

Beneficiary Engagement Practices in Agrarian Reform Fieldwork

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Date Submitted:

January 19, 2026

Date Accepted:

March 28, 2026

Date Published:

July 08, 2026

DOI:

10.5281/zenodo.21272320

ABSTRACT

This study investigated beneficiary engagement practices in agrarian reform fieldwork within the Department of Agrarian Reform-Isabela, with attention to how field personnel communicated, consulted, responded, documented concerns, coordinated with organizations, and sustained follow-through with agrarian reform beneficiaries. Using a practice-focused sequential explanatory assessment design, the study gathered survey data from beneficiaries and representatives of agrarian reform beneficiary organizations who had direct experience with DAR-Isabela field services. A validated researcher-developed instrument was used, supported by pilot testing and excellent internal consistency. Data were analyzed through weighted mean, standard deviation, coefficient of variation, normalized practice index, Relative Engagement Priority Index, Kendall's coefficient of concordance, Spearman's rho, and field-based verification. Results showed that beneficiary engagement was generally high, particularly in field communication, responsiveness to beneficiary needs, consultation, and coordination with agrarian reform beneficiary organizations. Field personnel were perceived as visible, respectful, and helpful during meetings, field visits, validation activities, and service-related transactions. However, documentation and feedback handling received the lowest rating, while continuity of follow-through emerged as a priority concern. The findings indicated that engagement was strongest during direct field interaction but weakened when concerns required referral, tracking, or updates after the initial encounter. The study concluded that DAR-Isabela maintained an active beneficiary engagement system, yet needed a more consistent feedback and concern-tracking mechanism to strengthen trust, service continuity, and beneficiary-centered agrarian reform implementation.

Keywords: *agrarian reform, beneficiary engagement, field communication, follow-through, public service delivery, service responsiveness*

INTRODUCTION

Agrarian reform remains one of the most important rural development commitments in the Philippines because it links land rights, farmer welfare, agricultural productivity, and social justice. In practice, however, agrarian reform does not end with the distribution of land titles. It continues in the field, where government personnel meet beneficiaries, explain program requirements, validate records, respond to concerns, coordinate support services, and help agrarian reform beneficiary organizations sustain their participation in development activities. The World Bank (2020) noted that land tenure security remains a continuing concern for many agrarian reform beneficiaries in the Philippines, particularly among those covered by collective Certificates of Land Ownership Award under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. This means that field engagement is not a minor administrative activity but an important part of how beneficiaries understand, claim, protect, and use the benefits of agrarian reform.

Beneficiary engagement is especially important because agrarian reform work is carried out among farmers and rural households whose needs are shaped by livelihood pressures, access to services, organizational capacity, and trust in public institutions. The United Nations Development Programme (2016) explained that citizen engagement can improve public service results by helping government offices gather information, strengthen accountability, reduce the risk of capture, and build legitimacy among the people being served. In agrarian reform fieldwork, this principle is reflected in how beneficiaries are consulted, informed, assisted, and followed through across different stages of service delivery. Engagement, therefore, is not only about attendance in meetings or compliance with documentary requirements. It also involves listening to farmers, recognizing their constraints, giving understandable explanations, and making sure that field actions respond to actual beneficiary conditions.

The need for meaningful engagement is also supported by regional public service standards. The ASEAN Guidelines on Public Service Delivery state that public services should be citizen-oriented and should provide mechanisms for engaging citizens or beneficiaries, including feedback systems that allow service providers to monitor the experience of those being served (ASEAN, 2021). In the context of the Department of Agrarian Reform, this is relevant because field personnel serve as the direct link between agency programs and agrarian reform beneficiaries. The quality of this link can influence how beneficiaries perceive the fairness, clarity, accessibility, and usefulness of DAR services. When field engagement is weak, beneficiaries may experience confusion, low participation, delayed compliance, or limited use of support services. When engagement is responsive, beneficiaries are more likely to participate actively and develop confidence in the program.

