

Naga City's i-Serve Program: Harnessing CBMS in promoting poverty focused-service quality improvement

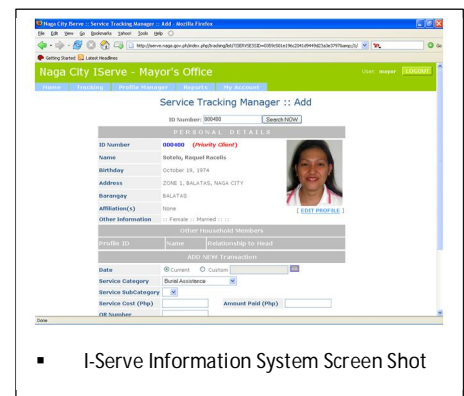
Background



In 2008, the City Government of Naga, through then City Councilor John G. Bongat, enacted Ordinance No. 2008-092, establishing a trailblazing program called i-Serve, which stands for Innovative Service and Value Entitlement.

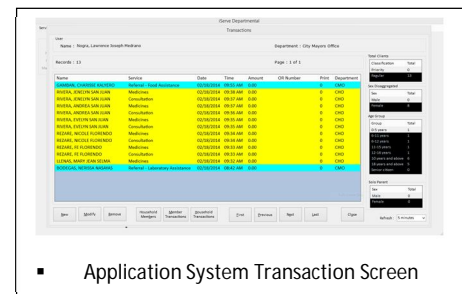
i-Serve is a service quality assurance initiative that addresses problems in services integration, convergence and delivery anchored on having a unified information system in place.

The program is designed to record, monitor, and evaluate the delivery of frontline services of the city government through



the use of a computerized system which accounts and reports all service transactions utilizing the city website (www.naga.gov.ph) with the end in view of expediting and improving service delivery to constituents from birth to death.

During the first three years of implementation, the program succeeded in developing the requisite web-based program that will run the system, capture data, and produce and distribute the mandatory Privilege Cards for around 50% of



the target population. But the absence of a more comprehensive central database on the city's household population eventually hampered its rollout and prevented the program from achieving its objectives.

The need for targeted poverty-responsive services

The implementation of the Community Based Monitoring System (CBMS) in Naga City in the second semester of 2011 enabled the city government to generate poverty data the following year. The development challenges that emerged from the survey largely validated the directions of i-Serve in providing poverty-responsive services in the following domains:

- Income and livelihood
- Basic education
- Housing
- Water and sanitation, and
- Health and nutrition

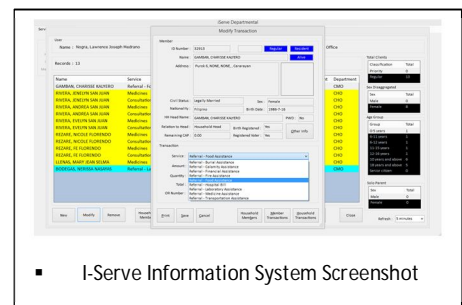
Consequently, the i-Serve project managers, which also supervised implementation of the CBMS enumeration and encoding of survey results, used the resulting CBMS database to power the i-Serve program.

The i-Serve program in brief

Vision. As provided for in the implementing rules and regulations for Ordinance No. 2008-092, the i-Serve program adheres to a vision for “a public-oriented, transparent and accountable city



▪ Naga CBMS Data Gathering in 2011

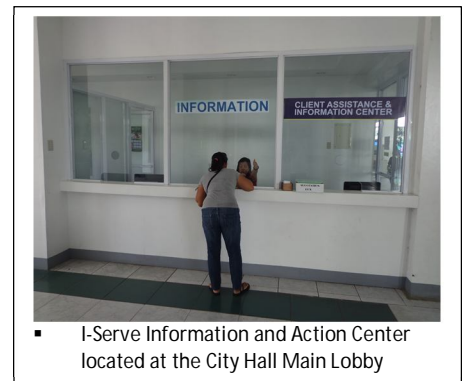
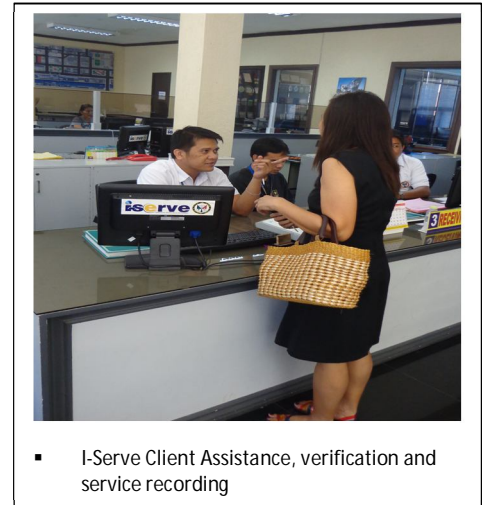


▪ I-Serve Information System Screenshot

government that puts premium on a culture of competence and professionalism in the delivery of basic services to the Nagueños through the efficient use of government resources.”

