



**PROCEEDINGS 2026-13**

Local Regional Studies Network

# **Project 2: *Namit* *Gid!***

**A Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration for  
Ilonggo's *Batchoy***

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18 June 2025

Office of Initiatives in Culture and the Arts (OICA) Conference Room  
University of the Philippines Visayas, Iloilo City

*Paolo Gequiñana*



UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES  
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# UP CIDS PROCEEDINGS

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*Pagrara: Exploring Northwestern Panay Weaving Heritage*

18 June 2025

Office of Initiatives in Culture and the Arts Conference Room  
University of the Philippines Visayas, Iloilo City  
Thania Margarrette Q. Coronica



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Fostering Sustainable Weaving Heritage and Industry through an Inter-Local Government Unit Alliance in Northwestern Panay

Proceedings 2025-32

### The Making of *Batchoy*: The Stories That Bind Us

*Namit Gid: A Multi-Stakeholders' Collaboration for Ilonggos' Batchoy Project Stakeholders' Meeting and Workshop Day 2*

17 September 2024  
University of the Philippines Visayas - Iloilo City Campus  
Iloilo City, Iloilo

Prepared by Mary Rose Rebueno, PhD



### PROCEEDINGS

The Making of *Batchoy*: The Stories That Bind Us



# Introduction

The Panay Weaving and Culinary Heritage Program is a cultural initiative that aims to preserve and promote Panay Island's rich cultural heritage through policy formulation and implementation, as well as stakeholder engagement. The program is spearheaded by the UP Visayas Center for West Visayan Studies (CWVS) and funded by the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS). The UP CIDS Local Regional Studies Network (LRSN) Iloilo facilitates the program, focusing on collaboration among local government units (LGUs), educational institutions, and industry players to sustain traditional practices and elevate craftsmanship in Panay through policymaking. This proceeding focuses on Project 2: *Namit Gid!*: A Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration for Ilonggo's *batchoy*.

*Batchoy*, a renowned Ilonggo noodle soup, embodies the culinary heritage of Iloilo and can support economic growth through culinary tourism. This project will organize multi-stakeholder dialogues on the utilization of airport and port spaces for *batchoy*. It also focuses on crafting policy on food safety handling and supporting locally sourced ingredients. The objectives of this project are:

- Document the value chain analysis for Ilonggos' *batchoy*;
- Foster sustainability through organizing a *batchoy* group/organization composed of owners, suppliers, cultural workers, and the local government unit;
- Initiate multi-stakeholder dialogue on airport and port use;
- Help draft policies in food safety handling of *batchoy* for small-scale *batchoy* owners and ingredient suppliers; and
- Facilitate connections between LGUs and experts for value chain analysis and project enforcement.



## Dialogue with Partner LGU for Project 2

On the 50th celebration of UP CWVS, Iloilo City Mayor Jerry P. Treñas delivered his video message saying that the Iloilo City government is proud to be its partner in the Panay Weaving and Culinary Heritage Program that preserves tradition while promoting innovation and pride in the city's local identity. He also expressed his continued support for everyone in moving forward while honoring the path and shaping the future for everyone.

To commence the program, a dialogue involving the Iloilo City LGU for Project 2 was conducted on June 18, 2025, at the Office of Initiatives in Culture and the Arts (OICA) Conference Room, UP Visayas, Iloilo City campus. The activity was led and organized by Asst. Prof. Frances Anthea Redison, Program Leader and CWVS Director; Dr. Mary Rose Rebueno, *Batchoy* Project Leader; Ms. Febrey Esclares, Senior Office Assistant; and Aprille Danilly Guintibano, Junior Administrative Aide. This was attended by Arch. Wilfredo Sy., Jr. of the Iloilo City Heritage Council representing Iloilo City Mayor Jerry P. Treñas, Atty. Rheinart Pahila from the Iloilo City Legal Office, and Mr. PJ Arañador from the Gastronomical City Committee.

The dialogue started with self-introductions of participants from project team members and stakeholders of Project 2. The activity is an informal dialogue to plan for the activities for Phase 2. Asst. Prof. Redison discussed the strategies employed in the previous year, which included securing a Memorandum of Agreement with the Iloilo City Government signed by incumbent Mayor Treñas, establishing a *batchoy* core group to further develop the project, and organizing a two-day stakeholders meeting which involved forging partnerships between the CIDS team and representatives from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the city government, conversations on the challenges that *batchoy* owners experienced, and the possibility of a geographic indicator. These efforts enabled the successful accomplishment of the project's deliverables.

