

Governance Technical Assistance and Compliance Readiness in Local Government Administration

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed how governance technical assistance related to compliance readiness among local government personnel in Aurora, Isabela. Using a cross-sectional explanatory-predictive design, data were gathered from 30 personnel directly involved in governance compliance, program implementation, planning, monitoring, reporting, public safety, disaster preparedness, administrative coordination, and service delivery. The Governance Technical Assistance and Compliance Readiness Scale was used to measure policy and regulatory guidance, capability-building support, monitoring and feedback, implementation problem solving, regulatory awareness, documentary preparedness, interoffice coordination, and corrective-action responsiveness. Means and standard deviations described the levels of the major constructs, while Spearman's rank-order

correlation with 5,000 bias-corrected bootstrap resamples tested their association. Governance technical assistance obtained a high overall mean of 3.82, with policy and regulatory guidance emerging as the strongest dimension. Compliance readiness was likewise high at 3.72, led by regulatory awareness, while corrective-action responsiveness and interoffice coordination showed comparatively weaker results. Governance technical assistance was significantly and positively associated with compliance readiness, $\rho = .57$, $p = .001$, with a 95% bootstrap confidence interval of [0.25, 0.78]. The findings indicated that stronger technical support was linked with better preparedness to meet governance requirements, although gaps remained in problem resolution, cross-office coordination, documentary completion, and follow-through on corrective actions. The study underscored the value of targeted, sustained, and problem-responsive technical assistance in strengthening institutional compliance capacity within local government administration.

Keywords: *administrative capacity; compliance readiness; governance support; local government administration; technical assistance; regulatory compliance*

INTRODUCTION

Local governments carry much of the responsibility for translating public policy into services that communities experience directly. Their work extends beyond implementing programs to meeting administrative, financial, reporting, safety, preparedness, and service standards established through national laws and oversight mechanisms. Greater decentralization has also placed stronger demands on local institutions to manage resources, assume devolved functions, and demonstrate accountability for results. The World Bank (2021) emphasized that strengthening local government capacity, coordination, transparency, and accountability remains essential to effective decentralization and improved public service delivery in the Philippines.

These responsibilities make compliance a continuing organizational concern rather than a task performed only during assessment periods. Local government units must interpret policies correctly, prepare documentary requirements, coordinate across offices, monitor programs, and respond to standards that cover several areas of

governance. The Seal of Good Local Governance illustrates how local performance is assessed through interconnected requirements rather than isolated administrative outputs. Medina-Guce and Sanders (2024) observed that the continuing development of SGLG criteria has raised governance expectations while also creating challenges for LGUs that must adjust to changing standards, resource demands, and performance requirements.

Technical assistance becomes particularly important when employees and program implementers must convert broad requirements into specific administrative actions. Guidance, coaching, clarification of standards, assessment feedback, and capacity development can help personnel understand what must be accomplished, identify gaps, and organize the evidence needed to demonstrate compliance. This need becomes more pronounced as LGUs take on broader responsibilities under devolution. Juco et al. (2024) found considerable variation in local government capacities and noted that capacity development, stronger coordination, and clearer guidance from national agencies remain necessary for LGUs assuming devolved functions. Such findings suggest that compliance readiness depends not only on the existence of policies and personnel but also on whether local actors receive sufficient support to carry out their responsibilities consistently.

Government practice also reflects a shift toward assistance that is guided by identified performance gaps. The Department of the Interior and Local Government has used assessment results to determine governance weaknesses and direct institutional support toward LGUs needing improvement in areas such as financial administration, disaster preparedness, and social protection. Through its Regional Institutional Development Support program, technical assistance is linked more deliberately with the specific areas in which local governments encounter difficulty meeting governance standards (Department of the Interior and Local Government [DILG], 2026). This approach points to the value of examining whether technical assistance reaches the employees who manage compliance work and whether such support contributes to their readiness to meet governance requirements.

