

# Implementation Of Enhance Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-Clip) In Bulan Sorsogon: Basis for Sustainable Development Program

**Mr. Jonie Cabiles Figueroa**

College Instructor  
Criminal Justice Education  
Solis Institute of Technology

## **Abstract**

**This study investigated the effectiveness of the E-CLIP program in reintegrating former rebels in Bulan, Sorsogon, Philippines. The program's resource availability (funding, manpower, and materials) and its impact on the program's four phases were analyzed. While a positive correlation between resource availability and program implementation was found, further evidence is needed to confirm this relationship across broader contexts. The Pre-Surfacing and Surfacing phases showed the strongest implementation, followed by a decline in Socio-economic and Capability Building, and the weakest in Sustainability and Communication Building. These findings suggest challenges in long-term engagement and highlight the need to strengthen later program phases. The study recommends developing a Resource Mobilization Plan to address resource gaps and explore new funding sources. Additionally, strengthening the Sustainability and Communication Building phase through alumni networks, community awareness initiatives, and long-term financial strategies is crucial.**

**Keywords: E-CLIP, Reintegration, Former Rebels, Resource Availability, Program Phases, Sustainability, Community Engagement**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Terrorism, influenced by socio-economic and political factors, is addressed worldwide through non-violent strategies that support the reintegration of former combatants and promote long-term peace and stability. DDR programs are vital for post-conflict reconstruction, promoting social cohesion, economic stability, and sustainable development (Bank, 2019). However, reintegration is a complex challenge requiring a comprehensive approach (Organization, 2019). The United Nations emphasizes DDR's role in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 16, promoting peaceful societies (United Nations Development Programme, 2019). Successful reintegration also depends on family support, ex-combatant networks, and community-based programs that enhance financial independence and ideological moderation, reducing recidivism (Suarez & Baines, 2022; Masithoh, Priyanto, & Syauquillah, 2022). Across Asia, countries like Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka have implemented

structured reintegration programs that offer livelihood support, education, and healthcare, contributing to long-term peace and stability. In 2019, technical assistance strengthened the Philippines' E-CLIP, further promoting social cohesion and regional stability (Agency, 2019).

The Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP) in the Philippines has played a pivotal role in the national and regional reintegration of former rebels, particularly in areas affected by insurgency like the Bicol Region. Introduced in 2017 to strengthen the earlier CLIP, E-CLIP provides comprehensive support—including education, healthcare, legal aid, and livelihood assistance—not only to former members of the Communist Party of the Philippines–New People's Army–National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF) but also to their families (DILG, 2019). Institutionalized under Executive Order No. 70 and Administrative Order No. 10, the program is part of the government's whole-of-nation approach to end local communist armed conflict. The creation of Task Force Balik-Loob further enhances program implementation by overseeing weapon decommissioning, facilitating community dialogues, and offering psychological services. A recent example of this commitment was seen on January 30, 2025, when five former NPA rebels received E-CLIP aid in Albay, Bicol Region, during a ceremony led by the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC). These efforts underscore the Philippine government's regional and national dedication to sustainable peacebuilding and the successful reintegration of former insurgents into civilian life.

This study fills a critical gap in the literature by focusing on the localized implementation of the Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP) in Bulan, Sorsogon—an area with unique socio-economic challenges. Unlike existing studies, which largely evaluate E-CLIP at the national or regional level and from a peace and order perspective, this study uniquely explores its alignment with sustainable development goals to enhance reintegration outcomes. By examining how regional disparities, resource availability, and community dynamics impact the program's effectiveness, the research offers a context-specific analysis that has been largely overlooked. The reason for pursuing this problem is to bolster and to strengthen reintegration in conflict-affected areas like Bulan, Sorsogon, where national strategies alone may not be sufficient. This study aims to generate practical, evidence-based recommendations to ensure that E-CLIP fosters not just demobilization but also inclusive and long-term socio-economic development.

