

Volume 6



The PACAP¹² Area-Focus Approach

Philippines-Australia Community Assistance Program (PACAP)

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)



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Area-Focus Approach

Area-Focus Approach or AFA is a pioneering effort of PACAP and its partner, Coalition of Social Development Organisations of South Cotabato (CSDO–SC) in the planning and implementation of the **Mt. Matutum Integrated Conservation and Development Project (MICADEV)**. Although it is the lone and pioneer project in this category, a number of best practices and insights or learnings have already been noted.

I. Best Practices

A. Sound Project Management Design

The sound project management design feature of the MICADEV-AFA project is manifested in all phases of the project. The very base for the MICADEV-AFA project—the situational analyses undertaken by the Louis Berger International, Inc. (LBI) and the CSDO (in their respective areas of assignment) and the ensuing multilevel planning—are already indicators of the design’s soundness. It also took into consideration the MICADEV Program of the SOCSARGEN TWG (now the PAMB) which is relatively comprehensive. The parallelism between the two development interventions was also ensured.

In the ensuing phases, the objectives set were clearly defined and consistent with the needs identified in the study and assessments done by CSDO-SC members. The project implementers were chosen on the basis of their capacity to implement an integrated development project. Consistent and true to the AFA principles, the MMPL area was subdivided into six areas, with each one assigned to one of the six CSDO-SC members. Thus, there was simultaneous implementation of all the core components. PACAP’s involvement came mostly in the form of upscaling the activities of previous development efforts—allowing for buildup on previous gains that defined the use of current resources in the area.

These are just among the successful and careful steps initially taken by the implementors that point to the soundness of project management and design.

B. Sustainability Features

The project is based on assessed needs of the communities at the *sitio*-level. Each sub-project or component had built-in sustainability mechanisms. These components and mechanisms came in the form of livelihood projects, agro-forestry activities, and community organisation building. Annual targets had also been set for increases in annual membership shares to likewise increase PO capitalisation and business operations.

The fact that the MICADEV development agenda has been imbedded in the LGU's short-term, medium-term, and long-term development plans, as well as in the larger MICADEV Program of SOCSARGEN, is another sustainability feature. These LGU resolutions, ordinances, and executive orders institutionalised sectoral and other special concerns. With the continuous establishment and strengthening of strong buffer zones (social fence), the protection of the MMPL from future encroachment was ensured.

C. Strong People's Participation

Acquiring the people's participation in the project was the least difficult task. The people were easily mobilised because the interventions directly relate to their survival and security needs. From the design preparation up to the implementation and monitoring stages, participation, down to the *sitio* (portion of a *barangay* or *barrio*) level, was very apparent. The formation of several core groups to conduct the community mapping and delineation of the MMPL zones also aided in the mobilisation. These core groups led the drafting of the final project design which was the result of a tedious ten-month consultation and planning—from the *sitio* to the provincial level.

This quality of participation was sustained and even intensified at the Project Implementation Team's monthly meetings where issues and concerns affecting on-field implementation are discussed and the formulation of common policies undertaken. These meetings became venues for the review of common policies, the sharing of information, and the exchange of experiences. Monitoring teams are composed of members of the communities as well as representatives from other stakeholders.

D. Innovativeness

Perhaps the most innovative feature of the project was the way it accommodated cultural diversity among the communities and integrated indigenous traditions of the communities into the project design. This is the first PACAP project that involved as many as six non-government organisations and mobilised as many as 56 communities in one project. The proactive role taken by PACAP to ensure that project goals and activities were parallel with the development agenda of the more comprehensive MICADEV concept is also a first.

Aside from the "firsts", the project is also commendable for its recognition of important sectoral concerns. Gender and women's concerns have been incorporated in the different educational and social awareness activities. Various activities in the project consciously encourage the participation of women and indigenous peoples.

E. Environment Protection

Only the most appropriate technology was used in the buffer zones. The project also followed the dictum of any environment conservation and protection program—the livelihood and quality of life of the communities living in the protected area should be improved to ease pressure on the environment.

II. Insights and Learnings

A. Area-Focus Approach

What brings the actors together? What keeps them together? Dr. Nietes notes that the MICADEV-AFA project looks simple but it is actually a very complex undertaking with so many stakeholders, too many problems, and too many activities. The area-focus approach (AFA) is the unifying element of the entire project. It should be noted, though, that it did not start this way. There were many interventions in place in the area and, slowly, the program evolved into an AFA project through collaboration and linking. There was a consequent upscaling of projects.