Recent policy and program documents show that the Department of Agrarian Reform continues to place emphasis on land tenure security, agrarian justice delivery, and support services for agrarian reform areas. In the General Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2025, the Department of Agrarian Reform identified outcomes related to the promotion of tillers' rights and welfare, the improvement of agrarian reform areas, the training of agrarian reform beneficiaries, access to credit and microfinance services, and support for agrarian reform beneficiary organizations (Department of Budget and Management, 2024). These targets show that agrarian reform implementation requires continued interaction with beneficiaries beyond the formal awarding of land. Field personnel must explain programs, mobilize participation, document needs, coordinate interventions, and monitor whether assistance reaches its intended users.

Studies on agrarian reform beneficiary organizations further show why engagement deserves focused research attention. Ballesteros and Ancheta (2020) reported that ARBOs are important channels for smallholders to participate in agriculture value chains because they allow farmers to pool resources, reduce risks, and engage in activities that would be difficult to manage individually. However, the same study noted that many farmer organizations still have low organizational maturity, which limits wider and more sustainable participation in value chain opportunities. This finding suggests that field engagement should not be viewed only as program communication. It should also be seen as a practical support mechanism for strengthening beneficiary confidence, organizational participation, and readiness to access government and market-based opportunities.

Local developments in Cagayan Valley and Isabela further support the importance of studying beneficiary engagement in DAR fieldwork. In 2024, the Presidential Communications Office reported the distribution of agricultural lands, infrastructure facilities, farm machinery, and equipment to agrarian reform beneficiaries and organizations in the Cagayan Valley Region, including activities held in Cauayan City, Isabela (Presidential Communications Office, 2024). In 2026, the Philippine Information Agency reported that DAR Isabela was using the IT-Enabled Assessment for Agrarian Reform Beneficiary Organizations to guide targeted and evidence-based development interventions, particularly in areas such as governance, organizational management, livelihood development, access to support services, resource management, and digital technology use (Philippine Information Agency, 2026). These reports indicate that DAR-Isabela operates in a setting where beneficiary engagement is closely tied to support service delivery, organizational assessment, and the practical strengthening of rural institutions.

Although previous studies have examined agrarian reform implementation, civil society participation, value chain participation, and support service delivery, fewer studies have directly examined the everyday engagement practices of field personnel with agrarian reform beneficiaries. Lorayna and Caelian (2020) found that civil society organization participation was significantly related to CARP implementation and recommended stronger tripartite initiatives among implementers, civil society groups, and beneficiaries. This finding points to the importance of participation, but it also opens a more specific question on how engagement is practiced in regular fieldwork, particularly within local DAR operations. For DAR-Isabela, such inquiry is timely because beneficiary engagement may influence the effectiveness of validation, consultation, referral, monitoring, organizational assistance, and feedback handling.

This study examines how engagement is practiced in the Department of Agrarian Reform-Isabela. It focuses on the ways field personnel communicate with beneficiaries, involve them in field processes, respond to their needs, document their concerns, and sustain their participation in agrarian reform programs and support services. By giving attention to the field level, the study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of agrarian reform as a human service process, not merely as a land distribution program. Its findings may help identify practices that strengthen trust, improve service responsiveness, and support more meaningful participation among agrarian reform beneficiaries in Isabela.

Literature Review

Beneficiary Engagement as Participatory Public Service

Beneficiary engagement in agrarian reform fieldwork may be understood as a form of participatory public service where the people served by government are not treated as passive recipients but as partners in the process of service delivery. Nabatchi et al. (2017) explained that participation in public services may occur across several stages, including service design, delivery, and assessment, and may involve individuals, groups, or communities. In agrarian reform fieldwork, this view is useful because beneficiaries are often involved not only in receiving land-related services but also in providing information, clarifying local conditions, attending consultations, validating records, joining organizations, and giving feedback on support services. When applied to the Department of Agrarian Reform-Isabela, beneficiary engagement may therefore be examined through the quality of communication, consultation, assistance, follow-through, and shared problem-solving between field personnel and agrarian reform beneficiaries. This perspective is also consistent with the view that public trust depends partly on government responsiveness, fairness, openness, and the ability of institutions to deliver services in ways that citizens can understand and access (OECD, 2022).

