



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



## The Implementation of Farm-To-Market Roads by the Department of Public Works and Highways Albay First District Engineering Office

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### Abstract

This study explored how farm-to-market roads (FMRs) were implemented by the Department of Public Works and Highways in the Albay First District Engineering Office. It examined seven FMR projects, focusing on their reach, purpose, and impact on local communities. Through a descriptive-survey method, data were gathered from seven project implementers and seventy purposively selected beneficiaries—residents of barangays where the roads were built. The study aimed to understand not just what was constructed, but how these roads were perceived and used by the people they were meant to serve.

Key areas of investigation included community awareness, project utilization, beneficiary satisfaction, and the quality of completed roads. The study also assessed effectiveness in terms of improving financial conditions, promoting environmental sustainability, and encouraging social participation. Using descriptive statistics—frequency counts, weighted means, and rankings—the research quantified responses to paint a clearer picture of how well the FMRs met their goals.

Challenges such as limited resources, logistical constraints, and gaps in community engagement were identified. To address these, the study proposed an implementation plan focused on strengthening stakeholder collaboration, improving transparency, and enhancing monitoring systems. Ultimately, the findings offer valuable insights for refining future infrastructure projects that aim to uplift rural communities.

**Keywords:** Accountability; Verification; Implementation; Accessibility

### 1 Introduction

Rural infrastructure, particularly farm-to-market roads (FMRs), is a cornerstone of agricultural and economic development in emerging regions. These roads directly impact productivity by improving access to markets, reducing transport costs, and minimizing post-harvest losses. The World Bank highlights that poor transport infrastructure contributes significantly to rural poverty and low competitiveness, with nearly half of rural villages lacking market access. Beyond physical connectivity, weak extension services, costly inputs, and limited financial access further hinder agricultural progress. Addressing these gaps through strategic infrastructure investment is essential to unlock rural potential and foster inclusive growth.

The Asian Development Bank underscores the transformative role of transportation in reducing poverty and enhancing economic opportunities. FMRs not only connect farmers to buyers but also link communities to education, healthcare, and employment. Sustainable transport systems promote regional integration and attract investment, reinforcing long-term development. In the Philippines, this vision is enshrined in Article XII, Section 9 of the 1987 Constitution, which

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mandates the state to uplift living standards through infrastructure and social services. Republic Act No. 917, the Philippine Highway Act of 1993, further empowers provinces and municipalities to develop roads, reinforcing national efforts to improve mobility and economic resilience.

Guided by this legal framework, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) plays a central role in implementing FMRs. Its Strategic Plan 2023–2028, outlined in Department Order No. 38, emphasizes road quality, safety, and public satisfaction. Projects must meet international standards like the International Roughness Index and achieve high safety ratings. As an ISO 9001:2015 certified agency, DPWH also aligns with Republic Act No. 11032, promoting efficient service delivery and stakeholder engagement. Capturing public feedback is vital to refining infrastructure initiatives and ensuring they meet community expectations. This study builds on these mandates to assess FMR implementation in Albay's First District, focusing on effectiveness, satisfaction, and challenges.

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## 2 Materials and Methods

Between 2022 and 2024, seven farm-to-market road (FMR) projects were implemented across Albay's First District to enhance rural connectivity and infrastructure. The projects were distributed across Bacacay (2), Tabaco City (2), Santo Domingo (1), Malilipot (1), and Tiwi (1), strategically linking barangays such as Hindi, Bariw-Nahapunan, Pinagbobong, Hacienda, San Roque, San Andres, Calbayog-Tinabakoan, and Joroan. Community engagement was prioritized throughout the planning and execution phases, with high levels of awareness and participation reported. Data collection included satisfaction surveys, utilization metrics, and quality assessments, with ratings captured on a standardized scale to evaluate effectiveness, safety, and community impact.

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## 3 Results

The completed FMRs demonstrated exceptional performance across all measured indicators. Utilization and satisfaction scores averaged 4.98, confirming that the roads were actively used for economic activities and contributed to improved quality of life. Road quality metrics—including safety, durability, and accessibility—received perfect scores, validating compliance with engineering standards. Beneficiaries reported enhanced financial conditions due to reduced post-harvest losses and improved mobility, with an average rating of 4.97. Environmental safeguards were rigorously applied, earning a 4.99 average, while social participation scored 4.98, reflecting strong community involvement in resilience and collaboration efforts.

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## 4 Discussion

While the FMR projects yielded substantial benefits, several challenges emerged during implementation. These included limited community support in some areas, inadequate information dissemination, project delays, and insufficient backing from local government units. Additional complications arose from political interference, high construction costs, and occasional non-compliance with standards. To mitigate these issues, a comprehensive implementation plan was proposed, outlining targeted activities, timelines, and resource allocations. Verification mechanisms such as progress reports and compliance audits were recommended to ensure transparency and accountability. This strategic approach aims to reinforce rural development efforts and sustain the long-term impact of FMR investments.

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## 5 Conclusion

The implementation of farm-to-market roads in Albay's First District has demonstrated significant progress in enhancing rural connectivity, economic activity, and community well-being. High levels of community awareness, satisfaction, and utilization reflect the projects' relevance and impact. The roads have improved financial conditions, reduced transport burdens, and supported environmental and social goals. Despite these successes, challenges such as political interference, resource limitations, and weak stakeholder engagement must be addressed. A strategic implementation plan offers a pathway to overcome these barriers and sustain the benefits of rural infrastructure development.

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## Compliance with ethical standards

### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

No conflict of interest should be disclosed.

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