B. Small Efforts to Form Bigger Programs

Instead of the traditional method of cutting up big areas into smaller pieces, MICADEV concentrated on previous small efforts and brought these small efforts together to form a bigger program.

C. LOGFRAME as a Planning Tool

The project also demonstrated the LOGFRAME's capability as an effective planning tool. It became very useful to managers down to the community level.

D. Well-Defined System of Protection

MICADEV made a distinction between the MMPL and the watershed. The project addressed the watershed concerns. There was a clear identification of zones in the watershed area and a well-defined system of protection.

E. Legislative Support

Legal pronouncements supported the institutionalisation of MICADEV-AFA.

F. Elements of the Project Design

Aside from the AFA, other elements of the outstanding project design are the following: people's participation, donors' concerns, and galvanising efforts of the stakeholders.

G. Critical Project Elements

The MICADEV-AFA project also showed that complex projects can be accomplished. Dr. Nietes points to strong people's participation as the critical element. Another important element is the environment. The rest of the project components

are geared towards releasing the stress posed on the environment.

H. Sustainability

The thrust for sustainability should be highlighted as well. There was institutional LGU support and multilevel participation. The use of the learning process approach facilitates the project's adaptation to changes. Dr. Nietes also drew attention to the following financial sustainability issues:

- Capability to sustain internal financial services;
- High internal rate of return of investments;
- Attracts more support from other funding agencies;
- Reduces dependence on external sources.

I. Tenurial Security

Although the presenter clarified that, at present, tenurial instrument is not an issue, as this may be granted to residents and provide security to the farmers, the reactor cited the case of BUNGA where tenurial security remains to be an issue despite a decade of operations. ■

Case Summary

- *Mt. Matutum Integrated Conservation and Development (MICADEV) Project*



Mt. Matutum Integrated Conservation and Development (MICADEV) Project

of the Coalition of Social Development Organisations of South Cotabato (CSDO-SC)

I. Background

A. Project Site

Mindanao's agro-industrial belt lies in the resource-rich provinces of South Cotabato and Sarangani. The area is host to large local and foreign agribusiness firms and enjoys a proliferation of skilled workers, attracted by the many job opportunities around. It has a strong and well-organised business sector. Non Government Organisations (NGOs) and Local Government Units (LGUs) enjoy good working relationship with one another.

Almost half of the SOCSARGEN land area is classified as alienable and disposable (A&D). Sixty nine percent (69%) of the A&D areas is characterised by flat to rolling terrain ideal for various agro-economic activities. The rest are forestlands, of which more than half is reserve or protected forests. Proponents of the SOCSARGEN growth area foresaw the importance of making economic growth go hand in hand with appropriate measures to protect, conserve and develop natural resources. The most critical resource by far is water. Hence it is only natural that attention would turn to Mt. Matutum, main watershed of the SOCSARGEN Growth Area.

Mt. Matutum supplies twenty five percent (25%) of the water for agriculture, industry, and commercial activities in the SOCSARGEN growth area. Rivers, creeks, streams, and

underground water flowing to the plains of South Cotabato, Sarangani, and General Santos City have their sources in the Mt. Matutum watershed. Recognising this, Pres. Fidel Ramos issued Presidential Proclamation No. 552 in 1995, also called the National Integrated Protected Area System (NIPAS), declaring the Mt. Matutum landscape a protected area. From its original 14,773 hectares, the area increased to 45,659 hectares to include buffer zones which were established around the watershed.



The Mt. Matutum Protected Landscape (MMPL) covers fourteen (14) *barangays* and fifty six (56) *sitios* and *puroks* (a portion of a *barangay* or *barrio*) belonging to four (4) municipalities of South Cotabato and in Sarangani. Forty one percent (41%) of the population are indigenous B'laans. The rest are migrant-settlers from other parts of the country. A 1995 socio-economic survey recorded 1,592 households living in the area with an average household income of PhP1,988.

