


A Business Model for Sustainable Livelihood and Skill Development Programs for Person Deprived of Liberty

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Abstract

Livelihood and skill development programs have become an integral part of rehabilitation initiatives for Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs). At the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm (IPPF), these programs aim to provide marketable skills, restore self-worth, and prepare inmates for successful reintegration into society. Despite the availability of initiatives such as crop production, handicrafts, retail operations, and cosmetology, challenges persist in aligning acquired skills with post-release employment opportunities and market demands. It is therefore necessary to assess the skills developed, identify barriers to program effectiveness, and design a sustainable business model that ensures long-term livelihood opportunities and market access for PDL-produced goods and services.

The study aimed to examine the profile of respondents, determine the skills developed by PDLs through livelihood programs, identify challenges in program implementation, and propose interventions and a business model to support sustainability and market access.

This study employed an Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design to assess the effectiveness and sustainability of livelihood and skill development initiatives for Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) at the Iwahig Prison

and Penal Farm. The respondents included 236 PDLs and 40 stakeholders (BuCor personnel, LGU officials, NGO representatives, and academicians). Purposive and quota sampling were used to ensure inclusion of participants with program involvement and expertise. Data were collected through a validated survey questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis to evaluate skills, challenges, and proposed interventions.

Results revealed that PDLs have acquired essential technical and entrepreneurial skills in agriculture, food production, handicrafts, and service-oriented livelihood projects. However, challenges remain in resource availability, program continuity, and post-release market integration. Stakeholders emphasized the need for stronger inter-agency collaboration, skills certification, and market-driven program design. Proposed interventions include strengthening partnerships with TESDA and LGUs, enhancing training modules, and engaging NGOs in material support and product promotion.

The findings affirm that livelihood programs at IPPF contribute to skill development and rehabilitation of PDLs. However, sustainability challenges highlight the necessity of adopting a comprehensive business model that integrates

training, certification, branding, and market linkage. Such a model not only ensures long-term

economic opportunities for PDLs but also fosters their dignified reintegration into society.

Keywords: *livelihood programs, skills development, sustainability, rehabilitation, Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm, Persons Deprived of Liberty*

INTRODUCTION

Reintegration into society after incarceration is often hindered by social stigma, limited economic opportunities, and restricted access to sustainable livelihoods. At the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm (IPPF), rehabilitation programs aim to equip Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) with vocational skills through partnerships with TESDA, Western Philippine University, and the Department of Agriculture. These programs include High-Value Crops Production, Cashew and Coconut Plantation, Copra Making, Granary Management, Animal Husbandry, Agroforestry, Property and Vermi Composting, Bilao Making, Beauty Products, Manicure and Pedicure Services, and Grocery Store Management. IPPF's unique open-air correctional model emphasizes productivity and responsibility, engaging PDLs in activities that mirror real-world business operations (Onsat & Breva, 2023).

While these initiatives provide essential skills, challenges remain in linking them to sustainable post-release employment. Many former PDLs face weak industrial connections, limited entrepreneurship training, and scarce market access, making economic reintegration difficult (Behan, 2021). Studies highlight the importance of market-driven approaches, post-release support, and multi-sector collaboration to enhance livelihood program effectiveness and reduce recidivism (Rubio et al., 2024). However, limited research exists on integrating livelihood program assessments with a comprehensive business model that ensures long-term sustainability and market access for PDL products and services.

This study assesses the livelihood programs implemented at IPPF, evaluates their sustainability in terms of poverty reduction, skills development, access to resources, social inclusion, sustainable development, and empowerment and agency, and examines whether perceptions differ significantly across respondent profiles. Based on the findings, the study proposes a business model designed to ensure long-term sustainability, market access, and economic empowerment for PDL products and services.

To address the identified gaps, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How do respondents assess the following livelihood programs implemented by the Bureau of Corrections to develop skills among PDL?
 - 1.1 High-Value Crops Project
 - 1.2 Cashew Plantation
 - 1.3. Animal Husbandry
 - 1.4. Coconut Plantation

- 1.5. Copra Making
- 1.6. Granary
- 1.7 Agro
- 1.8. Property and Vermi Project
- 1.9 Bilao Making Project
- 1.10 Beauty Products
- 1.11 Manicure and Pedicure
- 1.12 Grocery Store
2. How do respondents assess the sustainability of the livelihood and skill development for Person Deprived of Liberty (PDL) at the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm (IPPF) with regards to the following:
 - 2.1 Poverty Reduction;
 - 2.2 Skills Development;
 - 2.3 Access to Resources;
 - 2.4 Social Inclusion;
 - 2.5 Sustainable Development and;
 - 2.6 Empowerment and Agency?
3. Is there a significant difference on the assessment of the respondents on the sustainability of the livelihood and skill development for Person Deprived of Liberty (PDL) at the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm (IPPF) when grouped according to their profile?
4. What intervention programs can be implemented by the government, educational institutions, and NGOs to enhance the effectiveness of skill development and livelihood opportunities for (PDL) at Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm?
5. What business model can be proposed to ensure the long-term sustainability and market access for products and services created by the PDL?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts an Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design to assess the effectiveness and sustainability of livelihood and skill development initiatives for Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) at the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm. In this approach, quantitative data are collected and analyzed first, providing a broad understanding of program outcomes, which then informs the subsequent qualitative phase aimed at explaining and contextualizing the initial findings. As defined by Haynes-Brown (2025), an Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design involves two distinct phases: initially, quantitative data are collected and analyzed; subsequently, qualitative data are gathered to elaborate on and explain the quantitative findings. This design is particularly suitable for understanding patterns found in quantitative data by exploring them in depth through participant experiences and perspectives.

