.

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Significance of the Study

The results of this study are beneficial to various stakeholders involved in youth development and anti-drug campaigns. The findings will empower Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) officials by validating their crucial role as youth leaders and reinforcing the importance of their participation in capacity-building training. The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) and the Local Government Unit (LGU) can also utilize the results as a partial assessment tool, providing a springboard for designing and institutionalizing a more effective, youth-centered peer education system. Specifically, the Local Youth Development Office (LYDO) of Sanchez Mira will gain direct insights to refine its programs, partnerships, and strategies for capacitating young leaders. Furthermore, Educational Institutions can integrate the findings to strengthen their preventive education curricula, while the community at large benefits from the resulting reduction of drug-related problems which will lead to a safer and more positive environment. Lastly, the study serves as a reference for future researchers and enhanced the researcher's knowledge and practical exposure in the field of youth empowerment and drug prevention.

Objectives of the Study

The study aims to evaluate the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) Trainers' Training for Youth Leaders in Sanchez Mira, Cagayan. Specifically, this study seeks:

- To assess the level of implementation of the Trainer's Training in terms of Program Administration, Drug Abuse Prevention Education, Communication and life skills development, Practical community immersion, Basic research and development, and Formulation of Action Plan and immersion.
- To compare the level of implementation of the Trainer's Training for Youth Leaders among the three respondent variables (SK Officials, Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency personnel, and Local Youth Development Office personnel).
- To determine the challenges encountered by the informants in the implementation of Trainer's Training for the Youth Leaders.
- To develop an intervention program based on the study's findings to enhance the implementation of the Trainer's Training for the Youth Leaders.

METHODOLOGY

This presents the research methods and procedures undertaken in the stidy including the design, participants, instruments, data collection, analysis and ethical considerations.

Research Design

The study employed a mixed-methods research design, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. This allowed the researcher to collect and analyze both numerical and narrative data which provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. The quantitative part generated measurable and statistically analyzable data, enhancing objectivity and generalizability, while the qualitative part explored participants' experiences and perspectives that added depth and context to the findings. By integrating these, the study used the strengths of each approach and minimized their individual limitations ensuring significant results.

Research Method

The researcher employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods from the collection and analysis of quantitative data, followed by qualitative data. Quantitative analysis identified key patterns and trends which provided an overview of the research problem and highlighting areas for further exploration. The subsequent qualitative component collected participants' detailed perspectives to clarify and expand upon the quantitative findings. This sequential design allowed the researcher to integrate statistical results with insights leading to a comprehensive understanding of the study topic.

Population of the Study

The study employed purposive sampling to select participants based on their active involvement in youth leadership and anti-drug programs in Sanchez Mira, Cagayan. The quantitative phase included 130 Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) officials, with the full complement of staff from the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) (10 personnel) and the Local Youth Development Office (LYDO) (5 personnel). The qualitative phase involved 15 SK officials, 5 PDEA personnel, and 1 LYDO personnel who voluntarily participated in follow-up interviews to clarify and enrich the survey data. Inclusion criteria mandated that participants be actively serving in their respective roles within the specified barangays of Sanchez Mira, while exclusion criteria disregarded individuals who were no longer in office or did not provide informed consent. This ensured that the collected data was relevant, voluntary, and ethically sound.

Data Gathering Tools

The data for this study were collected using a self-administered survey questionnaire developed by the researcher and validated by experts to ensure content validity. The instrument was anchored on the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) Regulation No. 5, Series of 2019 which standardizes preventive education for youth leaders. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.940 was yielded during a reliability test which affirmed the instrument's good internal consistency. The questionnaire was structured into three parts: the first part measured the level of implementation of the Trainer's Training across six key dimensions, the second part assessed the challenges encountered during implementation, and the third part identified organizational and logistical problems affecting respondent participation.