## **FRAMEWORK**

This study is based on three established theories that promote the ECLIP program's sustainable development: Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT), Social Identity Theory (SIT), and Resource-Based Theory (RBT). A recently created conceptual framework known as the Social Unify through Holistic Support Theory (SUHST) incorporates these theories. A comprehensive program that incorporates economic opportunity, community involvement, and government support is offered by SUHST. Policies that empower former rebels, promote community acceptance, and create strong support networks that guarantee ongoing aid after initial reintegration are all encouraged. In order to ensure the success of E-CLIP in Bulan, Sorsogon, and the study can offer comprehensive, long-term solutions that are in line with sustainable development goals by taking into account the interconnectedness of social, economic, and psychological aspects.

The study's primary variables are categorized as the availability of resources (funding, manpower, and materials) for E-CLIP implementation and its evaluation of the degree of E-CLIP implementation (pre-surfacing, surfacing, socioeconomic and capability building, sustainability and communication building). Those variables are assessed in order to calculate the significant correlation between the level of E-CLIP implementation and resource availability.

RMT provides a lens to examine how external resources like funding, manpower, and materials are mobilized and managed, emphasizing the importance of strategic planning and access to resources in achieving successful reintegration outcomes. SIT helps explain how former rebels shift their identities from insurgent to community member, aligning with the E-CLIP stages such as pre-surfacing, surfacing, capability building, and sustainability. It offers insight into how identity transformation is facilitated through social inclusion and communication. RBT supports the analysis of how internal resource quality—such as unique, valuable, and well-managed assets like training, livelihood aid, and institutional support—affects the overall success and sustainability of the program.

The Social Unify through Holistic Support (SUHS) Theory integrates these theoretical stances to highlight a holistic approach to reintegration by attending to the interrelated social, psychological, economic, and communal needs of former rebels. This theory provides a framework for evaluating sustainable development and long-term reintegration success when applied to E-CLIP in Bulan, Sorsogon. In order to avoid recidivism and promote long-lasting peace and community resilience, SUHS leads the study in identifying implementation gaps and suggesting integrated, long-term interventions that go beyond temporary assistance.

## **OBJECTIVES**

This study aims to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the implementation of the Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP) in Bulan, Sorsogon, serving as the basis for a proposed sustainable development program that supports the socioeconomic and psychosocial reintegration of former rebels and their families. Specifically, it intends to: (1) assess the availability of resources for the implementation of E-CLIP in terms of funding, manpower, and materials, in order to understand the capacity and readiness of local stakeholders to carry out the program; (2) evaluate the levels of implementation of E-CLIP based on four key variables—pre-surfacing, surfacing, socioeconomic and capability building, and sustainability and communication building—so as to determine the effectiveness and extent of the program's operational reach; (3) compute the significant relationship between the availability of resources and the level of E-CLIP implementation to identify whether resource availability impacts program success; and (4) formulate a sustainable development program that enhances and supports the continued implementation of E-CLIP in the locality.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study utilized a purely quantitative descriptive research design to systematically gather, analyze, and interpret numerical data regarding the implementation of the Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP) in Bulan, Sorsogon. The study involved 40 respondents: 5 each from the DILG and LGUs, and 15 each from the PNP and AFP—agencies directly involved in implementing E-CLIP. Due to limited personnel in some agencies, especially DILG and LGUs, a

targeted selection was made to ensure relevant data. Data was collected through survey questionnaire via purposive sampling to choose participants who have direct program experience to support a quantitative evaluation of resource availability and program implementation. The study used a structured survey questionnaire developed based on national E-CLIP guidelines to assess resource availability and program implementation. It had two sections: one measured funding, manpower, and materials; the other evaluated implementation across four key areas—pre-surfacing, surfacing, socio-economic and capability building, and sustainability and communication. A 4-point Likert scale was used to gather consistent, quantifiable responses. Clarity, dependability, and content validity were ensured by expert validation and pilot testing of the research tool. Prior to data collection, ethical protocols were strictly followed: a transmittal letter was submitted to different agencies involved in the program, informed consent was obtained from all participants, and clearance was secured from the institutional ethics review board. Data collection source from the internet via national level reported by the AFP through journal release by the DILG.