Respondents/Participants

The respondents were composed of two groups: first were 236 Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) at IPPF who have participated in and completed at least one officially recognized livelihood program. Second were key institutional stakeholders, including 10 BuCor personnel, 10 Local Government Unit (LGU)

officials, 10 representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and academicians with expertise in livelihood, skills development, or rehabilitation programs.

Inclusion criteria for PDL respondents:

1. Must have participated in and completed any livelihood or skills development program at IPPF,
2. Must have been involved in the program for at least three (3) months,
3. Must be physically and mentally fit to participate, and
4. Must have voluntarily given informed consent.

Inclusion criteria for key stakeholders:

Direct involvement in implementing, supporting, or evaluating livelihood programs, or Expertise in program evaluation, livelihood training, or PDL rehabilitation.

Exclusion criteria: Include those who have not participated in any livelihood or skills programs, those with communication impairments that hinder participation without support, and those deemed ineligible by BuCor for security or ethical reasons.

Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique was used for PDL respondents to ensure inclusion of participants with substantial program experience. For stakeholders, quota sampling was applied to secure representation from BuCor personnel, LGU officials, NGOs, and academicians.

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, which operates an open-air correctional system.

Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study is a survey questionnaire which aims to assess the implementation, effectiveness, and sustainability of various livelihood programs at Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm. The questionnaire was validated by three experts from the academe and government sectors, using the Content Validity Index (CVI) with a threshold score of 0.80. Items below this score were revised or removed. A pilot test with 25 respondents (15 PDLs and 10 BuCor personnel not included in the final sample) yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.953, indicating excellent internal consistency.

Data Collection Procedure

1. Secured clearance from the Palawan State University Research Ethics Committee and authorization from BuCor and the IPPF administration.
2. Respondents were briefed on the study's objectives, voluntary nature, and confidentiality measures.
3. Printed questionnaires were distributed on-site in coordination with prison staff. Assistance was given to respondents with reading or writing difficulties without influencing responses.
4. Completed questionnaires were collected within 3–5 days, reviewed for completeness, and encoded for analysis.

Data Analysis

Data were processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27. The weighted mean was employed to summarize respondent assessments on program implementation (SOP 1) and sustainability (SOP 2), while the standard deviation was used to measure variability in responses. To determine significant differences in assessments based on respondent profiles (SOP 3), both the one-way ANOVA and the t-test for independent samples were applied. A significance level of 0.05 was consistently used for hypothesis testing to ensure the reliability of the results.

Ethical Considerations

The study strictly adhered to ethical standards. Participation was voluntary, with informed consent obtained from all respondents. Privacy and confidentiality were ensured by anonymizing responses, and no incentives were given. Considering the vulnerability of PDLs, the researcher ensured that participation was free from coercion or undue influence.

RESULTS

Table 1
Assessment of the Respondents on the Livelihood Programs Implemented by the Bureau of Corrections to Develop Skills among PDL

INDICATORS	CLASSIFICATION	MEAN	SD	INTERPRETATION	RANK
1. High-Value Crops Project	PDL	3.63	0.50	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	9.5
	Bucor	3.73	0.45	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.64	0.50	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
2. Cashew Plantation	PDL	3.63	0.49	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	9.5
	Bucor	3.68	0.47	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.64	0.49	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	PDL	3.63	0.50	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	12

3. Animal Husbandry	Bucor	3.65	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.63	0.50	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
4. Coconut Plantation	PDL	3.64	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	9.5
	Bucor	3.63	0.49	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.64	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
5. Copra Making	PDL	3.65	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	6
	Bucor	3.65	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.65	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
6. Granary	PDL	3.67	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	1
	Bucor	3.65	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.70	0.77	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
7. Agro	PDL	3.64	0.49	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	9.5
	Bucor	3.63	0.49	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.64	0.49	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
8. Property and Vermi Project	PDL	3.68	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	3
	Bucor	3.63	0.49	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.67	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
9. Bilao Making Projects	PDL	3.68	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	3
	Bucor	3.61	0.49	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.67	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
10. Beauty Products	PDL	3.68	0.47	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	3
	Bucor	3.59	0.50	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.67	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	PDL	3.65	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	6

11. Manicure and Pedicure	Bucor	3.64	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.65	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
12. Grocery Store	PDL	3.66	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	6
	Bucor	3.59	0.33	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.65	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
Overall Mean	PDL	3.65	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Bucor	3.64	0.47	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.65	0.51	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	

LEGEND: STRONGLY AGREE/HIGHLY IMPLEMENTED (4) =3.51-4.0); AGREE/IMPLEMENTED (3) =2.51-3.50); DISAGREE/SLIGHTLY IMPLEMENTED (2) =1.51-2.50); STRONGLY DISAGREE/NOT IMPLEMENTED AT ALL (1) =1.0-1.50)

Table 1 presents the assessments from both PDLs and BuCor personnel on the various livelihood programs implemented by the Bureau of Corrections to develop skills among PDLs. Data shows that all thirteen livelihood initiatives were rated Strongly Agree / Highly Implemented, reflecting a consistent appreciation for the programs' relevance and execution. The highest combined mean score of 3.70 (SD = 0.77) was recorded for the Granary program, suggesting this initiative stood out in perceived effectiveness, especially in equipping participants with post-harvest storage and food security skills. On the other vein, the Animal Husbandry program registered the lowest combined mean score of 3.63 (SD = 0.50), though it still remained within the category of strong implementation.