The most urgent problems of the watershed are 1) rapid extinction of wildlife; 2) flash floods resulting in soil erosion, siltation, and soil fertility depletion; 3) shortage of water supply for domestic, agricultural, and industrial uses, and 4) more frequent occurrences of droughts and longer dry seasons—sure signs of an environment badly stressed by the economic activities of the humans surviving in its midst. Some of these problems were believed to be caused by the following:

- 1) denudation of forest cover due to illegal logging and forest fires;
- 2) timber poaching and conversion of forest areas into agricultural lands;
- 3) migration and massive buying of local occupancy rights;
- 4) lack of political will and coordinated plans to enforce relevant environmental laws;
- 5) lack of opportunities for economic participation of the settlers.

B. The MICADEV Technical Working Group (TWG)

The MICADEV TWG was convened to oversee activities within the growth belt. To have an overview of the task it was given, the TWG contracted the Louis Berger International, Inc. (LBII), an environment consultancy firm, to conduct a baseline study of the Mt. Matutum landscape. LBII conducted its assessment and recommended an integrated development approach for the growth area to a multi-sectoral body assembled to hear its report.

C. Getting the Act Together

The following is a listing of NGOs, people's organisations and similar other entities which played major roles in the SOCSARGEN-Mt. Matutum Project. These are mentioned to show the tremendous interest and concern this economic zone of the Philippine countryside was eliciting from all over. The listing also shows the engagement of Philippines–Australia Community Assistance Program (PACAP) as a major player in the MMPL area.

a. The Mahintana Foundation Inc. (MFI) was among the earliest to take interest in this economic growth zone in Mindanao. MFI worked with Dole- Philippines and the USAID on tree-planting and livelihood support projects. At the same time, PACAP also supported

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stand-alone livelihood projects in the communities of Palkan and Maligo and in Polomolok in South Cotabato.

b. MICADEV Technical Working Group (TWG) was convened in 1994 to coordinate all activities related to the MMPL. The TWG evolved to become the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) and was tasked with the overall implementation of the MICADEV program. Its activities included ecosystem management, community organising, sustainable land development technologies, rehabilitation of degraded areas, and protection of resources.

c. Coalition of Social Development Organisation of South Cotabato (CSDO-SC) is an NGO network working for people's organisations, local government units at the *barangay*, municipal, and provincial levels, and national government agencies operating in and around the MMPL area. The creation of the CSDO-SC was considered a pioneering initiative in the Mindanao development sector. Because of its strong network and level of organisational development, PACAP chose it as its partner when it shifted to area-focused approach to development.

d. Foundation for the Philippine Environment or FPE is credited with the massive social preparation activities undertaken in the MMPL. FPE gave funds to Coalition of Social Services Organisations of South Cotabato (CSDO-SC), which enabled it to conduct a socio-economic survey, bio-resource assessment, and inventory of the developmental plans of LGUs and other entities. FPE funding also allowed CSDO-SC to consolidate forty (40) core groups whose various activities covered a concert of concerns over the MMPL. Through the assistance of CSDO groups, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the LGUs, CSDO-SC succeeded in conducting community mapping and the delineating the MMPL into management zones. Engr. Fred Fredeluces of MFI notes, "It was the FPE that impressed upon us the concept of a site-focused approach to development."

e. PACAP supported livelihood projects in Palkan and Maligo, both within the MMPL area, in Polomolok, South Cotabato. But these were mostly stand-alone projects. A major policy change evolved when after a 1997 administrative review, AusAID activities in the Philippines shifted focus from stand-alone types of projects to "a responsive program of area development with a strong capability building focus." This is the starting point of the MICADEV-Area Focus Approach or MICADEV-AFA which PACAP undertook in partnership with the 21-member coalition, CSDO-SC.

D. MICADEV-AFA

The 1997 AusAID administrative review tasked PACAP to transform its assistance scheme from "an aggregation of individual projects into a responsive program of area development," giving consideration to developing non-exclusive sectoral priorities within priority sectors." This entailed choosing a geographic area where integrated and complementary interventions could be delivered. The objective was to create a sizable sustainable impact from the mobilisation of a "critical mass, "to support priority issues and development activities.

After a thorough review, PACAP selected the SOCSARGEN area as the regional focus of its first AFA. Further consultation workshops with key development players identified

South Cotabato as the pilot province. The same consultation workshops also picked the CSDO-SC as its implementers. CSDO-SC worked in area-specific clusters and operationalised integrated approaches for multi-stakeholder partnerships. They promoted their agenda through community participation, environmental protection and conservation, and socio-economic development activities. PACAP chose the MICADEV cluster for its initial area-focus approach.