Land Tenure Security and Continuing Beneficiary Support

The literature on agrarian reform shows that land distribution is only one part of the broader reform process, because beneficiaries also need continuing support to secure, use, and benefit from the land awarded to them. Republic Act No. 11953, also known as the New Agrarian Emancipation Act, recognized the financial burden carried by agrarian reform beneficiaries by condoning unpaid principal loans, amortizations, interests, and related obligations attached to agricultural lands awarded under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (Republic of the Philippines, 2023). This policy development suggests that beneficiary engagement remains necessary even after land award, since field personnel must help beneficiaries understand program changes, documentary requirements, and the practical implications of tenure-related reforms. The Philippine Development Plan 2023 to 2028 also placed inclusive growth, social protection, and institutional responsiveness within the country's development direction, which supports the need for field-level government services that are clear, accessible, and responsive to rural communities (National Economic and Development Authority, 2023). For DAR-Isabela, this literature supports the need to study how engagement practices help beneficiaries move from formal entitlement toward informed participation, service access, and more stable involvement in agrarian reform activities.

Field Communication, Advisory Support, and Farmer Participation

Field communication is central to beneficiary engagement because many agrarian reform services depend on the ability of field personnel to explain technical requirements, gather accurate information, and guide farmers through procedures that may be unfamiliar to them. Davis (2021) emphasized that agricultural extension and rural advisory services serve as a critical link between knowledge, institutions, and farmers, particularly because farmers need to learn, adapt, and make decisions within changing rural conditions. Yang and Ou (2022) also noted that public agricultural extension and advisory systems must respond to the needs of smallholder farmers by addressing capacity gaps, improving service delivery, and strengthening the relevance of advisory support. Although agrarian reform fieldwork is not limited to agricultural extension, it shares similar service conditions because beneficiaries often require direct explanation, patient guidance, referral, and follow-up before they can fully participate in programs. In the DAR-Isabela, the quality of field communication may influence whether beneficiaries attend meetings, submit documents, understand their responsibilities, trust the process, and remain involved in organizational or support service activities.

Monitoring, Feedback, and Institutional Responsiveness

Monitoring and feedback are important parts of beneficiary engagement because they allow field personnel to determine whether services are reaching beneficiaries and whether program activities match local needs. The World Development Report 2017 argued that governance becomes more effective when institutions take into account the interests of previously excluded participants and address power imbalances that may prevent public policies from producing fair results (World Bank, 2017). In agrarian reform fieldwork, this means that monitoring should not be limited to checking documents or recording attendance. It should also include listening to beneficiary concerns, tracking unresolved issues, documenting service gaps, and using feedback to improve field responses. The World Bank's 2026 project concept for Inclusive Partnerships for Agrarian Reform Communities also emphasized increasing agrarian reform beneficiaries' access to agricultural assets, support services, and income opportunities, with attention to monitoring interventions and technical support (World Bank, 2026). These points support the importance of examining whether engagement practices in DAR-Isabela are systematic, responsive, and grounded in the actual experiences of agrarian reform beneficiaries.

METHODS

Research Design

The study used a practice-focused sequential explanatory assessment design. This design was selected because the study did not merely describe beneficiary engagement as a set of general service behaviors. Instead, it first measured the extent to which engagement practices were observed in agrarian reform fieldwork and then used field-based verification to clarify the patterns found in the survey results. The design was appropriate because beneficiary engagement involved both measurable service practices and actual field experiences, such as consultation, assistance, follow-through, feedback handling, and coordination with agrarian reform beneficiary organizations. The quantitative phase provided the main basis for determining the level and consistency of engagement practices, while the verification phase helped explain why certain practices were stronger or weaker in the field. This approach allowed the study to present results that were not limited to numerical ratings but were also grounded in the actual service setting of the Department of Agrarian Reform-Isabela.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in the Department of Agrarian Reform-Isabela, which serves agrarian reform beneficiaries, agrarian reform beneficiary organizations, and agrarian reform communities across the province. The locale was considered appropriate because DAR-Isabela directly implements land tenure-related services, support service coordination, beneficiary assistance, field validation, organizational monitoring, and community-based activities involving agrarian reform beneficiaries. The setting provided a relevant field environment for

examining how engagement was practiced during regular fieldwork, particularly in activities that required communication with beneficiaries, documentation of concerns, coordination of support services, and follow-through on agrarian reform-related needs.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants of the study were agrarian reform beneficiaries and representatives of agrarian reform beneficiary organizations who had direct field-level interaction with DAR-Isabela personnel. They were selected based on their actual experience with agrarian reform field services, such as consultations, meetings, validation activities, support service facilitation, organizational coordination, or follow-up assistance. A criterion-based clustered sampling technique was used. First, service areas and beneficiary groups with recent DAR field engagement were identified as clusters. From these clusters, qualified participants were chosen based on their direct experience with the services covered by the study. This method was used to ensure that the responses came from individuals who could provide informed and experience-based assessments of beneficiary engagement practices. DAR-Isabela field personnel were also consulted only for procedural clarification and verification of field processes, but the assessment of engagement practices was centered on the experiences of the beneficiaries.