Table 2

Assessment on Sustainability of the Livelihood and Skill Development for Person Deprived of Liberty at the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm

INDICATORS	CLASSIFICATION	MEAN	SD	INTERPRETATION	RANK
1. Poverty Reduction	PDL	3.70	0.46	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	2.5
	Bucor	3.63	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.69	0.46	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
2. Skills Development	PDL	3.70	0.46	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	2.5
	Bucor	3.60	0.49	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.69	0.47	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	

3. Access to Resources	PDL	3.67	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	6
	Bucor	3.59	0.51	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.66	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
4. Social Inclusion	PDL	3.69	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	5
	Bucor	3.65	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.68	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
5. Sustainable Development	PDL	3.71	0.46	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	2.5
	Bucor	3.58	0.50	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.69	0.46	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
6. Empowerment and Agency	PDL	3.70	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	2.5
	Bucor	3.63	0.49	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.69	0.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
Overall Mean	PDL	3.70	0.47	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Bucor	3.61	0.49	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	
	Combined	3.68	0.47	Strongly Agree/ Highly Implemented	

LEGEND: STRONGLY AGREE/HIGHLY IMPLEMENTED (4) =3.51-4.0); AGREE/IMPLEMENTED (3) =2.51-3.50); DISAGREE/SLIGHTLY IMPLEMENTED (2) =1.51-2.50); STRONGLY DISAGREE/NOT IMPLEMENTED AT ALL (1) =1.0-1.50)

Table 2 presents the assessment on the sustainability of livelihood and skill development programs for Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) at the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm. All indicators were rated as Strongly Agree/Highly Implemented, with a combined overall mean of 3.68 (SD = 0.47). Among the six domains assessed, the highest-rated dimension is Sustainable Development (M = 3.69, SD = 0.46). In contrast, Access to Resources registered the lowest combined mean at 3.66 (SD = 0.48), although still within the same interpretation range of strong agreement.

Table 3 presents the Significant Differences in the Assessment of Respondents on the Sustainability of the Livelihood and Skill Development for Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) at the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm. Based on the computed t-values and significance levels, four of the six indicators tested were found to be statistically significant. These include Poverty Reduction (t = 5.13, p = 0.02), Access to Resources (t = 10.70, p = 0.00), Social Inclusion (t = 14.48, p = 0.00), and Empowerment and Agency (t =

8.32, $p = 0.00$), all of which have p -values below the 0.05 threshold, leading to a rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0). On the other hand, Skills Development ($t = 3.35$, $p = 0.07$) and Sustainable Development ($t = 0.75$, $p = 0.39$) were found to be not significant, indicating no substantial differences in the perceptions of PDLs and BuCor personnel.

Table 3

Significant Difference on the Assessment of the Respondents on the Sustainability of the Livelihood and Skill Development for Person Deprived of Liberty at the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm

INDICATORS	CLASSIFICATION	MEAN	SD	T-VALUE	SIG VALUE	DECISION ON H_0	INTERPRETATION
1. Poverty Reduction	PDL	3.70	0.37	5.13	0.02	Reject	Significant
	BUCOR	3.63	0.30				
2. Skills Development	PDL	3.70	0.37	3.35	0.07	Accept	Not Significant
	BUCOR	3.60	0.33				
3. Access to Resources	PDL	3.67	0.39	10.70	0.00	Reject	Significant
	BUCOR	3.59	0.30				
4. Social Inclusion	PDL	3.69	0.39	14.48	0.00	Reject	Significant
	BUCOR	3.65	0.28				
5. Sustainable Development	PDL	3.71	0.36	0.75	0.39	Accept	Not Significant
	BUCOR	3.58	0.35				
6. Empowerment and Agency	PDL	3.70	0.38	8.32	0.00	Reject	Significant
	BUCOR	3.63	0.30				
OVERALL	PDL	3.69	0.35	7.59	0.01	Reject	Significant
	BUCOR	3.61	0.26				

@.05 Level of significance

The overall t-value of 7.59 with a significance level of 0.01 confirms that, in general, significant differences exist between the assessments of the two groups.

Table 4

Views of BuCor Respondents on Suggested Government Interventions to Improve Livelihood and Skill-Building Programs for Persons Deprived of Liberty at Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm

Themes	Recurrences	Defining Elements	Key Informants
Agricultural-Based Livelihood	1	<i>"Calamansi Planting Program"</i>	KI1
Expanded Skills Training	3	<i>"More training programs like soap making, charcoal painting, carpentry, plant propagation, bead production"</i> <i>"More trainings to be implemented by other training schools like TESDA"</i> <i>"Training and Development"</i>	KI2 KI3 KI7
Agency Partnership & Technical Support	2	<i>"TESDA and DA - Both agencies provide technical teachings and seminars"</i> <i>"To improve skills of PDLs, we need agencies like TESDA to share other skills"</i>	KI5 KI8
Education and Behavioral Support	1	<i>"Programs such as education to provide basic needs and behavioral modification"</i>	KI6
Funding Support	1	<i>"Provide additional funds to procure tasks and materials needed for programs of livelihood"</i>	KI9
Certification-Based Training	1	<i>"More hands-on training with certificates they can use after release. I suggest training conducted by Technical Skills and Development Authority (TESDA)"</i>	KI10

Table 4 presents the views of BuCor respondents on Suggested Government Interventions to Improve Livelihood and Skill-Building Programs for Persons Deprived of Liberty at Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm.

The suggestions reflect institutional insights into what improvements are needed to ensure that prison-based livelihood programs lead to meaningful post-release outcomes.

