



## UNION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES INC.

28F Unit 2803 Summit One Tower 530 Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City  
Telephone: (+632) 8534-6787 Telefax: (+632) 8534-6789 E-Mail: [ulapnatsec@gmail.com](mailto:ulapnatsec@gmail.com), [secretariat@ulap.net.ph](mailto:secretariat@ulap.net.ph)  
Website: [www.ulap.net.ph](http://www.ulap.net.ph) Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ulap.net.ph](https://www.facebook.com/ulap.net.ph)

### PRESS RELEASE

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### CUA HIGHLIGHTS KEY ROLE OF LGUS IN POVERTY REDUCTION

Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines president and Quirino governor Dax Cua highlighted the role of local government units in reducing poverty in the country, as he called on the national government to treat LGUs as partners in development.

During the Philippine Poverty Reduction Summit 2025 held recently, Cua said that LGUs should be acknowledged “not just as recipients, but as co-authors of national development.”

Cua, who was a panelist in the summit, noted that rather than downstream implementers of national policy, LGUs are upstream designers of poverty reduction strategies.

The governor added that “poverty reduction doesn’t happen in policy memos in Manila. It happens in barangays, towns, and provinces—on muddy roads, in public markets, in barangay health stations.”

As such, national goals only work when matched by local action, in particular solutions that are grounded, responsive, and deeply local, Cua said.

“We influence how long poverty lasts, where it hits hardest, whose dignity it erodes, and whether that dignity can be restored. Each health center built, each public consultation held, each bias challenged—modifies poverty’s impact. We make it shorter, shallower, less isolating. That is the power of local governance,” he added.

Cua also relayed how various LGUs across the country have attempted to cut poverty rates in their respective areas.

“In many provinces, LGUs are adopting area-focused or clustered approaches to target communities with the most persistent poverty. Using granular data,” often down to the barangay level,” they identify high-need areas and bundle interventions like health services, livelihood support, feeding programs, and infrastructure improvements to create a more concentrated impact,” he said.

He added that there have also been efforts to develop programs that prioritize solo parents, elderly indigents, persons with disabilities, or indigenous peoples by offering specialized livelihood support, healthcare access, or legal aid.

“We see local governments integrating climate resilience into their poverty reduction strategies—by investing in sustainable livelihoods, restoring coastal and upland ecosystems, improving drainage in flood-prone areas, and promoting climate-smart agriculture. Some LGUs have established community-based disaster risk reduction programs, where vulnerable households are not just recipients of aid but active participants in planning, early warning, and recovery.

He also that LGUs role as first responders was tested and proven during the pandemic

“LGUs didn’t wait for perfect guidelines—we moved and acted the best we can with the resources that we have. We mobilized local funds, distributed aid, set up health checkpoints, and converted gyms into isolation facilities,” he said.

Cua then called on the national government to continue to help LGUs so that they could better respond to their role in poverty reduction and development.

“Invest in our capacity, streamline coordination, and give space for local innovation. Let us turn every program into a partnership, and every target into a shared commitment,” he said.

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Ref:

Joshua F. Gonzales

ULAP Information and Communication Technology Officer

Email: [ulapnatsec@gmail.com](mailto:ulapnatsec@gmail.com)

Mobile: (+63)966 069 5076

Office Tel. No.: (02) 8534-6787

ULAP is the umbrella organization of all leagues of local government units and local government officials in country, serving as the focal representative and mouthpiece of the subnational government in all policy and program platforms to amplify our unified advocacy towards the strengthening of LGUs into able partners in nation-building.

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