Data Gathering Procedures

The research followed strict data gathering process. Firstly, the questionnaire checklist and interview guide were approved by the research adviser and subsequently validated by a panel of experts which included a member of the academe, the LYDO designate, and PDEA personnel, to ensure their clarity, appropriateness, and

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relevance. Formal permissions to conduct the study were then secured from the Executive Vice President of PCCR, the Municipal Mayor of Sanchez Mira, and the head of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA). Upon approval, the researcher coordinated with the respective local heads to administer the survey. All respondents were presented with a letter of informed consent to ensure voluntary participation and strict confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the process. The data gathering followed an explanatory sequence, with the quantitative survey phase completed first, followed by the qualitative interviews.

Treatment of Data

The data gathered were analyzed using a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics, followed by thematic analysis. For the quantitative component addressing the level of implementation, the weighted mean and a Likert Scale were utilized for interpretation. To determine the significant difference in the level of implementation among the three groups of respondents (SK Officials, PDEA, and LYDO), the Kruskal-Wallis Test was employed. The final phase, addressing the challenges and organizational and logistical problems involved a thematic analysis of the interview data, focusing on identifying and analyzing recurring patterns and themes.

Ethical Considerations

Strict ethical considerations governed the research and were reviewed and approved by the Ethics Review Committee prior to the study. A written informed consent form with the study's purpose, procedures, and the voluntary nature of participation was obtained from all respondents who were assured they could withdraw at any time without consequences. Privacy and confidentiality were upheld by using codes instead of names on all data forms and securely storing the separate list linking codes to identities which was accessed only by the main researcher. Given the sensitive and drug-related nature of the topic, extra measures were taken to safeguard participant data from vulnerability. The researcher declared no conflict of interest, and the minimal risks were balanced by the benefits of providing a platform for participants to express views and contribute to enhanced youth anti-drug initiatives. Finally, the study ensured non-coercive recruitment and committed to sharing the results with local agencies to maximize community impact.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This presents the findings of the study corresponding to the research objectives.

Level of Implementation of the Trainers' Training for Youth Leaders

Table 1 shows the level of implementation of the Trainers' Training for Youth Leaders across six key areas: Program Administration, Drug Abuse Prevention Education, Communication and Life Skills Development, Practical Community Immersion, Basic Research and Development, and Formulation of Action Plans and Immersion Activities. All three stakeholder groups: SK Officials, LYDO, and PDEA representatives rated each domain with a median score of 4, indicating that the training was Fully Implemented. This common rating demonstrates that the program was well-structured, comprehensive, and effectively delivered which indicate that youth leaders received consistent and thorough preparation in all core competencies. The consistently high scores suggest that the training sessions were accurately planned and implemented which ensure that objectives were clear, relevant, and aligned with the competencies expected from youth leaders. This finding is aligned with Draghici et al. (2021), who stated that program effectiveness is maximized when training design integrates clear objectives, contextualized content, and practical applications.

Table 1. Summary on the Level of Implementation of the Trainers' Training for the Youth Leaders

Indicators	LYDO	PDEA	SKO Overall
Program Administration	4 (FI)	4 (FI)	4 (FI)
Drug Abuse Prevention Education	4 (FI)	4 (FI)	4 (FI)
Communication and Life Skills Development	4 (FI)	4 (FI)	4 (FI)
Practical Community Immersion	4 (FI)	4 (FI)	4 (FI)
Basic Research and Development	4 (FI)	4 (FI)	4 (FI)
Formulation of Action Plan and Immersion	4 (FI)	4 (FI)	4 (FI)
Overall	4 (FI)	4 (FI)	4 (FI)

Difference on the Level of Implementation of the Trainers' Training for the Youth Leaders

Table 2 reveals the significant differences in how the three stakeholder groups: SK Officials, LYDO, and PDEA representatives perceived the implementation of the Trainers' Training for Youth Leaders. Across all six training areas, the p-values exceeded 0.05, indicating no significant differences among the groups. For instance, Program Administration had a p-value of 0.426, and Drug Abuse Prevention Education recorded $p = 0.177$. Even the highest test statistic ($X^2 = 3.47$) was not statistically significant. These results suggest that the training was implemented consistently and perceived similarly across all respondent groups which demonstrate fairness, standardization, and equitable delivery.