Table 5

Views of BuCor Respondents on the Role of Local Colleges, Training Centers, and TESDA-Accredited Institutions in Enhancing the Skills and Competencies of Persons Deprived of Liberty at Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm

Themes	Recurrences	Defining Elements	Key Informants
Agricultural Skills Training	1	<i>Proper way of planting of Calamansi</i>	KI1
Continued Skills Training and Seminars	1	<i>Continue training and seminars for PDC to improve their skills that they are in behind bars or ex-convict later they help them to grow and help their family day by day needs.</i>	KI2
Hands-On Technical Training	1	<i>Other local trainings centers or TESDA contributes to improve their skills by teaching them or sharing other related skills (Hands On) to improve their abilities.</i>	KI3
N/A	1	<i>N/A</i>	KI4
Lecture and Training Support	1	<i>Providing Stand on training and lectures.</i>	KI5
Knowledge and Skills Sharing	1	<i>They can help through sharing their knowledge and skills to PDL that they can learn to and help them prepare themselves as they reenter the community sooner.</i>	KI6
Technical Assistance for Modern Technologies	1	<i>Provide technical assistance like for the modern technical.</i>	KI7
Training Evaluation and Application	1	<i>To share, access and evaluate how PDL learn from that training and how they apply it to their life and actual operation.</i>	KI8
Institutional Skills Development Support	1	<i>Technical assistance and skills development provided by other institutions.</i>	KI9
Professional Trainer Deployment	1	<i>Highly professional trainer.</i>	KI10

Table 5 reveals the Views of BuCor Respondents on the Role of Local Colleges, Training Centers, and TESDA-Accredited Institutions in Enhancing the Skills and Competencies of Persons Deprived of Liberty at Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm. It shows that each key informant offered a unique perspective. This uniqueness underscores the multifaceted nature of rehabilitation programming, where no single approach is sufficient. Instead, a combination of experiential learning, technical expertise, continuous training, and institutional evaluation is seen as essential to support the varying needs and potential of PDLs.

Table 6

Views of BuCor Respondents on NGO-Supported Interventions to Enhance Delivery, Funding, and Continuity of Livelihood Projects for Persons Deprived of Liberty at Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm

Themes	Recurrences	Defining Elements	Key Informants
Marketing and Product Promotion Support	1	<i>NGOs can help through establish "Display Center" buildings to showcase PDL products and provide materials and tools; NGOs can help through marketing.</i>	KI2
Financial Assistance and Funding	1	<i>By providing other sources of funds to improve livelihood projects of PDLs.</i>	KI3
Technical Support	1	<i>Technical Support.</i>	KI5
Capacity Building and Material Provision	3	<i>Support through availability to sustain their livelihood or skills that learn ahsady; materials, tools, etc that are allowed inside</i> <i>By providing other materials of equipment to be used in prucubating PDL in different skills</i> <i>By supplying farm equipment and tools, seeds with percentage.</i>	KI6 KI8 KI10
Policy and Partnership Support	2	<i>Pro Board Assistance</i> <i>Maybe same donations or memorandum of agreement in line with the livelihood programs for the PDL.</i>	KI6 KI9
Agricultural Equipment and Input Support	1	<i>By supplying farm equipment and tools, seeds with percentage.</i>	KI10

Table 6 displays the Views of BuCor Respondents on NGO-Supported Interventions to Enhance Delivery, Funding, and Continuity of Livelihood Projects for Persons Deprived of Liberty at Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm. Six themes emerged, with “Capacity Building and Material Provision” being the most recurrent (3 mentions), followed by “Policy and Partnership Support” (2 mentions), while other themes such as “Marketing and Product Promotion Support,” “Financial Assistance,” “Technical Support,” and “Agricultural Equipment and Input Support” were mentioned once each.

Table 7

Views of BuCor Respondents on Collaborative Activities among Government, Schools, and NGOs to Support Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) post-incarceration

Themes	Recurrences	Defining Elements	Key Informants
Post-Release Support Programs	3	<p><i>“Training - post release supports.”</i></p> <p><i>“Make a program for post released PDL to help them continue learning even they are released already and to easy monitoring of them cooperatives action can help give/provide starting materials to start business of their own.”</i></p> <p><i>“Maybe Government can have a program for Ex-convict PDL's where it assume the project that those freed PDL's is safe and people or the community can safely purchase their products are valuable to them. Training for released PDL's and help them market the products.”</i></p>	<p>KI5</p> <p>KI6</p> <p>KI2</p>
Certification-Based Training	1	<i>“Activities or trainings with certificate that the PDL can use after his/her incarceration.”</i>	KI9
Hands-On Skills Development	2	<i>“Training hands-on training.”</i>	KI10
Market Integration and Public Trust	1	<i>“Their special skills that helps to PDL showing their capabilities or skills not only by theory but also in actual.”</i>	KI3

Gender-Inclusive Collaboration	1	<i>"When government shows and NGO's women together it would be most effective in PDL."</i>	KI8
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Table 7 shows Views of BuCor Respondents on Collaborative Activities among Government, Schools, and NGOs to Support Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) post-incarceration. It is shown that "Post-Release Support Programs" was the most common answer from the respondents. This stresses the respondents' belief in the need for structured transitional support for PDLs after incarceration. Statements such as "Training - post-release supports" and "Make a program for post released PDL to help them continue learning even after release" point the perceived value of continued engagement beyond prison walls.

DISCUSSION

The focus of this study is to assess the livelihood programs implemented by the Bureau of Corrections at the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm and their effectiveness in developing skills among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs). Based on the findings, all twelve livelihood initiatives were rated as Highly Implemented by both PDLs and BuCor personnel, indicating that the programs are well-integrated and responsive to the rehabilitation goals of the institution. However, while the overall assessment reflects strong implementation, variations in ranking highlight areas where program delivery and resource support may still be improved to maximize long-term benefits.