Objectives. To realize that vision, it seeks to attain the following objectives:

1. To implement quality service assurance by establishing a systematic mechanism of recording and assessment through the institutionalization of i-Serve;
2. To ensure the delivery of quality and effective government service to the Nagueños by:
 - a. recording service delivery (encoding);
 - b. ensuring delivery (verification);
 - c. assessment and evaluation of service (performance); and
 - d. granting of free benefits and discounts and other privileges (privileges).
3. To use a unified information system addressing problems in services integration and convergence, and
4. To establish an i-Serve Information and Action Center (i-SIAC) to facilitate service delivery of/and transactions with the different offices of the city.



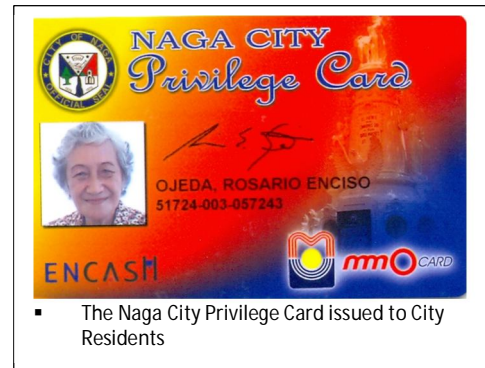
Mechanics. i-Serve therefore innovates on the usual

procedures being implemented by government agencies. It is a system change from recording on logbooks or forms to a unified computerized information system, which can facilitate immediate report generation and service improvement. Consequently, it also serves as a web-

based performance assessment tool for service quality and quantity evaluation of individual agencies concerned, using the city website.

It is designed to record, monitor and evaluate the delivery of basic services of the city government thru the use of a computerized system which accounts and reports all service transactions utilizing the city website with the assistance of the i-SIAC. Consequently, it also serves as a management tool on service performance evaluation and continuing service innovation. Finally, the program facilitates availment of benefits and privileges by target beneficiaries of the Naga City Privilege Card.

The Privilege Card. The Naga City Privilege Cards are ID cards issued to registered and qualified Naga City resident presented when holders are availing of services being rendered by the city government.



Through use of the ID card, service delivery is hastened due to instant positive identification of target prequalified beneficiary. The information found in the card, such as the unique identification number, can also be verified in i-Serve workstations of the frontline agency.

All services availed are entered and recorded in the system. When fully rolled out, a printed acknowledgment receipt will be generated and validated by the beneficiary upon completion of any service received.



Program beneficiaries

The i-Serve IRR categorizes program beneficiaries into primary and secondary.

Primary beneficiaries belong to priority sectors entitled to the benefits defined under the ordinance on account of indigency, physical limitations and government service. They include

- Indigent beneficiaries certified by the City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO) and the City Population and Nutrition Office (CPNO)
- Sectoral beneficiaries, i.e. differently-abled persons certified by the CSWDO and senior citizens certified by the Naga City Senior Citizens Federation
- Government service beneficiaries, which include employees of the city government, as well as elective, appointive and volunteer workers at the barangay level, and
- Volunteer service beneficiaries, which refer to volunteer workers of the city government.



Secondary beneficiaries, on the other hand, refer to those entitled to certain benefits under the ordinance on account of the fact that they are organized or accredited by the city government, or because they volunteered to be covered by the program.

The shift from the original database of registered Privilege Card holders to the more expansive CBMS data enabled the i-Serve program to provide almost universal coverage, especially in providing poverty-responsive services to indigent and sectoral beneficiaries, which are the most vulnerable segments of society.

Program impact or results

- With the deployment of CBMS data to power i-Serve, the Naga City Government is now able to provide targeted poverty-responsive services to disadvantaged and vulnerable residents.
- The centralized information system also enabled it to more effectively and efficiently record service delivery. The ensuing data allows management to conduct evidence-based performance evaluation of individual and organizational service providers, as well as procure supplies and materials more systematically.
- By practically eliminating redundant service delivery to a client (who, in the past, can hop between government offices without detection), the program also enabled the city to generate savings.
- Finally, it has demonstrated that the CBMS data can be used, not only for planning and allocating resources for poverty programs, but in ensuring that government services can be targeted to address the needs of disadvantaged citizens who need them most.



These results are actually within the reach of ordinary Philippine local governments that are willing to innovate and use local IT capabilities to do more with their CBMS data.