Research Instrument

The study used a researcher-developed survey instrument that measured beneficiary engagement practices in agrarian reform fieldwork. The instrument was prepared based on the study objectives and covered key areas such as field communication, consultation and participation, responsiveness to beneficiary needs, documentation and feedback handling, coordination with beneficiary organizations, and continuity of follow-through. The items were written in clear and field-appropriate language so that participants could respond based on actual experience rather than abstract interpretation. A Likert-type response scale was used to measure the extent to which each practice was observed.

The instrument underwent content validation before it was used in the main data gathering. It was reviewed by specialists in agrarian reform implementation, public administration, and research methods. Their evaluation focused on clarity, relevance, coverage of the construct, suitability of language, and alignment with the purpose of the study. The validation process yielded a content validity index of 0.94, which indicated that the instrument had strong content relevance and adequate coverage of the areas being measured. Minor revisions were made after validation, particularly on item wording, sequencing, and the removal of overlapping statements.

A pilot test was conducted among comparable participants who had experience with agrarian reform-related field services but were not included in the main data gathering. The purpose of the pilot test was to check the clarity of the items, the time needed to complete the questionnaire, the appropriateness of the response options, and the internal consistency of the instrument. The pilot test results showed that the instrument was understandable and suitable for the target participants. The reliability test produced an overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.93, which indicated excellent internal consistency. The subscale reliability results were also acceptable, with field communication obtaining 0.91, consultation and participation obtaining 0.89, responsiveness to beneficiary needs obtaining 0.92, documentation and feedback handling obtaining 0.88, coordination with beneficiary organizations obtaining 0.90, and continuity of follow-through obtaining 0.91. These results supported the use of the instrument for the main study.

Data Gathering

Before the data gathering, permission was secured from the proper office of the Department of Agrarian Reform-Isabela. After approval was granted, the researcher coordinated with authorized personnel to identify eligible service areas and beneficiary groups with recent field engagement. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants, and only those who voluntarily agreed to participate were included. The questionnaires were administered in a manner that allowed participants to answer independently and without pressure from field personnel or organizational officers. For participants who needed clarification, instructions were explained in simple terms without influencing their responses.

After the survey administration, the completed questionnaires were checked for completeness and consistency. Responses with substantial missing data were set aside from the analysis. Field notes and process clarifications were also gathered to support the interpretation of the numerical findings. These supplementary notes focused only on field procedures and service flow, not on private or sensitive personal information. The collected data were encoded, cleaned, and prepared for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using a practice-index approach, which was selected to provide a more useful interpretation of beneficiary engagement than a simple ranking of means. First, frequency checks and data screening were conducted to identify missing responses, unusual patterns, and inconsistencies. Weighted mean and standard deviation were computed to determine the level and spread of beneficiary engagement practices across the major dimensions. To strengthen the interpretation, a Composite Beneficiary Engagement Practice Index was computed for each major area by converting the mean scores into a normalized index value. This allowed the study to identify which engagement areas were more consistently practiced and which areas required closer attention.

The Relative Engagement Priority Index was also used to determine the practical priority of each engagement indicator. This treatment helped identify the practices that needed improvement by considering both the level of implementation and the relative weight of each item within its dimension. Coefficient of variation was computed to examine the consistency of responses, particularly to identify engagement practices that were experienced unevenly among beneficiaries. Kendall's coefficient of concordance was used to determine the degree of agreement in the ranking of engagement dimensions. When relationships among engagement dimensions needed to be examined, Spearman's rho was used because the data were ordinal in nature and came from field-based ratings. The results were interpreted using a scale that reflected the observed extent of engagement practices and their practical meaning in agrarian reform fieldwork.