The MICADEV-AFA project upscales the original MICADEV program. It was implemented in ten (10) different locations within the MMPL and required massive community organising. PACAP funds made up sixty three percent (63%) of the PhP54,087,274 invested in the MMPL. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of the PACAP funds was allocated for forest rehabilitation while twenty-five (25%) percent was set aside for socio-economic development.

The overall goal of the MICADEV-AFA is to “sustain the MMPL watershed using an integrated area development approach, establishing viable community enterprises, promoting multi-sectoral partnership, and enhancing community participation.”

Major components of the project are:

- 1) environment and resource management,
- 2) community organising and organisational development,
- 3) economic assistance and livelihood development,
- 4) basic social services,
- 5) infrastructure, and
- 6) advocacy.

E. Area-Focus Approach

AFA is a management and implementation strategy that seeks to unite stakeholders within a common or complementary agenda and focuses development initiatives and resources on a single geographically contiguous and clearly delineated area. Area-focus approach strives to harness diverse multi-sectoral resources and agenda toward larger common goals. This requires an extraordinary ability on the part of the development agency to consolidate all the activities of the actors or players and harness them toward these common goals. To achieve this, some fundamental elements must be in place, namely: 1) LGU support; 2) Multi-sectoral and multi-level coordination; 3) Learning focus process.

F. LGU Support

LGUs extended counterpart financial as well as other resources to the MICADEV project. They issued resolutions, ordinances, and executive orders to provide the legal mandate for MMPL-related activities. LGUs on their part were hoping that the activities of PACAP and its partners will reduce calamities in the area and alleviate the poverty and lack of social services hounding the communities.

G. Multisectoral and Multilevel Coordination

AFA required close coordination among key players, particularly the NGOs and LGUs. Thematic or sectoral concerns were incorporated into larger educational and social awareness-

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raising activities. Multi-sectoral concerns may range broadly—from economic to gender, to the environment, to ecologically sound agricultural practices, and on to issues affecting indigenous peoples whose lifeways are sorely threatened by encroaching development.

H. Learning Process Focus

Within the notion of learning process focus—accomplishments, changes, and transformation in one project area become the springboard for further learning by other project areas. This approach helped in rationalising decisions to expand to or replicate the projects in other sites.

I. Participation and Subsidiarity

MICADEV encourages people directly affected by issues in the MMPL to participate in the program. CSDO and PACAP strived to design reflecting interests and concerns, from the stakeholders' perspective. Among the mechanisms devised for this purpose are the following:

1. Bottom-up planning

MICADEV-AFA uses the multilevel LOGFRAME planning technique. Under this technique, project officers facilitate planning at the *sitio* or *purok* level. Output at this stage is consolidated with *barangay* plans. Barangays then feed their visions and objectives to municipal development plans to guide the project's implementation at the municipal level. Finally, the municipal level plans are introduced into the provincial plans.

All the stakeholders are represented at all levels of the planning process. MICADEV's development agenda are also embedded at each level, contributing to the institutionalisation of MICADEV approaches and strategies. With LGU planning activities lasting from eight to ten days each, the entire process takes about ten months to complete. Upon approval of the plans it goes back for implementation to the barangay and the municipal government units.

2. Coordinated Project Management

Committees monitor the accomplishments of the MICADEV-AFA at the *sitio/purok* levels. A Project Implementation Team (PIT), composed of project officers and bookkeepers monitor and assess accomplishments as well as ensure unity of purpose in the attainment of commonly set objectives. Regular PIT meetings are venues to review and formulate common policies, exchange experiences, opinions, and ideas, and share information and knowledge. Issues and concerns affecting implementation are discussed and resolved here as well.

J. Sustainability

Sustainability is seen at several levels:

1. Financial Sustainability

Projects' designs have built-in sustainability mechanisms. Targets are set for livelihood revolving funds. The PO and the NGO each get their respective share. The NGO share goes into administrative expenses and the replication and expansion of the livelihood

programs. CSDO-SC has established a trust fund to sustain its own future operations.

2. Project/Commercial Sustainability

People's organisation set their own targets in the agro-forestry area. A percentage of income from these projects is levied as share of the PO and the NGO.