"For Year 1, last year, we completed the stakeholders meeting and the policy brief. We had recommendations from stakeholders meeting and our dialogue. We're done, we have completed the policy brief and for Year 2. We are opening the floor for suggestions or comments because the trajectory now of the project is food safety and capacity building activities. So just to disclose, the UP CIDS can only support our projects/activities related to policy preparations or policy programs. The way around it is to provide technical support or technical expertise through our experts from Iloilo City."

- Asst. Prof. Frances Anthea Redison



Figure 1. Dialogue with Partner LGUs on June 18, 2025, at the OICA Conference Room, UP Visayas, Iloilo City campus

### *Sharing of Insights*

The dialogue facilitated by the UP CIDS LRSN Iloilo provided valuable perspectives on the experiences, existing challenges, and potential measures that may facilitate the realization of the program’s deliverables and the cooperation of stakeholders in promoting and supporting the *batchoy* industry of Iloilo City. Asst. Prof. Redison reiterated that UP can only initiate partnership to seek technical expertise, promote *batchoy*, and engage stakeholders in capacity building activities.

Atty. Pahila suggested that UP could partner with the Iloilo City Local Economic Development and Investment Promotion (LEDIP) Center. Currently, LEDIP is handling the certification and training of market vendors in food handling and food safety. They can also partner with other agencies and foundations such as Us汪 Negosyo Academy that provides food handling and safety training in batches for vendors, micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), and aspiring entrepreneurs who benefit from the redevelopment of Iloilo City public markets. Through this initiative, the project can help *batchoy* vendors graduate in that academy to boost their morale.

To boost the tourism and promote the *batchoy*, Mr. Arañador suggested to tap the developers for Iloilo International Airport and the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines Region VI, as well as other ports in the city and provinces to



**Figure 2. Asst. Prof. Redison requested the participants to share their insights related to the *batchoy* industry**

provide spaces to sell the products and foods such as *batchoy*, *pancit molo*, and other Ilonggo culinary heritage as part of Iloilo’s tourism. By doing so, tourists can feel a sense of place for Iloilo City upon arrival and departure. He also emphasized the need for a creative director that will showcase Ilonggo culture in public spaces.

## ***Issues and Suggested Resolutions***

### ***Authenticity of Lapaz Batchoy Through Geographical Indication***

Authenticity in the context of commercialization is one of the problems confronting the *batchoy* industry. Dr. Rebueno suggested a geographical indication (GI). It is a distinctive identity that connects a product to its specific geographical origin, providing legal protection to certain terms. This concept is pertinent to the “Lapaz *batchoy*,” as stakeholders seek to safeguard the exclusive use of this term.

During the first phase of the project, it was noted that the term “Lapaz *batchoy*” has been misused by some commercial soup-makers that label their products as such, despite not adhering to authenticity. This potential misuse undermines the product’s heritage and cultural significance, as it is an integral part of the Ilonggo culinary heritage.

Part of the dialogue is exploring the possible geographic indication for the Lapaz *Batchoy*. Dr. Rebueno is currently expanding her policy brief on geographical indication together with food safety into a full journal article for submission to CIDS.

### *Batchoy Associations through LGU Support*

Dr. Rebueno emphasized that one of the prerequisites in GI is an association, according to a DTI specialist at the Intellectual Property Office. For *batchoy*, there is not any in the city right now.

To address the necessity for an association, Atty. Pahila shared that a creation of an inter-agency council named the Iloilo City Gastronomy and Food Industry Development Council was proposed by Iloilo City Councilor Rex Sarabia and was approved in 2024. This is an inter-agency council made up of Iloilo City offices is composed of the Agriculture Office, City Planning Office, LEDIP, City Architect, and Public Information Office, while government agencies are composed of the Department of Tourism (DOT), Department of Agriculture (DA), and Department of Science and Technology (DOST).

Based on the ordinance, the council would oversee regulating and upholding industry standards at each stage of the city's food value chain, including the movement of food items from manufacturing, marketing, and distribution to cultivation. This organization would oversee and enforce industry standards at each stage of the city's food value chain, which includes the movement of food items from growers to manufacturers, marketers, and distributors.