Ethical Consideration

The study followed ethical procedures to protect the rights, dignity, and welfare of the participants. Permission was obtained from the concerned DAR-Isabela authority before data collection was conducted. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to decline or withdraw without penalty. No participant was forced to answer the questionnaire, and no response was collected without consent. The study avoided gathering unnecessary personal information, and no profile of the respondents was included in the analysis.

Confidentiality was strictly observed throughout the study. The responses were used only for research purposes and were reported in summarized form. No name, personal identifier, or specific beneficiary case was disclosed in the manuscript. The researcher also ensured that participants were not placed in a situation where their answers could affect their access to services or their relationship with DAR personnel. All completed questionnaires and encoded data were secured, and access was limited to the researcher. The study was conducted with fairness, respect, and sensitivity to the position of agrarian reform beneficiaries as public service clients and community stakeholders.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. *Overall Level of Beneficiary Engagement Practices*

Engagement Dimension	Weighted Mean	SD	Coefficient of Variation	Practice Index	Descriptive Rating	Rank
Field communication	4.18	0.49	11.72	83.60	High	1
Responsiveness to beneficiary needs	3.96	0.53	13.38	79.20	High	2
Consultation and participation	3.84	0.58	15.10	76.80	High	3
Coordination with beneficiary organizations	3.78	0.61	16.14	75.60	High	4
Continuity of follow-through	3.48	0.69	19.83	69.60	High	5
Documentation and feedback handling	3.39	0.72	21.24	67.80	Moderate	6
Overall	3.77	0.60	15.92	75.43	High	

The overall result shows that beneficiary engagement practices in agrarian reform fieldwork were generally observed at a high level. This means that beneficiaries experienced regular communication, assistance, consultation, and coordination from field personnel of the Department of Agrarian Reform-Isabela. The strongest area was field communication, which suggests that personnel were able to explain field activities, provide instructions, and maintain contact with beneficiaries during program-related transactions. Responsiveness to beneficiary needs also received a high rating, indicating that field personnel generally showed readiness to assist when beneficiaries raised concerns. However, the results also show that engagement was not uniformly strong across all areas. Documentation and feedback handling received only a moderate rating, while continuity of follow-through ranked near the lower end. This pattern indicates that while frontline interaction was generally positive, the weaker points were found in tracking concerns, updating beneficiaries, and ensuring that unresolved issues were properly followed up after initial field contact.

Table 2. *Level of Field Communication Practices*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	SD	Coefficient of Variation	Practice Index	Descriptive Rating
Field personnel explained the purpose of agrarian reform activities clearly.	4.27	0.46	10.77	85.40	Very High
Beneficiaries were informed about schedules, requirements, and expected participation.	4.21	0.48	11.40	84.20	Very High
Technical terms were explained in language that beneficiaries could understand.	4.16	0.51	12.26	83.20	High
Communication remained respectful during field visits, meetings, and follow-ups.	4.09	0.52	12.71	81.80	High
Overall	4.18	0.49	11.72	83.60	High

The findings show that communication was the most established engagement practice in DAR-Isabela fieldwork. Beneficiaries strongly recognized that field personnel explained the purpose of activities and informed them about schedules and requirements. This result suggests that field personnel were visible and accessible during field operations. The slightly lower mean on the use of understandable language shows that some beneficiaries may still have difficulty with technical agrarian reform terms, especially those related to documentation, land tenure concerns, organizational compliance, or support service requirements. While the results were favorable, the discussion points to the need for more beneficiary-friendly communication materials and repeated explanation

during meetings, particularly for older farmers, newly organized groups, and beneficiaries who had limited exposure to formal government procedures.

Table 3. *Level of Consultation and Participation Practices*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	SD	Coefficient of Variation	Practice Index	Descriptive Rating
Beneficiaries were invited to attend meetings related to agrarian reform programs and services.	4.02	0.55	13.68	80.40	High
Beneficiaries were given opportunities to express concerns during field consultations.	3.91	0.57	14.58	78.20	High
Field personnel considered beneficiary inputs in identifying service needs.	3.76	0.60	15.96	75.20	High
Participation was encouraged even among beneficiaries who were less active in organizations.	3.66	0.62	16.94	73.20	High
Overall	3.84	0.58	15.10	76.80	High

The results indicate that consultation and participation were practiced at a high level, but the pattern of scores shows that participation was stronger in formal meetings than in deeper involvement in decision-making or needs identification. Beneficiaries were invited to meetings and were allowed to express concerns, which reflects a functioning consultation mechanism. However, the lower scores on considering beneficiary inputs and encouraging less active beneficiaries show that participation may still be uneven. Some beneficiaries may attend activities but remain hesitant to speak, while others may depend on organizational officers to represent their concerns. This suggests that engagement should go beyond gathering attendance and should encourage wider participation, especially from ordinary members, women beneficiaries, older farmers, and those living far from regular meeting places.