The statistical tools were appropriately applied to its objectives: (1) Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage) were utilized to summarize and describe respondents' perceptions regarding the availability of key resources funding, manpower, and materials. (2) Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were again used to determine the extent of implementation to evaluate the level of implementation of E-CLIP across its core components—pre-surfacing, surfacing, socio-economic and capability building, and sustainability and communication building. (3) Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson  $r$ ) was applied to assess whether a statistically significant relationship exists, to explore the relationship between resource availability and the program's implementation level. Lastly, results-based interpretation from the findings of the first three objectives was employed to guide the formulation of a sustainable development program, translating data into practical, evidence-based recommendations.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section outlines the study's findings in connection with its four research objectives. Each subsection presents the results, supported by relevant literature, and interprets their implications within both the Philippine and global contexts. The section concludes with a critical analysis of the strengths and limitations of the research methodology and the theoretical framework applied.

### **Availability of resources for the implementation of E-CLIP, in terms of funding, manpower and material.**

#### **Funding**

Study indicates with moderately sufficient resources, but strategic improvements are needed to ensure long-term effectiveness. Among the three resource components—funding, manpower, and materials—funding emerged as the most effective, particularly due to its efficient use by implementing agencies. However, the study highlights that irregular allocation and limited funding for long-term reintegration activities may hamper sustainability. This aligns with the findings of the Folke Bernadotte Academy (2021), which emphasized that efficient financial management and consistent funding are critical success factors in disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs globally.

Additionally, UNICEF (2022) pointed out that securing adequate and consistent funding throughout the reintegration process is essential to overcome the vulnerabilities that former rebels face, particularly in long-term reintegration efforts.

### **Manpower**

Manpower resources were assessed as relatively stable, with trained personnel actively participating in E-CLIP activities. However, the study stresses the importance of ongoing training and upskilling, as reintegration efforts increasingly involve complex psychological and community-based challenges. This aligns with the findings of UNDP (2020), which assert that continuous capacity-building is essential for frontline workers involved in Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs. In support of this, World Bank (2021) emphasized that capacity-building initiatives for staff should be comprehensive, ensuring that employees are well-equipped to manage the diverse challenges faced by ex-combatants, from mental health issues to community reintegration.

### **Material**

The greatest gap was observed in material resources. While basic infrastructure is present, there is a notable lack of logistical supplies and essential equipment, which could hinder the program's execution. This mirrors the analysis by Ozerdem and Podder (2021), who noted that insufficient logistical support often undermines DDR program efficiency, even when other resources are in place. Furthermore, The Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights (2021) stressed that logistical issues, particularly in remote or conflict-affected areas, need to be addressed comprehensively to ensure that DDR programs can achieve their intended outcomes.

### **Evaluation of the Levels of Implementation of E-CLIP with four Phases (Pre-Surfacing Phase, Surfacing Phase, Socio-economic and Capability Building Phase, and the Sustainability and Communication Building Phase).**

#### **Pre-Surfacing Phase**

This phase focuses on the recovery and initial preparation of former rebels (FRs) for reintegration. The study by Alcantara and De Castro (2023) found that orientation sessions and skills training significantly improve the employability and reintegration readiness of FRs. However, challenges such as delays in fund disbursement and stringent documentation requirements were identified as barriers to full implementation

#### **Surfacing Phase:**

The study identified this phase as the most effectively implemented, mainly due to strong coordination and comprehensive support for former rebels. A key finding is the significant role of psychosocial assistance in stabilizing FRs during reintegration, as exemplified by the “Project Good Life” initiative. This program highlights the importance of mental health in achieving successful and sustainable reintegration (JH Cerilles State College, 2023). In line with these findings, Bou-Orm et al. (2023) emphasized that psychological support plays a crucial role in reducing trauma and increasing



resilience in post-conflict communities, further supporting the positive impact of psychosocial programs like “Project Good Life.”