3. Institutional Stability

POs target a PhP1000 share capital per member. This is meant to generate institutional capital for expansion of business operations and improvement of organisational sustainability. POs accomplish only 40 percent of this target since most members are farmers who earn only every three to four months. POs adjust and divide the target amount into installments based on income during the harvest months. Most members are able to give only partial contributions.

K. Critical Issues and Felt Needs

In general, MICADEV-AFA interventions were direct responses to the socio-economic needs of the communities within the MMPL.

- Disastrous floods, droughts, and deadly forest fires were occurrences linked to environmental stress.
- Degraded soil quality resulted in diminishing agricultural yield.
- Communities lacked water supply for household use.
- Logging was rampant as a regular source of livelihood for most people living in the area. The projects undertaken under CSDO-PACAP partnerships were direct responses to these social problems.

On the other, hand environmental concerns lay equal claim over any social development efforts. Interventions within the MMPL must look both ways—to the survival needs of the people, as well as the protection and conservation of the environment. AFA requires developers to view their activities in a more holistic frame and are compelled by the MMPL to adopt an integral approach in their intervention designs.

II. Presentation Highlights

Mr. Martiniano L. Magdolot presented the best features of the MICADEV-AFA project during the PACAP Partners Conference. In his presentation, Mr. Magdolot cited the following as best features: 1) sound project management design, 2) sustainability features, 3) strong people's organisation, 4) innovation, and 5) recognition of important sectoral concerns.

A. Sound Project Management Design

The following are the outstanding management features design of the MICADEV-AFA project:

- a. Planning for MICADEV-AFA projects was based on sound data provided by Louis Berger International, Inc. and the CSDO-AFA
- b. The project took into consideration the more comprehensive MICADEV Program of

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the SOCSARGEN TWG (now the PAMB). The proposal was revised eight times in a span of less than a year to ensure parallelism and dovetailing.

- c. Project objectives were clearly defined and are consistent with the needs identified in the LBII study and ensuing assessments of CSDO-SC and some of its members.
- d. Project implementers were chosen based on their proven experience and capacity to handle an integrated development project. Except for one, PACAP has had previous working relations with the CSDO-SC member-organisations working in MMPL.
- e. The MMPL area was subdivided into six areas. Each area was assigned to one of the six CSDO-SC members. One CSDO-SC member focused on one MMPL area so that the implementation of all the core components in all six areas went on simultaneously. The managers of the six NGOs formed a Project Management Committee (PMC) which met once a month to assess the progress of the project and to discuss the issues arising from each group's respective areas. A similar Project Implementing Team (PIT) was formed, composed of the project officers of each of the six NGOs, PO and LGU representatives. The PIT met once a month to discuss situations in their area.
- f. All the CSDO-SC members involved in the project had set up a sound Financial Management System (FMS) and updated financial records, consistent with PACAP standards. Audits were conducted on the project to validate this.
- g. PACAP interventions were directed at upscaling the activities of development efforts since 1995. Activities were built on previous gains, allowing for the efficient use of current resources in the area and eliminated duplication of efforts.

B. Sustainability Features

1. Sustainability Mechanisms

The projects were based on assessed needs of the communities at the *sitio* level. Each sub-project or component had sustainability mechanisms built into them.

2. Community Organisation Building

Annual targets are set for additional annual membership shares to increase PO capitalisation and business operations. Aside from these inherent sustainability mechanisms, MICADEV development agenda are also imbedded in the LGU's short-term, medium-term, and long-term development plans as well as in the larger MICADEV Program of SOCSARGEN.

3. LGU Involvement

LGU resolutions, ordinances, and executive orders have institutionalised sectoral and other special concerns. LGUs have also allocated IRA for MMPL projects. Finally, the continuous establishment and strengthening of strong buffer zones (social fences) have ensured the protection of the MMPL from environmentally destructive economic activities.

C. Strong People's Participation

People participation in MICADEV projects begin from the *sitio* level and works up to the level of the province. Activities that demonstrate this are the following.