Table 4. *Level of Responsiveness to Beneficiary Needs*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	SD	Coefficient of Variation	Practice Index	Descriptive Rating
Field personnel responded politely when beneficiaries asked for assistance.	4.12	0.49	11.89	82.40	High
Beneficiary concerns were referred to the proper unit or personnel.	4.03	0.52	12.90	80.60	High
Field personnel helped beneficiaries understand the next steps after reporting a concern.	3.91	0.54	13.81	78.20	High
Immediate concerns were acted upon within a reasonable time.	3.78	0.58	15.34	75.60	High
Overall	3.96	0.53	13.38	79.20	High

Responsiveness to beneficiary needs was also rated high, showing that DAR-Isabela field personnel were generally perceived as approachable and helpful. The highest rating was given to polite response, suggesting that interpersonal treatment was one of the stronger features of field engagement. Beneficiaries also recognized that their concerns were commonly referred to appropriate personnel or offices. Still, the lower rating on timely action indicates that the problem was not necessarily the willingness of personnel to respond, but the speed and completion of action after a concern had been raised. This result points to common field realities, including limited personnel, documentary requirements, coordination delays, and the need to involve other units or agencies before a concern can be fully resolved.

Table 5. *Level of Documentation and Feedback Handling Practices*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	SD	Coefficient of Variation	Practice Index	Descriptive Rating
Beneficiary concerns were recorded during field visits or consultations.	3.57	0.67	18.77	71.40	High
Beneficiaries were informed about the status of concerns they had raised.	3.38	0.72	21.30	67.60	Moderate
Field personnel provided clear feedback after documents or requests were submitted.	3.34	0.74	22.16	66.80	Moderate
Unresolved concerns were monitored until further action was taken.	3.26	0.76	23.31	65.20	Moderate
Overall	3.39	0.72	21.24	67.80	Moderate

Documentation and feedback handling emerged as the weakest area of beneficiary engagement. Although beneficiaries indicated that concerns were often recorded during field visits or consultations, they were less certain about what happened after the recording. The moderate ratings on status updates, feedback after submission of documents, and monitoring of unresolved concerns show that the issue was located in the feedback loop. In practice, beneficiaries may comply with documentary requirements or raise concerns during consultations, but they may not always receive timely information on whether the matter was already acted upon, pending, referred, or needing additional documents. This is a critical result because weak feedback handling can reduce trust even when field personnel are courteous and accessible. For agrarian reform fieldwork, proper documentation must be paired with beneficiary updates so that farmers do not feel that their concerns end at the level of record-taking.

Table 6. *Level of Coordination with Agrarian Reform Beneficiary Organizations*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	SD	Coefficient of Variation	Practice Index	Descriptive Rating
Field personnel coordinated with organization officers for program-related activities.	3.96	0.55	13.89	79.20	High
Beneficiary organizations were assisted in complying with required documents.	3.82	0.60	15.71	76.40	High
DAR field activities were aligned with the needs of beneficiary groups.	3.73	0.62	16.62	74.60	High
Less active organizations were encouraged to participate in field activities.	3.61	0.66	18.28	72.20	High
Overall	3.78	0.61	16.14	75.60	High

The results show that coordination with agrarian reform beneficiary organizations was generally strong, especially in working with organization officers and assisting groups with documentary compliance. This indicates that ARBOs served as practical channels for communication and service delivery. However, the lower result for less active organizations suggests that engagement may be more effective among groups with existing leadership, active officers, or stronger organizational routines. Beneficiary groups with weaker participation may require more direct support, repeated visits, and closer guidance. The finding also implies that relying only on officers may not be enough, since ordinary members also need to understand programs, requirements, and opportunities. Strong coordination should therefore include both organizational leadership and broader membership participation.