Consequently, as part of the conditions for geographical indication for *batchoy* in Iloilo City, the council could assist in the formation of an association. They are supposed to form “sectoral core groups” as part of their mandate to focus on particular areas of the food industry, including media promotions, special events, skills training, technology transfers, and food industry practice standards. Moreover, their mandate also involves production and distribution; health and nutrition; research and data keeping; and more.

### *Value Chain and Supply Chain by Empowering the Grassroots*

Mr. Arañador stressed that an association can be established, especially for technical training. The brand aesthetics and promotion are crucial to identify the GI. He proposed that supply chain and value chain should be addressed.



**Figure 3. Mr. PJ Arañador and Dr. Rebueno discussing the role of the grassroots in the *batchoy* industry and the need for the supply chain and value chain**

One way of addressing this is to train people and monetize their creativity – something that matters to the vendors and MSMEs, and the other one is to make the *batchoy* sustainable by addressing the problems of supply and cost of ingredients.

Creativity equates to sustainability, and this should originate from the grassroots by shifting the emphasis towards them. To engage with the grassroots, Mr. Arañador stated that this can be achieved through various initiatives. The first step is to empower them. A study by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation in Iloilo revealed that 90 percent of the city's economy is driven by MSMEs, including the smaller players in the *batchoy* industry. To establish a connection with them, it is crucial to approach them directly, serve as a model for the industry, and create a ripple effect. This can be accomplished by uniting them, identifying their needs, and documenting relevant data. Empowerment can also be facilitated by compensating them for their creativity, providing training, and promoting their products. The aim of this program is to ensure they see results as quickly as possible; otherwise, these individuals may lose interest.

Regarding the supply chain, Mr. Arañador recommended that expert insights from food technologists are necessary. Conversely, the value chain should be informed by restaurant and *batchoy* owners, as well as those responsible for customer relations and staff training. Asst. Prof. Redison proposed utilizing UP's expertise to enhance the value chain through research processes.

“We were able to get the UNESCO city recognition...is when we put a sort of a workshop research. It was like a barangay hall, bring in the farmers, bring in the market vendors, ask them what they need, and we wrote it - that's what we submitted to the UNESCO. To create an industry is to create a single movement. When you have a value chain, the people will probably help one another.”

In summary, the insights presented by the stakeholders in *batchoy* were recommended to develop policies and resolutions, such as acknowledging the project's core team, documenting the discussion paper, and formalizing the suggestions. The project's future course is covered in the next section.

## Ways Forward: Plan of Action for Phase 2

To help the participants and the project team identify the issues at hand and accomplish the goals, Asst. Prof. Redison also provided the deliverables that are relevant to the project. These are as follows:

1. Three (3) publications for *batchoy* that will be submitted to UP CIDS, which will also be used as attachments and support for Iloilo City as a UNESCO City of Gastronomy;
2. Two (2) policy briefs on food safety and food handling focusing on MSMEs; and
3. One (1) discussion paper with a narrative of evidence from *batchoy* owners in terms of sourcing and data on the value chain with full confidentiality.

The second phase of Project 2 will conduct the following activities:

1. Craft the new Memorandum of Agreement with the new Iloilo City Mayor as the signatory. This will forge partnership between UPV CIDS and Iloilo City government for technical expertise such as policy.
2. Documentation of the value chain and identifying MSMEs who are willing to be part of the interview for *batchoy* with the help of Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) Center of Iloilo City and city government in identifying the participants. Include a dialogue

with some of the stakeholders and partner agencies especially connected to port use, other offices and agencies that are willing to be part of the conversation.

3. Draft a program design which includes food safety and food handling.

## **Center for Integrative and Development Studies**

Established in 1985 by University of the Philippines (UP) President Edgardo J. Angara, the UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS) is the policy research unit of the University that connects disciplines and scholars across the several units of the UP System. It is mandated to encourage collaborative and rigorous research addressing issues of national significance by supporting scholars and securing funding, enabling them to produce outputs and recommendations for public policy.

The UP CIDS currently has twelve research programs that are clustered under the areas of education and capacity building, development, and social, political, and cultural studies. It publishes policy briefs, monographs, webinar/conference/forum proceedings, and the Philippine Journal for Public Policy, all of which can be downloaded free from the UP CIDS website.

### **The Program**

The Local Regional Studies Network (LRSN) aims to create a network of research programs engaging in local and regional areas of study, involving scholars and research centers based in the different UP System constituent universities.

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