1. the FPE-funded community mapping and delineation of the MMPL zones

2. exhaustive consultations undertaken at all levels to make sure that everyone's concerns are heard and given attention; the final project design was the result of a tedious ten-month planning from sitio level to the provincial level
3. mutual accomplishment pattern works between the project and the POs themselves; POs recognise accomplishments as their own because of the active roles they have played in planning and implementation (these activities may range from loan facilitation to construction of water system, to tree planting, etc)
4. PIT monthly meetings discuss issues and concerns affecting on-field implementation; meetings are venues for review and formulation of common policies, information sharing, and exchange of experiences
5. monitoring teams are composed of members of the communities as well as representatives from other stakeholders
6. people's participation in the project is easily mobilised because the interventions relate immediately to their survival and security needs

D. Innovation

1. The project accommodated cultural diversities among the communities and integrated indigenous traditions of the communities into the project design.
2. This is the first PACAP project that involves as many as six non-government organisations and mobilised as many as 56 communities in one project. Project reach in a period of less than two years has no precedent in PACAP history.
3. PACAP has taken a proactive role for the first time to ensure that project goals and activities were parallel with the development agenda of the more comprehensive MICADEV concept.

E. Recognition of Important Sectoral Concerns

The project has given cognition to important sectoral concerns.

1. Gender and women's concerns have been incorporated in the different educational and social awareness activities.
2. Various activities in the project consciously encourage the participation of women and indigenous peoples.
3. Appropriate farming technologies were used by the communities serving as buffer zones. The project also lived up to the dictum of any environment conservation and protection program—the livelihood and quality of life of the communities living in the protected area should be improved to ease pressure on the environment. The management zones determine the ways by which the communities could live harmoniously with their environment.

F. Initial Impact

Two years into the project, the following results were noted:

1. Reduced incidence of flooding. This could be attributed to reduction in timber poaching, planting of trees along gullies, and prevention of further encroachment into forest areas. Incidence of slash-and-burn agriculture and forest fires was also minimised.

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2. Stricter enforcement of environmental laws.
3. More Community Organisations (COs), People's Organisations (POs), and co-ops organised.
4. More people served and given agricultural production support.
5. Increased income for co-op members.
6. Improved delivery of social services and more infrastructures provided.

In general, the MICADEV-AFA provided intensive and extensive learning experiences that might be useful for fine-tuning the design of future area-focused initiatives.

III. Reactor's Comments

Dr. Pulcra M. Nietes points out that there are only two questions to ask to determine how this complex project has succeeded: "What brings the actors together? What keeps them together?" The following are excerpts from her notes:

A. MICADEV's Goals

The goal statements are simple and clear. They are also well-matched with the actual undertakings of the COs, POs, LGUs, and NGOs operating within the MMPL area.

B. People's Participation

Evidence of active people's participation at all levels is clear on the methods and processes adopted by the MICADEV-AFA, from planning to implementation to monitoring and evaluation.

C. Gender as a Special Concern

Several projects target the particular needs of women, such as water supply. Women leaders were accepted and respected. They could access assistance for any economic venture they may want to engage in at par with the men without obstacle or discrimination.

D. Environment as a Unifying Factor

A harsh environment spares no one. Everybody fears a future where nature is unable to replenish itself and provide humans with what they need. Yet poverty has its claims, too. Any mission to protect the environment will not succeed unless the survival needs of people are attended to first. AFA approach to development seem to have this dimension covered.

E. Sustainability

LGU support and multilevel participation are twin factors increasing the sustainability of MICADEV-AFA. LGUs provide legislation to support environment projects. The use of the learning process approach facilitates the project's adaptability to changes. Dr. Nietes also draws attention to the following financial sustainability issues:

- Capability to sustain internal financial services
- High internal rate of return of investments
- Capacity to attract more support from other funding agencies

- Reduced dependence on external source

Dr. Nietes closed her discussion of reactions by pointing to the following issues that were not mentioned in the case study. These are 1) tenurial security; 2) turnover mechanisms, and 3) integration as an indicator of quality of inputs, outputs, and the process itself.

IV. Conference Interaction

Discussion during the interaction session focused on specific aspects of the project. Some of the more important ones that may be considered learning areas are listed below.

A. Tenurial Issue

In Mt. Matutum, tenurial instrument is not an issue. It can be issued to residents to give security to the farmers. The project manages them where they are. Two experiences were raised to prove that tenurial security could be a problem in MICADEV. Fundamentally in MICADEV, LGUs and other stakeholders recognise the settlement of people, especially in zoning management activities.