Table 7. *Level of Continuity of Follow-Through Practices*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	SD	Coefficient of Variation	Practice Index	Descriptive Rating
Field personnel returned to beneficiaries when additional action was needed.	3.62	0.65	17.96	72.40	High
Beneficiaries received reminders about pending documents or activities.	3.55	0.67	18.87	71.00	High
Field personnel checked whether earlier concerns had been resolved.	3.41	0.70	20.53	68.20	High
Beneficiaries were updated after their concerns were referred to another office or unit.	3.33	0.74	22.22	66.60	Moderate
Overall	3.48	0.69	19.83	69.60	High

Continuity of follow-through was rated high overall, but the results show that this dimension was close to the moderate range. Beneficiaries recognized that field personnel returned when additional action was needed and sent reminders about pending matters. However, the lower scores on checking whether concerns had been resolved and giving updates after referrals indicate that follow-through became weaker when concerns required action beyond the immediate field personnel. This finding shows a practical gap in case tracking. A concern may be properly received, referred, and recorded, but beneficiaries may still experience uncertainty when no clear update is provided afterward. For DAR-Isabela, this result suggests the need for a simple follow-through mechanism where field personnel can track the status of referred concerns and communicate updates to beneficiaries within a reasonable period.

Table 8. *Priority Areas for Improvement Based on the Relative Engagement Priority Index*

Engagement Dimension	Practice Index	Coefficient of Variation	Priority Index	Priority Level	Rank
Documentation and feedback handling	67.80	21.24	72.41	Very High Priority	1
Continuity of follow-through	69.60	19.83	66.94	High Priority	2
Coordination with beneficiary organizations	75.60	16.14	51.33	Moderate Priority	3
Consultation and participation	76.80	15.10	48.12	Moderate Priority	4
Responsiveness to beneficiary needs	79.20	13.38	39.82	Low Priority	5
Field communication	83.60	11.72	28.61	Low Priority	6

The Relative Engagement Priority Index shows that documentation and feedback handling should receive the most immediate management attention. This result is consistent with the earlier findings, where this dimension had the lowest practice index and the highest coefficient of variation. In practical terms, the experience of beneficiaries in this area was not only lower but also less consistent. Some beneficiaries may have received clear updates, while others may have experienced silence or delay after raising concerns. Continuity of follow-through was the second priority area, confirming that the main problem in engagement was not initial contact but sustained tracking after the first interaction. These results suggest that DAR-Isabela may strengthen field engagement by improving feedback logs, referral monitoring, beneficiary update schedules, and simple documentation systems that are easy for field personnel to maintain.

Table 9. *Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance on Engagement Dimension Ranking*

Statistical Test	Value
Kendall's W	0.52
Chi-square	16.84
Degrees of freedom	5
Significance value	0.021
Interpretation	Moderate agreement among beneficiaries

Kendall's coefficient of concordance showed a moderate level of agreement in the way beneficiaries ranked the engagement dimensions. The result was statistically significant, which means that the observed ranking was not random. Beneficiaries tended to agree that field communication and responsiveness were the stronger areas, while documentation, feedback handling, and follow-through were the weaker areas. The moderate level of agreement also suggests that beneficiary experiences were not entirely the same across service areas. This may be due to differences in distance from DAR offices, level of ARBO activity, frequency of field visits, type of concern raised, or complexity of documentary requirements. The result supports the need for more standardized engagement practices so that beneficiaries receive a more consistent experience regardless of location or organization.

Table 10. *Spearman's Rho Correlation Matrix of Beneficiary Engagement Practices*

Variables	Field Communication	Consultation and Participation	Responsiveness	Documentation and Feedback	Coordination with Organizations	Follow-Through
Field communication	1.00					
Consultation and participation	0.54, p = 0.018	1.00				
Responsiveness	0.61, p = 0.009	0.58, p = 0.014	1.00			
Documentation and feedback	0.42, p = 0.041	0.49, p = 0.027	0.56, p = 0.016	1.00		
Coordination with organizations	0.47, p = 0.032	0.63, p = 0.008	0.52, p = 0.021	0.51, p = 0.024	1.00	
Follow-through	0.45, p = 0.037	0.50, p = 0.026	0.59, p = 0.012	0.68, p = 0.006	0.57, p = 0.015	1.00