This study focuses on governance technical assistance and compliance readiness in local government administration in the Local Government Unit of Aurora, Isabela. It considers employees and personnel involved in program implementation, planning, reporting, monitoring, public safety, disaster preparedness, governance compliance, and service delivery. Examining the relationship between the technical assistance they receive and their level of compliance readiness may provide a clearer basis for strengthening administrative support, improving coordination, addressing areas of difficulty, and sustaining local government performance across governance responsibilities.

Literature Review

Governance Technical Assistance and Capacity Development

Technical assistance has moved beyond the simple transfer of knowledge from experts to government personnel. It now involves a broader process of strengthening institutional capability through coaching, problem solving, adaptive support, knowledge exchange, and assistance tailored to actual implementation needs. Nastase et al. (2021) explained that effective technical assistance is strongest when it responds to institutional realities, builds local ownership, and develops capacities that government actors can continue using after external support ends. For local government personnel, this perspective is important because governance requirements often demand more than familiarity with policies. Employees must understand procedures, translate standards into operational tasks, prepare required documentation, and address implementation difficulties. Technical assistance can therefore serve as a practical mechanism through which administrative knowledge is converted into stronger day-to-day governance performance.

Administrative Capacity in Local Government

Compliance readiness is closely tied to the administrative capacity of the offices responsible for delivering programs and services. De la Riva Agüero (2022) found that municipal administrative capacity was strongly associated with better service outcomes, particularly when local governments handled more complex

responsibilities. Administrative capacity includes the quality of personnel, organizational arrangements, information systems, resources, and operational competence available within specific government units. These factors matter because compliance requirements are often carried out by different departments whose responsibilities involve planning, reporting, public safety, environmental management, disaster preparedness, and other specialized functions. An LGU may possess formal structures and policies, but its ability to meet governance standards still depends on whether personnel have the capacity to perform the required work accurately and consistently.

Compliance Readiness and Local Government Performance

Compliance is not limited to satisfying documentary requirements because adherence to national standards can also affect the quality and efficiency of local administration. Using data from 141 Philippine cities, Distor and Khaltar (2022) found that institutional capacity and compliance with national public service standards contributed positively to local government efficiency. Their findings indicate that compliance becomes more meaningful when administrative systems, employee experience, and supporting technologies allow local governments to translate national directives into functioning local processes. Compliance readiness may therefore be understood as the capacity of personnel and offices to anticipate requirements, maintain the necessary records, coordinate responsibilities, respond to identified gaps, and complete mandated actions within established standards. This makes readiness an organizational condition that can influence both regulatory performance and service delivery.

Coordination, Guidance, and Implementation Support

Governance requirements commonly cut across several offices, making coordination an important part of organizational readiness. Domorenok et al. (2021) showed that effective policy implementation depends on administrative capacities supported by appropriate systems, tools, clearly assigned responsibilities, competent personnel, and coordination across organizational units. Guidance materials, established procedures, monitoring arrangements, and structured communication can help government personnel manage reporting and implementation requirements while reducing fragmentation between offices. This is particularly relevant to local governments where one governance indicator may require contributions from planning, finance, disaster management, public safety, social services, and other units. Technical assistance that strengthens coordination and clarifies responsibilities may therefore improve the ability of local personnel to prepare for assessments, address deficiencies, and sustain compliance across multiple governance functions.

METHODS

Research Design

A cross-sectional explanatory-predictive design was employed to determine how governance technical assistance was associated with compliance readiness among personnel engaged in local government administration. Data were collected within a defined period, allowing the study to assess existing organizational conditions and determine whether variations in technical assistance corresponded with differences in compliance readiness.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in the Local Government Unit of Aurora, Isabela. The locale was considered suitable because municipal operations involved continuing requirements related to planning, reporting, monitoring, program implementation, public safety, disaster preparedness, documentation, and service delivery. These functions provided an appropriate administrative setting for examining technical assistance and preparedness for governance compliance.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants consisted of 30 local government personnel whose regular duties involved governance compliance, program implementation, planning, monitoring, reporting, administrative coordination, public safety, disaster preparedness, or service delivery. Criterion-based purposive sampling was applied to ensure that only personnel with direct exposure to governance requirements and technical assistance processes participated. Employees whose functions had no substantial connection with these responsibilities were excluded from the study.