As shown in Table 1 Granary program was on the top rank. This implies a high level of engagement and satisfaction among PDLs, possibly due to its practical relevance in addressing agricultural productivity and food preservation—skills that are both marketable and applicable to community farming or personal enterprise after release. According to Sarah Eichberger, Michigan State University Extension, (2024) programs that incorporate agricultural training not only provide economic opportunities but also instill discipline and a sense of purpose. Moreover, the granary project complements broader efforts in food security and sustainable livelihood within prison farms like Iwahig, where PDLs are trained in rice cultivation and storage, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to national goals. On the other hand, while Animal Husbandry remained favorably evaluated, its lowest rank may indicate challenges related to program scope, delivery, or accessibility of resources. This echoes Behan's (2021) view that technical training in correctional settings requires adequate funding, structured pedagogy, and a learner-centered approach to fully maximize its rehabilitative impact. In contexts where livestock management demands continuous supervision, PDLs may encounter limitations in applying their skills without real-time exposure or consistent mentoring. The need to enhance these modules through hands-on experiences, monitoring systems, and perhaps integration with local veterinary or agricultural extension services could help address such gaps. This result confirms that BuCor's livelihood programs are both relevant and well-received, achieving their goal of empowering PDLs through skill acquisition and preparation for reintegration. The consistency across the programs—from crop farming and vermiculture to retail, cosmetology, and handicrafts—demonstrates a diversified strategy aligned with the varied educational and socioeconomic backgrounds of the respondents. As supported by Polat & Kutlu (2022), vocational training that is contextually adapted and comprehensive can increase employability, promote psychosocial healing, and reduce recidivism. Moreover, the inclusion of programs like bilao weaving, grocery management, and beauty care reflects an understanding of low-capital livelihood options that can serve PDLs with limited resources upon release. These findings resonate with the reform agenda promoted by BuCor (2023) and TESDA, where technical-vocational education is positioned as a tool for rehabilitation, and also as a means

to dignify incarcerated individuals by equipping them with real-world competencies. In conclusion, the assessed programs in Table 1 highlight the multifaceted value of livelihood training in correctional facilities, supporting not just economic productivity, but also restoration of self-worth, community contribution, and long-term reintegration into society.

As indicated in Table 2 Sustainable Development, Empowerment and Agency, Poverty Reduction, and Skills Development were the top-rated indicators. This indicates that the programs at Iwahig address short-term skill acquisition but also focus on equipping PDLs with competencies for long-term transformation. This is critical as it shows that inmates perceive the training as beneficial even beyond prison life, particularly in contributing to environmental awareness, personal responsibility, and sustainable livelihoods. Olaghere et al. (2021) affirm that structured vocational training programs foster goal-setting behavior among inmates, making their learning more purposeful and practical. In the same vein, Abdulkadir et al. (2022) argue that skill-based education enhances employment prospects post-release, which contributes to psychological well-being and reduces chances of recidivism. These findings suggest that when such programs are aligned with marketable outcomes, they promote sustainable reintegration and social mobility. On the other hand, Access to Resources garnered the lowest mean among the indicators. While still strongly agreed upon, this lower rating points for further improvement in availability of tools, materials, and supportive infrastructure necessary to fully maximize learning. Anggi & Pramitasari (2021) stress that spatial design and proper resource allocation within correctional environments are essential in sustaining inmate engagement. Inadequate access to learning equipment or inconsistent support could limit the effectiveness of hands-on training modules, such as those involving retail management or manual craftsmanship. These resource constraints may affect skill acquisition and also hinder the confidence of PDLs in applying what they learned after release. Overall, the data reflect a favorable perception of the sustainability and long-term value of the livelihood and skills training initiatives among respondents. The consistently high ratings across all indicators underscore the relevance and transformative potential of the programs. As Leonor (2023) and Duman et al. (2024) note, integrating livelihood skills with community support and mental resilience training can amplify rehabilitation outcomes. Thus, strengthening resource access and expanding community-linked training modules, such as those focused on grocery store operations, can further enhance both the technical and psychosocial readiness of inmates for reintegration.

The presence of significant differences in dimensions in Table 3 indicates that PDLs and BuCor staff view the sustainability of the program through differing lenses, shaped by their respective roles and lived experiences. Specifically, PDLs rated Access to Resources, Social Inclusion, and Empowerment higher than staff, reflecting the direct impact and relevance of these components in their daily rehabilitation and future reintegration. As Olaghere et al. (2021) emphasize, motivation and sustained engagement in vocational activities are heightened when learners see clear personal relevance and goals. This aligns with the findings here, suggesting that PDLs are more attuned to the day-to-day benefits and limitations of the programs, which staff might perceive more abstractly or administratively. Similarly, Ghazanfari et al. (2023) assert that strong psychosocial support systems—such as inclusion and empowerment—positively shape inmate engagement and perceptions, offering a potential reason for these significant rating gaps. Meanwhile, the lack of significant difference in Skills Development and Sustainable Development indicates a shared understanding and relatively consistent evaluation between the two groups. This may be due to the tangible and observable nature of skills training sessions and livelihood activities, which both groups witness or facilitate regularly. According to Lindsay (2022), training programs that are closely aligned with actual market demands tend to be viewed more consistently across stakeholders, which could explain the uniformity of responses. Furthermore, the stable rating for sustainability suggests that both PDLs and BuCor personnel perceive the long-term viability of the program as equally promising, perhaps due to its established structure and continuing support within the facility.

