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**AN ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (LED) PLANNING: A  
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PARANG AND SULTAN KUDARAT  
MUNICIPALITIES IN SHARIFF KABUNSUAN PROVINCE IN  
THE AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO**

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**Abstract:**

With the local government code in place, the various local government units were subsequently given more responsibilities to develop their local economies. As an approach to promote economic development at the local level, the municipalities of Parang and Sultan Kudarat in the Province of Shariff Kabunsuan in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) have been pursuing the Local Economic Development (LED) strategy to realize their economic vision. Therefore, this study investigates the application of the LED strategy in these municipalities by closely examining and comparing their respective planning process, the stakeholders involved and their varying roles, the sources of economic growth and challenges, and illustrating the connection between LED and comprehensive land use planning.

The study shows that the two municipalities incorporate members from the business sector and the not-for-profit organizations in planning for their economic development. Also, as the dominance of agriculture is increasing in Parang, manufacturing and the service sectors are relatively reducing the dominance of agriculture in Sultan Kudarat. As a LED strategy, as the municipal government of Parang is adopting the use of favourable regulations and promoting good relations with the business sector, the local government of Sultan Kudarat is improving service provision as a way of attaining economic prosperity. The issues being deliberated by the stakeholders in Parang include the production of seaweed, training programs, regular supply of electricity and water, rural infrastructure, and access to credit. Whilst in Sultan Kudarat, the issues being discussed are related to regulatory framework, redtape, and access to more credit.

In terms of the connection between LED and comprehensive land use planning, the study shows that the current comprehensive land use plan of Parang is supporting the proposed economic plan of the municipality; whilst in Sultan Kudarat, the absence of an updated comprehensive land use plan in the municipality makes it difficult to assess the link between LED and spatial planning.

Despite efforts by the respective local governments, the two areas are also plagued with some challenges which tend to hinder their economic development. The main challenges include the ongoing rebellion in the areas, limited access to capital and credit, low infrastructure development, and limited skilled labour. Based on these findings, two set of recommendations clustered into the facilitation and the regulatory roles of the local governments were advanced to help overcome these challenges and promote the local economies of these municipalities.