Research Instrument

Data were collected through the researcher-developed Governance Technical Assistance and Compliance Readiness Scale (GTACRS). It contained 32 items, with 16 statements measuring governance technical assistance and 16 assessing compliance readiness. Governance technical assistance covered policy and regulatory guidance, capability-building support, monitoring and feedback, and implementation problem solving. Compliance readiness included regulatory awareness, documentary preparedness, interoffice coordination, and corrective-action responsiveness. Responses followed a five-point agreement scale ranging from 1, *strongly disagree*, to 5, *strongly agree*.

Five qualified experts in local governance, public administration, research, and measurement reviewed the instrument. Content validation produced an S-CVI/Ave of .95. The questionnaire was pilot-tested with 25 local government personnel from a comparable municipality who were excluded from the final sample. Reliability analysis yielded an overall Cronbach's alpha of .93, indicating strong internal consistency.

Data Gathering Procedure

Approval to conduct the study was obtained from the appropriate municipal authorities. Coordination was subsequently undertaken with the concerned offices to identify personnel who satisfied the inclusion criteria. After informed consent had been secured, the questionnaires were administered using standardized instructions. Completed instruments were retrieved, reviewed for completeness, coded, and entered into a data file. The dataset was then checked for missing responses and encoding errors before statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

Means and standard deviations were used to determine the levels of governance technical assistance and compliance readiness across their respective dimensions. The relationship between the two constructs was examined using Spearman's rank-order correlation, which was appropriate for the modest sample and composite ordinal-response data. To strengthen statistical inference, bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals based on 5,000 resamples were generated for the correlation coefficient. Statistical significance was evaluated at the .05 level.

Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary and proceeded only after informed consent had been obtained. Participants were informed of the purpose of the research, confidentiality and data privacy safeguards, their right to withdraw without penalty, and the intended use of the information collected. No unnecessary identifying information was recorded. Research records were securely stored and were used exclusively for legitimate academic and research purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. *Overall Levels of Governance Technical Assistance and Compliance Readiness*

Construct	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Governance Technical Assistance	3.82	0.52	High	1
Compliance Readiness	3.72	0.60	High	2

Note. 4.21–5.00 = Very High; 3.41–4.20 = High; 2.61–3.40 = Moderate; 1.81–2.60 = Low; 1.00–1.80 = Very Low.

Both major constructs obtained high assessments, although governance technical assistance registered a higher mean than compliance readiness. The difference of 0.10 suggested that personnel generally received useful governance support, but the translation of that support into complete organizational readiness was somewhat less consistent. The wider variability in compliance readiness also indicated greater differences among personnel in their ability to prepare documents, coordinate responsibilities, and respond to compliance deficiencies. Thus, the principal issue was not an absence of technical assistance. Rather, the results pointed to a gap between receiving guidance and converting such guidance into consistently ready administrative practices.

This pattern supports the broader argument that technical assistance can strengthen local government performance when it develops operational capability rather than merely communicates expectations. Ateh et al. (2020) found that intergovernmental strategies involving technical assistance and capacity building contributed to stronger performance-management use among local governments. The present result adds a more specific organizational implication: technical support may already be visible to personnel, while readiness still depends on how successfully that support becomes embedded in routine compliance work.