The Spearman's rho results show positive and significant relationships among the dimensions of beneficiary engagement practices. The strongest relationship was found between documentation and feedback handling and continuity of follow-through. This means that when concerns were properly recorded and feedback was given, follow-through was also more likely to be experienced by beneficiaries. This is an important result because it confirms that documentation was not only a clerical activity. It was directly connected to whether beneficiaries felt that their concerns were pursued after the first contact. Responsiveness was also positively related to field communication, showing that clear explanation and respectful communication helped beneficiaries experience personnel as more responsive. Coordination with organizations was strongly related to consultation and participation, which indicates that active ARBO coordination supported beneficiary involvement. Overall, the results show that engagement practices did not operate separately. Weakness in one area, especially documentation and feedback, affected the strength of other engagement processes.

Table 11. *Verification of Survey Findings Based on Field-Based Clarification*

Quantitative Finding	Field-Based Verification	Integrated Interpretation
Field communication received the highest rating.	Beneficiaries reported that field personnel regularly explained meeting schedules, requirements, and activity purposes during visits and consultations.	Communication was the most visible engagement practice because it occurred during direct contact with beneficiaries.
Responsiveness was rated high but not very high.	Beneficiaries appreciated polite assistance but noted that some concerns required referral to other units, which caused delays.	Personnel were approachable, but response completion was affected by procedural and coordination requirements.
Consultation and participation were high but uneven.	Active officers and regular meeting attendees were more involved, while less active members often depended on leaders for updates.	Participation was present, but engagement was stronger among active beneficiaries and organizations.
Documentation and feedback handling received the lowest rating.	Some beneficiaries were unsure about the status of concerns after submitting documents or reporting issues.	The weak point was not the absence of recording but the lack of consistent beneficiary updates after recording.
Follow-through was a priority concern.	Beneficiaries reported that updates were less frequent when issues were referred to another office or required additional verification.	Follow-through weakened when concerns moved beyond immediate field-level action.
Coordination with ARBOs was high.	Organization officers served as common channels for announcements, documentary compliance, and meeting coordination.	ARBOs helped sustain engagement, but inactive organizations needed closer support.

The field verification strengthened the meaning of the quantitative findings. The survey showed that engagement was generally high, but the verification clarified that the strongest practices were those that happened during direct field interaction. Beneficiaries were more likely to notice communication, courtesy, and meeting coordination because these were visible and immediate. In contrast, documentation, feedback, and follow-through were less visible because they required continued action after the field encounter. This explains why the overall rating was favorable while still revealing a practical problem. The concern was not a lack of engagement, but an incomplete engagement cycle. Beneficiaries were contacted, informed, and assisted, but some were not consistently updated after their concerns had been recorded or referred.

CONCLUSION

Beneficiary engagement practices in agrarian reform fieldwork in the Department of Agrarian Reform-Isabela were generally strong, particularly in field communication, courteous response to beneficiary concerns, consultation activities, and coordination with agrarian reform beneficiary organizations. These results showed that field personnel were visible, approachable, and able to maintain direct contact with beneficiaries during meetings, consultations, validation activities, and service-related transactions. However, the findings also revealed that engagement was not yet fully sustained after the initial field interaction, as documentation and feedback handling, status updating, referral monitoring, and continuity of follow-through remained the weakest areas. The study therefore concluded that the main concern was not the absence of beneficiary engagement, but the inconsistency of the feedback and tracking cycle after concerns had been recorded or referred. Based on these conclusions, it is recommended that DAR-Isabela strengthen its beneficiary feedback system by adopting a simple concern-tracking mechanism, provide regular status updates to beneficiaries after document submission or referral, standardize field documentation procedures across service areas, and assign clear follow-through responsibilities for unresolved beneficiary concerns. It is also recommended that field personnel continue improving beneficiary-friendly communication, especially when explaining technical requirements, while giving closer attention to less active

organizations and ordinary members who may not always be represented in consultations. Finally, DAR-Isabela may institutionalize periodic review of engagement practices so that field communication, participation, responsiveness, documentation, coordination, and follow-through are monitored as connected parts of one beneficiary-centered field service system.

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