### **Socio-Economic and Capability Building Phase**

Although financial assistance and livelihood support are offered, inconsistencies in their delivery and difficulties in accessing support services were noted. Muin et al. (2024) emphasize that local conditions heavily influence the success of reintegration programs, suggesting the need for tailored interventions responsive to the specific socio-political and economic contexts of target communities. Furthermore, De Jong (2021) confirms that socio-economic support programs must not only address immediate financial needs but also empower FRs with long-term self-sufficiency skills to break cycles of poverty and reintegration failure.

### **Sustainability and Communication Building Phase**

Identified as the least effective, largely due to ongoing social stigma and insufficient public awareness efforts. International research supports these findings. Bauer, Fiala, and Levely (2018) highlight that, with proper support, military experience, especially among youth, can foster trust and social engagement, emphasizing the importance of structured community involvement in reintegration. Similarly, Godefroidt and Langer (2023) stress the role of community preparedness and public perception in successful reintegration. Ortiz Salazar (2020) further underscores the need for public education and reconciliation processes to combat stigma and ensure the successful reintegration of former rebels. These studies collectively emphasize the importance of community engagement and perception management in overcoming barriers to reintegration.

### **Relationship between the availability of resources and the level of implementation of E-CLIP.**

The study explored the relationship between resource availability and the implementation of the Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP), revealing a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.83$ ). Despite this, the t-value of 1.41 was below the critical value of 2.58 at a 1% significance level, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. This suggests that the correlation observed in the study may be due to random chance rather than a statistically significant relationship. The findings align with broader research, such as that of Özerdem and Podder (2021), which emphasizes the importance of resource adequacy in DDR programs but notes that correlations alone do not guarantee long-term results. Similarly, Muin et al. (2024) stress the need for robust data to confirm causal links between resources and program success, particularly in local reintegration efforts.

### **Sustainable program that supports the continued implementation and success of E-CLIP**

The study highlights that to ensure the long-term success of E-CLIP, efforts must focus on strengthening community engagement, localizing livelihood support, improving inter-agency coordination, and addressing resource gaps through real-time monitoring. Sustained funding and continuous capacity development are also essential to create a more holistic, adaptive, and sustainable reintegration framework.

These findings validate the integration of four key theories. Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT) supports the emphasis on effective funding and manpower allocation, highlighting the necessity of mobilizing and utilizing resources strategically. Resource-Based Theory (RBT) reinforces the value

of internal organizational capacity—particularly skilled manpower and materials—in achieving program goals. Social Identity Theory (SIT) explains the role of community perception and group belonging in facilitating reintegration, especially during the Sustainability Phase. Lastly, the Social Unify through Holistic Support Theory (SUHST), developed for this study, integrates these existing frameworks into a comprehensive approach that underscores the interplay of social, psychological, and resource-based factors in promoting sustainable reintegration.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that while resource availability—particularly funding, manpower, and material support—remains an essential factor in the implementation of the Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP), it is not a standalone determinant of success. A significant discovery that emerged only after the completion of the research is that strong initial implementation phases, such as Pre-Surfacing and Surfacing, tend to benefit from structured coordination and resource concentration, but as the program progresses into more complex stages requiring long-term integration, such as socio-economic development and sustainability, its effectiveness declines regardless of resource sufficiency. This insight challenges previous assumptions in the literature that emphasized resource adequacy as the primary barrier or enabler of program success. Instead, the study highlights the growing importance of adaptive governance, continuous stakeholder engagement, and localized interventions tailored to the evolving needs of former rebels and their communities. This finding supports the theoretical foundations of Resource Mobilization Theory and Resource-Based Theory by recognizing the value of strategic use of available assets, but it also goes beyond them by introducing a dynamic understanding of reintegration as a phased, evolving process that demands holistic support mechanisms. Consequently, the study validates and strengthens the conceptual relevance of the newly formulated Social Unify through Holistic Support Theory (SUHST), which integrates psychological, social, and economic dimensions into a unified approach. This theory, emerging from the empirical realities observed in the field, contributes novel insight to the discourse on sustainable reintegration and offers a valuable framework for future policy and program development.

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