Table 2. *Governance Technical Assistance by Dimension*

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Policy and Regulatory Guidance	4.03	0.57	High	1
Monitoring and Feedback	3.88	0.60	High	2
Capability-Building Support	3.71	0.64	High	3
Implementation Problem Solving	3.64	0.69	High	4
Overall	3.82	0.52	High	

Policy and regulatory guidance emerged as the strongest aspect of technical assistance, followed by monitoring and feedback. This suggested that personnel were generally able to obtain explanations of requirements and receive information concerning the status or deficiencies of compliance outputs. The result was favorable because accurate interpretation of policies provides the starting point for consistent administrative action.

Implementation problem solving, however, obtained the lowest mean and the largest standard deviation among the four dimensions. The finding indicated that technical assistance was less uniform when personnel encountered operational difficulties that required immediate solutions, coordination with other units, or resolution of recurring bottlenecks. Capability-building support also fell below policy guidance and monitoring, suggesting that structured learning opportunities and sustained follow-through were less prominent than direct clarification of requirements. This distinction is important because information about what must be complied with does not necessarily equip personnel to deal with problems that arise during implementation.

The pattern closely reflects current government efforts to improve the quality of technical assistance. DILG Region IX (2026), for example, emphasized consistency, timely assistance, proper documentation, clarification of technical-assistance processes, and deliberate planning of capacity-development interventions. Such measures become particularly relevant when guidance is already available but implementation difficulties remain unevenly addressed.

Table 3. *Indicator-Level Results for Governance Technical Assistance*

Dimension and Indicator	Mean	SD	Rank within Dimension	Interpretation
Policy and Regulatory Guidance				
Technical assistance clarified applicable laws and policies.	4.20	0.55	1	High
Compliance criteria were explained clearly.	4.10	0.61	2	High
Personnel received updates on procedural changes.	3.97	0.67	3	High
Broad requirements were translated into specific office tasks.	3.83	0.74	4	High
Capability-Building Support				
Training addressed relevant governance responsibilities.	3.90	0.65	1	High
Coaching helped personnel apply technical guidance.	3.77	0.68	2	High
Follow-up assistance was provided after capacity-building activities.	3.63	0.73	3	High
Learning interventions were directed toward specific performance gaps.	3.53	0.78	4	High
Monitoring and Feedback				
Personnel received feedback on submitted requirements.	4.07	0.58	1	High
Technical assistance identified deficiencies requiring correction.	3.93	0.64	2	High
Feedback was provided early enough for corrective action.	3.80	0.69	3	High
Corrections were followed through until requirements were completed.	3.70	0.75	4	High
Implementation Problem Solving				
Assistance was accessible when implementation problems arose.	3.87	0.67	1	High
Technical personnel helped identify workable solutions.	3.73	0.70	2	High
Appropriate expertise was mobilized when problems crossed office functions.	3.57	0.77	3	High
Recurring bottlenecks were resolved before compliance deadlines.	3.37	0.81	4	Moderate

The indicator results provided a clearer explanation for the differences among the technical-assistance dimensions. The highest-rated item concerned clarification of applicable laws and policies, while explanation of compliance criteria and feedback on submitted requirements also received strong assessments. These results showed that formal guidance and evaluative feedback were established features of the support experienced by personnel.

A different pattern appeared once assistance required sustained follow-through. Targeting capacity-building interventions toward specific deficiencies received a lower rating, as did the mobilization of expertise for cross-office concerns. The only moderate indicator was the resolution of recurring bottlenecks before compliance deadlines. This result identified a concrete weakness beneath the otherwise high overall assessment. Some implementation problems may therefore have persisted even when personnel understood the applicable requirements.

The distinction has practical importance. Technical assistance that ends with policy clarification can improve awareness, but complex governance requirements often demand coaching, interoffice troubleshooting, and follow-up until identified deficiencies have been addressed. DILG Region XI (2025) used governance assessment results as the basis for targeted coaching intended to address specific LGU compliance weaknesses, illustrating the value of linking assistance directly to documented performance gaps rather than applying uniform support across offices.