As displayed in Table 4, the most recurrent theme was Expanded Skills Training (3 mentions). This indicates that BuCor personnel see a need for more varied and practical training opportunities. Respondents highlighted skills such as soap making, charcoal production, carpentry, beadwork, and propagation techniques. These reflect the call for more hands-on, job-relevant programs that can empower PDLs to start microenterprises or find employment after release. As emphasized by Pangestuti (2024), the success of skills programs depends on how well they are aligned with labor market demands and local economic conditions. Expanding the scope of training increases the chances for PDLs to transfer those skills into sustainable income-generating opportunities. Moreover, second most frequently mentioned theme is Agency Partnership & Technical Support, cited twice. Respondents underscored the value of linking BuCor with government agencies such as the Department of Agriculture (DA) and TESDA to strengthen technical instruction and post-release support. This highlights a belief in the critical role of inter-agency collaboration in sustaining livelihood interventions beyond incarceration. SaberiZafarghandi et al. (2024) affirm that structured coordination across agencies improves continuity, ensures resource flow, and enhances rehabilitation success rates. In contrast, the least recurrent themes, each with only one mention, include Agricultural-Based Livelihood, Education and Behavioral Support, Funding Support, and Certification-Based Training. While these areas were mentioned less frequently, they point to critical gaps that may be under-recognized but are nonetheless vital to rehabilitation. In addition, Certification-Based Training, though only cited once, speaks directly to the PDLs' ability to present valid credentials post-release—a key factor influencing employability. Mourão et al. (2025) and Clark (2021) emphasize that access to formal certification and education strengthens PDLs' self-efficacy and acceptance into formal labor markets, increasing their post-release prospects and reducing recidivism. Similarly, Winston & Buhori (2024) argue that educational attainment within correctional facilities must be accompanied by pathways to recognized qualifications. The disparity in recurrence implies that while technical skill acquisition remains a strong institutional focus, other support dimensions like certification, funding, and behavioral intervention may require more emphasis in future policy and program design. Addressing these lower-mentioned yet high-impact areas can lead to a more holistic and sustainable livelihood development framework for PDLs.

As shown, contribution illustrate were technical and agricultural skills development, exemplified by responses such as “proper way of planting calamansi” and the role of hands-on training provided by TESDA and other institutions in table 5. These comments reflect how respondents value experiential, field-based education that is directly applicable to rural livelihoods. As indicated in the study of Pedro and Quirap (2024), TESDA-accredited programs in agriculture are highly effective when tailored to meet national competency standards. These programs not only build capacity but also prepare PDLs for actual employment or entrepreneurial work upon release. Another theme is the continued provision of training and seminars while PDLs are incarcerated. Respondents emphasized that ongoing skill-building programs can support not only the personal growth of inmates but also their families' future livelihoods once they reintegrate into society. This sentiment is supported by Clark (2021), who emphasizes that long-term educational engagement inside prisons lays the foundation for successful reentry and reduces recidivism by promoting structured learning habits and vocational preparedness. Professional trainer deployment and technical assistance for modern technologies were also noted as critical roles external institutions can play. These responses underscore the need for expert-led instruction and up-to-date equipment to enhance learning quality and relevance. According to Dransmann et al. 2024, the inclusion of structured, competitive, and professionally managed training can boost inmates' confidence and help simulate real-world performance standards, a crucial element in workforce readiness. Moreover, some respondents discussed institutional support through evaluation, knowledge-sharing, and certification, pointing to the importance of assessing the applicability of acquired skills and ensuring that trainings translate into measurable personal development. As highlighted by Lerman and Sadin (2022), such initiatives can contribute to identity transformation among PDLs. Earning recognized credentials while in prison not only equips them with employable skills but also helps mitigate social stigma post-release, improving their

chances for societal acceptance and gainful employment. Likewise, one respondent gave a non-response (“N/A”), which could reflect either a lack of direct knowledge about institutional partnerships or gaps in communication regarding external collaborations. This minor anomaly highlights the need for awareness and visibility of these programs among BuCor staff. The range of responses affirms the need for differentiated yet coordinated interventions. By recognizing the unique viewpoints of staff members, program planners can ensure that future collaborations with TESDA and other educational institutions are not only comprehensive but also adaptable to the complex realities of prison-based education and rehabilitation. This approach aligns with Vaughn et al. (2024), who emphasize that successful correctional education stems from dynamic partnerships that reflect the shared and varied insights of all stakeholders involved.

It is noted in Table 6 that the dominant theme were Capacity Building and Material Provision, that underscores the importance of NGOs as financial donors and as partners in operational implementation. Respondents noted the role of NGOs in supplying materials and tools for skill-building, such as farm equipment and training gear, including: “Support through availability to sustain their livelihood or skills... materials, tools,” and “By providing other materials of equipment to be used in prucubating PDL in different skills.” This reinforces the need for sustained input support to make livelihood training programs effective and scalable. As Kajawo (2024) underscores, NGOs can provide critical operational inputs that governments often struggle to consistently fund or deliver, helping to bridge training, resource gaps and support rehabilitation. Meanwhile, themes such as Agricultural Equipment and Input Support and Technical Support were only mentioned once, yet they point to specific and actionable support needs. A respondent stated, “By supplying farm equipment and tools, seeds with percentage,” signaling the value of NGO contributions to agriculture-based livelihood programs. Though this theme was least recurrent, it remains essential, as agriculture remains a central livelihood pathway in correctional rehabilitation. According to Setiawan et al. (2023), building sustainable and responsive programs involves strategic collaborations with institutions that can offer both technical and input-related support tailored to local contexts. The call for Policy and Partnership Support also reflects the institutional need for NGOs to formalize their engagements through memoranda of agreement and board-level involvement, as one respondent suggested: “Maybe same donations or memorandum of agreement in line with the livelihood programs.” This resonates with Aquino (2023), who argues that structured collaboration between NGOs and government institutions enhances the accountability and sustainability of correctional programs. Despite only one mention, the theme of Marketing and Product Promotion Support is particularly notable. The suggestion to establish “Display Center” buildings and to promote PDL-made products via local and social media platforms presents a forward-looking strategy. This idea directly links livelihood initiatives to reintegration by creating visibility and market access for PDL outputs—an often overlooked but vital component. As Kajawo (2024) suggests, NGOs that align their incentives with rehabilitation outcomes, such as market connectivity, are better to make a long-term impact on inmates’ post-release success. The responses confirm that NGOs are seen as key partners in enhancing livelihood programs for Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs). The most common suggestion—providing materials and equipment—reflects the immediate and practical needs inside the facility. However, even the less frequently mentioned inputs such as marketing support and technical assistance point to the broader role NGOs can play in ensuring program continuity, post-release opportunities, and long-term rehabilitation success.