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Table 2. Difference on the Level of Implementation of the Trainers' Training for the Youth Leaders Among the Three Groups of Respondents

Indicators	X^2	df	p-value	Decision	Remarks
Program Administration	1.71	2	0.426	Accept H_0	No significant difference
Drug Abuse Prevention Education	3.47	2	0.177	Accept H_0	No significant difference
Communication and Life Skills Development	2.50	2	0.286	Accept H_0	No significant difference
Practical Community Immersion	2.52	2	0.283	Accept H_0	No significant difference
Basic Research and Development	2.53	2	0.282	Accept H_0	No significant difference
Formulation of Action Plan and Immersion	2.39	2	0.303	Accept H_0	No significant difference

Challenges Experienced during the Implementation during the Training

Table 3 presents the themes identified from the Trainers' Training for Youth Leaders, regarding the participant challenges. Theme 1, Resistance to Change and Low Engagement, revealed that some youth leaders attended sessions passively, often reluctant to participate due to fear of change or perceived minimal personal benefit. Respondents emphasized the need for motivational strategies and a psychologically safe learning environment to encourage active involvement. Theme 2, Inadequate Needs Assessment and Training Relevance, indicated that certain training content was too general or technical, limiting its applicability to participants' community roles. Respondents suggested incorporating localized case studies and examples to ensure the training addresses real competency gaps, underscoring the importance of a thorough Training Needs Assessment (TNA). Theme 3, Post-Training Application and Retention Issues, showed difficulties in applying learned concepts in real-world situations, with participants noting that lessons were quickly forgotten without follow-up support. Recommendations included refresher sessions, mentoring, and peer-support mechanisms to reinforce learning and sustain behavior change. Theme 4, Communication and Facilitation Challenges, highlighted barriers caused by complex terminology, formal facilitation style, and limited interactive activities, which reduced engagement and comprehension. Participants recommended adopting more learner-centered approaches and simpler language to enhance accessibility and participation. Inclusively, the findings suggest that while the training was well-structured and fully implemented, addressing engagement, contextual relevance, practical application, and facilitation quality is important to maximize its effectiveness and ensure that youth leaders can effectively apply their training in their communities.

Table 3. Challenges Experienced during the Implementation during the Training

Theme	Supporting Observations / Quotes
Resistance to Change and Low Engagement	SK03: "Parang nasa training lang sila for attendance, hindi talaga sumasali sa discussion kahit encouraged." SK09: "May mga youth leaders na andun lang, pero wala masyadong participation, parang hinihintay lang matapos." PDEA2: "Minsan may takot sila sa pagbabago, o iniisip na wala namang benefit sa kanila kaya parang wala silang gana."
Inadequate Needs Assessment and Training Relevance	L1: "Maganda yung training pero medyo general, hindi masyadong tumutugma sa specific problems namin sa community." SK11: "Medyo technical yung ibang terms, kaya medyo nahirapan akong intindihin." PDEA4: "Informative naman, pero may parts na hindi ko ma-apply sa work namin kaya parang hindi ko makita yung use."
Post-Training Application and Retention Issues	SK05: "Medyo hirap i-apply sa totoong sitwasyon kasi yung scenarios na binigay hindi tugma sa nangyayari sa amin." SK10: "Kung walang follow-up sessions or refreshers, mabilis naming makalimutan yung lessons." PDEA1: "Kung walang support after ng training, bumabalik lang yung tao sa dati nilang ginagawa."
Communication and Facilitation Challenges	SK13: "Ang dami kasing mahihirap na terms, kaya nalilito ako sa gitna ng discussion." SK15: "Sobrang formal ng trainer, parang nakakailang magtanong." PDEA3: "Kulang sa interactive activities, kaya medyo boring at mahirap mag-focus."

Organizational or Logistical Problems of the Informants' Participation

Table 4 shows the challenges encountered in the Trainers' Training for Youth Leaders, highlighting two main themes. The first theme details about time and resource constraints where respondents noted that conflicting schedules and limited resources, such as transportation and snacks, hindered participation. The respondents suggested flexible training schedules and adequate logistical support to address these concerns. The second theme regarding organizational and

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structural barriers revealed that applying training outputs was difficult due to unclear implementation guidelines and inconsistent attendance, emphasizing the importance of leadership support and follow-up sessions to ensure effective implementation. Respondents recommended creating cascading sessions for non-attendees and aligning leadership support to sustain the impact of training.