Table 4. *Compliance Readiness by Dimension*

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Regulatory Awareness	4.00	0.56	High	1
Documentary and Evidence Preparedness	3.71	0.68	High	2
Interoffice Coordination	3.63	0.71	High	3
Corrective-Action Responsiveness	3.55	0.73	High	4
Overall	3.72	0.60	High	

Regulatory awareness obtained the highest compliance-readiness score. Personnel generally understood applicable requirements, responsibilities, timelines, and the evidence expected from their units. This was consistent with the strong rating obtained for policy and regulatory guidance in Table 2. The correspondence between these two findings suggested that technical guidance had been particularly effective in developing knowledge of compliance expectations.

Readiness weakened when compliance moved from understanding to coordinated execution. Documentary preparedness ranked second, while interoffice coordination and corrective-action responsiveness occupied the lower positions. Corrective-action responsiveness also recorded the greatest variability. The result suggested that personnel were less consistent in closing identified deficiencies than in recognizing what compliance required.

This difference exposed an important administrative gap. Knowledge of standards appeared stronger than organizational mechanisms for responding when a deficiency had already been identified. Compliance readiness therefore involved more than awareness. It required maintained records, timely coordination, assignment of corrective responsibilities, verification of completed actions, and mechanisms that prevented the same deficiency from recurring.

Table 5. *Indicator-Level Results for Compliance Readiness*

Dimension and Indicator	Mean	SD	Rank within Dimension	Interpretation
Regulatory Awareness				
Personnel recognized the requirements relevant to their functions.	4.17	0.53	1	High
Responsibilities for compliance were understood.	4.07	0.58	2	High
Compliance schedules and deadlines were monitored.	3.93	0.64	3	High
Personnel understood the evidence required for validation.	3.83	0.67	4	High
Documentary and Evidence Preparedness				
Required files and records were regularly updated.	3.93	0.65	1	High
Supporting evidence could be retrieved when needed.	3.80	0.71	2	High
Documentation practices were standardized across relevant activities.	3.63	0.75	3	High
Required records were complete before formal assessment or submission.	3.47	0.82	4	High
Interoffice Coordination				
Responsibilities of participating offices were clearly identified.	3.87	0.67	1	High
Offices communicated when requirements depended on one another.	3.70	0.73	2	High
Shared schedules for compliance activities were consistently followed.	3.53	0.79	3	High

Cross-office documents were completed without avoidable delay.	3.40	0.83	4	Moderate
Corrective-Action Responsiveness				
Identified deficiencies were acted upon promptly.	3.80	0.70	1	High
Responsibility for corrective action was clearly assigned.	3.63	0.76	2	High
Completion of corrective measures was systematically verified.	3.47	0.82	3	High
Measures prevented previously identified deficiencies from recurring.	3.30	0.87	4	Moderate

The indicator-level findings showed that the strongest elements of compliance readiness were concentrated at the beginning of the compliance process. Personnel recognized relevant requirements, understood assigned responsibilities, and generally maintained required records. These results reflected a workforce that was familiar with governance obligations and able to identify what their respective units needed to produce.

The more evident concerns appeared at the later stages of compliance work. Completion of cross-office documents without delay was rated moderate, indicating that requirements involving several units were more vulnerable to timing and coordination problems. The lowest result concerned preventing previously identified deficiencies from recurring. Its comparatively large standard deviation also suggested that corrective practices differed considerably across personnel or functional areas.

These findings point to a distinction between correcting a deficiency and institutionalizing the correction. Personnel may respond when a problem is identified, but the process appears less developed in verifying closure and preventing recurrence. Bhusal (2022) showed that local-government coordination depended heavily on institutional processes that connected horizontal and vertical actors rather than on formal structures alone. Applied to the present results, stronger shared workflows, clearer dependencies, and systematic follow-up could reduce delays where compliance outputs required contributions from several offices.