It is shown in Table 7 that “Post-Release Support Programs” was the most common answer from the respondents. This stresses the respondents’ belief in the need for structured transitional support for PDLs after incarceration. Statements such as “Training - post-release supports” and “Make a program for post released PDL to help them continue learning even after release” point the perceived value of continued engagement beyond prison walls. These suggestions align with the findings of Ekanayake (2021), who argues that reentry service hubs and nearby support networks facilitate the transition from prison to community by addressing practical and emotional needs. Similarly, Inusa (2022) stresses the necessity of

extending prison education into community-based reentry programs to maintain learning momentum and ensure smoother reintegration. Hands-On Skills Development was the second most recurrent theme, with respondents highlighting the importance of experiential learning: “Training hands-on training.” This reflects a recognition that theoretical instruction alone is insufficient. Vaughn et al. (2024) affirms that hands-on, applied learning within prison education enhances inmates’ self-efficacy and confidence, both of which are critical for job readiness and psychological adjustment post-incarceration. Although themes like Certification-Based Training, Market Integration and Public Trust, and Gender-Inclusive Collaboration were only cited once, their implications are significant. Certification programs equip PDLs with formal recognition of skills—an essential asset in the competitive job market—as noted by Faiz et al. (2022), who found that earning credentials during incarceration improves post-release employment outcomes. Hence, promoting trust in PDL-made products and including women-focused collaborations implies the respondents’ awareness of broader reintegration challenges like social stigma and gender equity. These themes underscore the potential for NGOs and public institutions to shape public perception and ensure inclusive rehabilitation. Thus, the diversity of responses, even those cited only once, illustrates the multifaceted needs of PDLs and the importance of collaborative, cross-sectoral strategies. While frequently mentioned programs such as post-release training should be prioritized, less frequent but strategic interventions like market access and gender-sensitive partnerships must not be overlooked.

Overall, the analysis affirms that while the program is generally perceived as sustainable and impactful, differences in specific dimensions, particularly those rooted in access, inclusion, and empowerment, point out areas for further enhancement. These findings indicate the need for more dialogic evaluation strategies that actively incorporate the voices of both PDLs and staff. As Ciptono et al. (2022) recommend, fostering a culture of self-reflection and entrepreneurial planning among inmates, supported by staff collaboration, can bridge perceptual gaps and strengthen program coherence. Likewise, Anggi & Pramitasari (2021) stress the importance of optimizing physical and instructional environments in correctional facilities to support equal access and participation. Moving forward, reinforcing communication, equity, and joint ownership of program goals between implementers and beneficiaries will be essential to ensuring that sustainability outcomes are both inclusive and enduring.

CONCLUSION

1. The results of the assessment indicate that all twelve livelihood initiatives implemented by the Bureau of Corrections—namely, High-Value Crops, Cashew Plantation, Animal Husbandry, Coconut Plantation, Copra Making, Granary, Agro, Property and Vermi Project, Bilao Making, Beauty Products, Manicure and Pedicure, and Grocery Store—are consistently rated as Strongly Agree/Highly Implemented. Respondents affirmed the effectiveness of these programs in providing practical, income-generating, and rehabilitative skills. These results reflect a generally positive reception from both PDL and BuCor respondents, with perceptual differences that may stem from their varied roles and levels of engagement in program delivery and participation.
2. The findings confirm that the Livelihood and Skill Development Program at Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm is highly effective in supporting the rehabilitation of Persons Deprived of Liberty, as evidenced by consistently high ratings across all six sustainability dimensions namely Poverty Reduction, Skills Development, Access to Resources, Social Inclusion, Sustainable Development, and Empowerment and Agency. Its practical orientation, confidence-building impact, and resource provision contribute to its success. Nonetheless, areas such as equitable resource access, instructional quality, and reinforcement of long-term skill use require further strengthening. These

results affirm that while the program already serves as a robust platform for sustainable reintegration, continuous refinement is essential to ensure its responsiveness to the evolving needs of PDLs and the demands of post-release reintegration.

3. There is a significant difference in the assessment of the livelihood and skill development program between Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and BuCor personnel in the areas of poverty reduction, access to resources, social inclusion, and empowerment and agency. This finding underscores the varying perceptions between program beneficiaries and implementers, which may reflect differences in lived experiences, expectations, and program interaction. However, there is no significant difference in the areas of skills development and sustainable development, indicating a shared understanding of the program's effectiveness in building competencies and promoting long-term outcomes. These results emphasize the need to align stakeholder perspectives to enhance the program's overall coherence and impact.
4. The views of institutional stakeholders affirm that there is a need for a coordinated and inclusive approach to enhance skill development and livelihood programs for PDLs at Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm. This includes expanding market-relevant training, strengthening partnerships with TESDA and DA, involving educational institutions in continuous instruction and evaluation, and engaging NGOs for resource provision, marketing, and reintegration support, all within a comprehensive, multi-sectoral framework for sustainable rehabilitation.
5. It is essential to adopt a business model that ensures both the sustainability and market accessibility of products and services created by Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) at Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm. This model should integrate value chain development, skills certification, product branding, and partnership with local cooperatives and social enterprises. Emphasis must also be placed on post-release entrepreneurial pathways, access to microfinancing, and linkages with local government units and markets. By institutionalizing these components, the proposed model will not only secure income-generating opportunities for PDLs but also promote their dignified reintegration into society.
6. The views of institutional stakeholders affirm that there is a need for a coordinated and inclusive approach to enhance skill development and livelihood programs for PDLs at Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm. This includes expanding market-relevant training, strengthening partnerships with TESDA and DA, involving educational institutions in continuous instruction and evaluation, and engaging NGOs for resource provision, marketing, and reintegration support, all within a comprehensive, multi-sectoral framework for sustainable rehabilitation.