Table 4. Organizational or Logistical Problems of the Informants' Participation

Theme	Key Observations / Participant Quotes
Time and Resource Constraints	SK08: Training sessions conflicted with barangay activities. SK14: Difficult to balance school, work, and training schedules. PDEA5: Limited budget for transportation and snacks reduced attendance, especially for distant participants.
Organizational and Structural Barriers	L1: Integrating training outputs into existing workflows was challenging SK07: Not all SK members attended training, making implementation difficult PDEA01: Lack of clear support system from leadership led to inconsistent application

Intervention Program to Enhance the Implementation of the Trainer's Training for the Youth Leaders

The existing SK STEP-UP Program, institutionalized through Dangerous Drugs Board Regulation No. 5, Series of 2019, serves as the standard preventive education training for SK and barangay youth leaders, developing them into Certified Anti-Drug Advocates. Implemented in three phases: Youth Camp, Trainer's Training, and ground implementation, the program provides structured leadership and drug prevention education, practical skills, and monitoring mechanisms. However, the study identified gaps such as low engagement, inadequate contextualization, logistical constraints, post-training follow-through issues, facilitation challenges, and limited institutional support.

To address these, the proposed SUSTAIN Intervention Program (Strengthening Unified Support Through Adaptive, Inclusive, and Needs-Based Training) introduces a youth-centered engagement framework, contextualized curriculum development, modular and blended learning, structured mentorship and coaching, enhanced facilitator training, and governance integration. These strategies are designed to increase participation, tailor training to local contexts, ensure continuity of skill application, improve facilitation quality, and institutionalize support mechanisms, ultimately promoting a more sustainable, adaptive, and effective youth anti-drug advocacy program in coordination with LGUs and PDEA.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This presents the conclusions and recommendations drawn from the study.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the Trainers' Training for Youth Leaders was highly effective, as shown by high ratings across all components, successfully enhancing youth leaders' knowledge, skills, and leadership for community-based drug prevention. The results show that the overall implementation was assessed as Fully Implemented. Consistent rating across SK officials, LYDO, and PDEA representatives demonstrate strong inter-agency coordination, systematic planning, and comprehensive content delivery which yielded to no significant differences among the groups. However, challenges such as resistance to change and low engagement, inadequate needs assessment and training relevance, post training application and retention issues, and communication and facilitation challenges were identified. Additional challenges were also known such as gaps in facilitation and communication, and structural and organizational barriers. While the SK STEP-UP framework provides a uniform preventive education platform for youth leadership in anti-drug advocacy, long-term effectiveness requires a participatory, youth-centered approach with flexible delivery, mentorship, and institutionalized support to fully realize youth leaders' potential in sustainable anti-drug advocacy. Without these enhancements, the full potential of youth leaders as catalysts for sustainable anti-drug advocacy cannot be fully realized.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed based on the findings of the study. First, to sustain the high level of implementation, it is advised that the Trainers' Training for Youth Leaders be institutionalized within the Local Youth Development Council (LYDC) framework. This will ensure continuity, relevance, and structured support, with regular needs analysis, clear inter-agency collaboration protocols, and scheduled refresher sessions to maintain consistent engagement and resource allocation. Second, a localized Training Needs Assessment tool should be developed to contextualize the training content to the specific issues and priorities of Sanchez Mira, ensuring that modules are practical, participatory, and aligned with the real concerns of youth and community stakeholders. Third, adopting the SUSTAIN Program as a complementary model is recommended to address challenges such as resistance to change, post-training retention, low participation, and limited facilitation skills. This program integrates motivational strategies, recognition systems, experiential learning, mentoring, and continuous monitoring to strengthen engagement and community impact. Finally, it is recommended to pilot the SUSTAIN Intervention Program alongside the SK STEP-UP framework to address organizational barriers, time and resource constraints, and weak inter-agency coordination. Institutional adoption and multi-agency collaboration will embed the enhanced training program

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into long-term LGU and SK council development plans, promoting sustainability and ensuring lasting benefits for youth leadership and community development.

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