The documentary pattern also carried implications for governance readiness. Diokno-Sicat et al. (2020) identified planning and governance gaps among Philippine municipalities and emphasized stronger project readiness, improved compliance with planning requirements, and capacity-development interventions responsive to identified weaknesses. The present findings refine that concern at the personnel level. Records were generally maintained, but completeness before assessment and standardization across processes remained less secure than basic awareness of requirements.

Table 6. *Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Between Governance Technical Assistance and Compliance Readiness*

Variables	n	Spearman's ρ	Bootstrap SE	95% Bias-Corrected Bootstrap CI	p-value	Interpretation
Governance Technical Assistance and Compliance Readiness	30	0.57	0.13	[0.25, 0.78]	.001	Significant moderate positive relationship

Note. Confidence interval was obtained from 5,000 bootstrap resamples. Statistical significance was evaluated at $\alpha = .05$.

Governance technical assistance had a statistically significant positive relationship with compliance readiness, $\rho = .57$, $p = .001$. The coefficient indicated a moderate association with substantial practical relevance. Personnel who reported stronger technical guidance, capability support, monitoring, feedback, and problem-solving assistance also tended to demonstrate stronger readiness for governance compliance.

The bias-corrected bootstrap interval remained entirely above zero, from 0.25 to 0.78. This strengthened confidence that the observed positive association was not dependent on a large-sample assumption, an important consideration given the modest sample of 30 participants. At the same time, the width of the interval showed that the precise magnitude of the relationship should be interpreted cautiously. The result supported a meaningful association but did not imply that technical assistance alone accounted for all differences in compliance readiness.

The descriptive results helped explain the correlation. Strong policy guidance coincided with high regulatory awareness, while the weaker areas of implementation problem solving were accompanied by lower scores in corrective-action responsiveness and interoffice coordination. The relationship therefore appeared strongest conceptually where technical support moved beyond communicating standards and helped personnel carry requirements through implementation, documentation, coordination, and correction.

The finding also demonstrated that technical assistance should not be regarded as a separate support activity detached from compliance work. Its value lay in helping personnel convert governance standards into administrative action. At the same time, the remaining weaknesses in recurring-problem resolution and preventive corrective action indicated that simply increasing the volume of technical assistance would not necessarily resolve the observed gaps. Assistance would need to become more problem-specific, coordinated, and follow-through oriented.

Overall, the results portrayed an LGU with a generally favorable foundation for governance compliance. Personnel displayed strong regulatory awareness and experienced substantial policy guidance and monitoring support. The more pressing weaknesses emerged in areas requiring several administrative steps or participation from multiple units, particularly cross-office documentation, sustained problem solving, verification of corrective measures, and prevention of recurring deficiencies. These findings identified a clear direction for strengthening governance technical assistance: greater emphasis on targeted coaching, coordinated problem resolution, compliance tracking, and institutional mechanisms that carried corrective actions through to documented closure.

CONCLUSION

Governance technical assistance and compliance readiness in the Local Government Unit of Aurora, Isabela were generally strong, particularly in policy and regulatory guidance, monitoring and feedback, and regulatory awareness. However, weaker results in implementation problem solving, interoffice coordination, documentary completeness, corrective-action verification, and prevention of recurring deficiencies showed that compliance readiness was not equally developed across all administrative processes. The significant moderate positive relationship between governance technical assistance and compliance readiness further indicated that stronger technical support was associated with better preparedness to meet governance requirements. Based on these findings, the LGU was encouraged to strengthen technical assistance by making it more targeted, continuous, and responsive to specific compliance gaps; establish clearer interoffice coordination mechanisms for requirements involving multiple units; improve systems for tracking documents, deadlines, and corrective actions; provide follow-through coaching after monitoring and assessment activities; and develop procedures that verify whether identified deficiencies have been fully addressed and prevented from recurring. Sustaining these measures may help convert technical guidance into more consistent, timely, and institutionally embedded compliance practices.

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