RECOMMENDATION

In the light of the findings of the study and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are advanced:

1. Sustain the current livelihood initiatives by institutionalizing regular performance reviews, feedback mechanisms, and stakeholder consultations to maintain quality implementation while expanding coverage to reach more PDLs, especially in underrepresented facilities or sectors.
2. Integrate enterprise development components such as marketing, customer service, budgeting, and product branding into existing livelihood modules to ensure that PDLs are not only job-ready but also equipped to start and manage small-scale businesses upon release.

3. Integrate regular stakeholder dialogues and participatory evaluation sessions into the Livelihood and Skill Development Program itself, ensuring active involvement of both PDLs and BuCor personnel. These sessions will serve as platforms to address perceptual gaps, align expectations, and collaboratively refine program components—especially in poverty reduction, access to resources, social inclusion, and empowerment—while reinforcing shared understanding in skills development and sustainable reintegration. To further strengthen the program’s long-term impact in line with the six sustainability dimensions, these activities should focus on cultivating essential skills such as financial literacy, entrepreneurial management, technical proficiency in livelihood trades, quality control, marketing, and customer service, enabling PDLs to secure gainful employment or establish sustainable microenterprises upon reintegration into the community.
4. Consider redesigning the livelihood and skill development programs at Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm in alignment with the study’s findings, which underscore the need for coordinated efforts across sectors. This includes expanding access to market-relevant training, strengthening partnerships with TESDA and the Department of Agriculture, facilitating ongoing instruction and evaluation through educational institutions, and engaging NGOs in material provision, product promotion, and post-release support. These strategies will contribute to sustainable rehabilitation and long-term livelihood opportunities for Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs).
5. Adopt and institutionalize a sustainable business model that integrates value chain development, branding, certification, cooperative partnerships, and post-release entrepreneurial pathways. Ensure access to microfinancing, market linkages, and mentorship for PDLs to transition from prison-based training to real income-generating activities that support long-term reintegration.

Proposed Business Model for PDL Products and Services

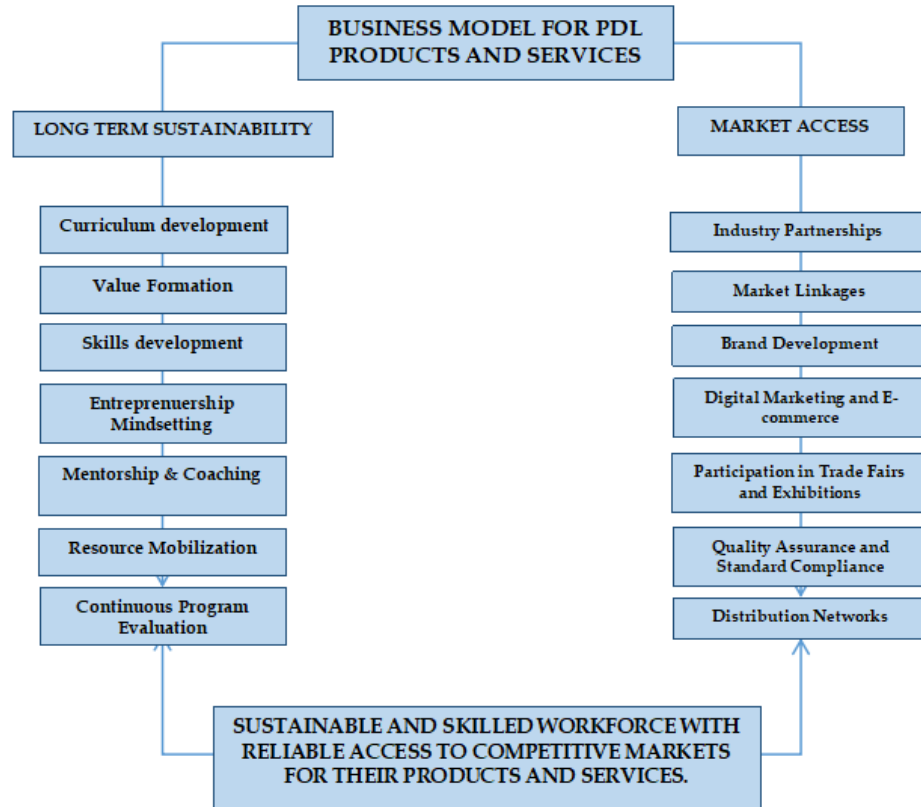


Figure 1: Business Model for PDL Products and Services (Balanoba, 2025)

This business model for PDL products and services integrates two critical components—**long-term sustainability** and **market access**—to achieve a holistic and enduring impact. Long-term sustainability is pursued through curriculum development, value formation, skills development, entrepreneurship mindsetting, continuous program evaluation, resource mobilization, and mentorship and coaching, ensuring that Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) gain relevant competencies, strong work ethics, and self-reliance. In parallel, market access is strengthened through industry partnerships, market linkages, brand development, digital marketing and e-commerce, participation in trade fairs and exhibitions, adherence to quality standards, and establishment of distribution networks, enabling PDL products and services to reach competitive local, national, and global markets. Together, these strategies result in a **sustainable and skilled workforce with reliable access to competitive markets for their products and services**, fostering economic empowerment, rehabilitation, and social reintegration.

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