B. Planting Pineapples

A participant asked if there is something being done to convince the plantation owners to stop planting pineapples in the watershed. There are two separate issues involved in this matter:

1. Pineapple plantations are not within the protected areas; these are usually found in titled lands outside the area.
2. It is not a matter of convincing people to plant pineapple or other marketable trees since one of the project's advocacy is to create buffer communities and other areas to plant trees. The issue is how to design a planting and farm management mechanism.

V. Insights and Learnings

A summary of learnings from the MICADEV-AFA follows:

- a. Planning and the usefulness of the LOGFRAME as a planning tool.
- b. Implementation is smooth because it emphasised commonalities, strong partnership bonds, broad-based participation, and had a clear advocacy agenda.
- c. Unity of purpose and willingness to work together seems to be the key to the success of the project.
- d. Success of the project may be attributed in no small part to the generosity of the funding agencies—FPE and PACAP.
- e. Integration cannot be forced but it can be imbibed slowly or learned from interaction. It is something that Filipinos excel as Dr. Nietes says. One can only hope it is so.

In a synthesis by the facilitator, Mr. Arturo Aportadera, the success of the MICADEV-AFA project is attributed to the following elements. These elements have been previously mentioned and are repeated here for emphasis.

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- a. a project is bound by an ecosystem;
- b. the use of indigenous collaboration mechanisms such as the *toka-toka* system (an indigenous way of collaboration—stakeholders make no agreements in terms of how much each partner would contribute but each commits to contribute regardless of the costs);
- c. effective change management mechanisms;
- d. strong collaboration among NGOs, LGUs, and private sector;
- e. environmental sustainability; and
- f. imbibing of emerging technologies. ■

Case Study

- *Mt. Matutum Integrated Conservation and Development (MICADEV) Project*



The Mt. Matutum Integrated Conservation and Development (MICADEV) Project

of the Coalition of Social Development Organisation of South Cotabato (CSDO-SC)¹

I. Background

The MICADEV-AFA was a participatory area-focused integrated development project implemented in the Mount Matutum Protected Landscape (MMPL)² under the leadership of the Coalition of Social Development Organisations of South Cotabato (CSDO-SC).³ The CSDO was an NGO network working with people's organisations (PO), local government units (LGUs) at the *barangay*, municipal, and provincial levels, and national government agencies (NGA) operating in and around the geographical area covered by the MMPL.

The Mt. Matutum Protected Landscape (MMPL) and its surrounding communities comprised a total of 45,659 hectares.⁴ The surrounding communities included 14 *barangays* and 56 *sitios/puroks* belonging to three municipalities in South Cotabato and one municipality in Sarangani Province (list attached).

¹ A case study presented during the PACAP partners conference held at Grand Regal Hotel, Davao City on 19-20 April 2001.

² Declared a protected area in 1995 under the National Integrated Protected Area System (NIPAS) Law, covering an area of 14,773 hectares.

³ These members included Mahintana Foundation, Inc. (MFI), South Cotabato Foundation, Inc. (SCFI), Maguindanaon Development Foundation, Inc. (MDFI), *Samahan ng mga Magsasaka sa Timog Kutabato* (SAMATIKU), and the Justice and Peace of the Social Action Centre (JP-SAC) of the Catholic Diocese of Marbel.

⁴ MMPL area was 14,773 hectares, but MICADEV interventions also included development of buffer zone communities, hence, expanding the coverage area to 45,659 hectares.

II. The SOCSARGEN Growth Area

The SOCSARGEN⁵ area was said to be Mindanao's "agro-industrial and commercial belt with the presence of large local and foreign agribusiness firms and a skilled workforce as well as the existence of basic physical and commercial infrastructures that could support the area's value-added food systems."⁶ Forty-nine per cent (49%) of SOCSARGEN's land area was alienable and disposable (A&D), while the rest (51%) was forestland. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of the A&D areas were suited for agricultural production while more than half of the forestlands were classified as protection forests. The growth centre had a well-organised and strong local business sector that

had good working relationships with non-government organisations (NGOs) and the LGUs.

Some proponents of the SOCSARGEN growth centre believed that while promoting economic growth in the area, it was important to protect, conserve and develop the natural resources needed to sustain that growth. Water was considered the most important and critical natural resource, and attention was drawn to Mt. Matutum. Mt Matutum was the main watershed of rivers, creeks, streams, and underground water flowing down to the plains of South Cotabato, Sarangani, and General Santos City.

General Information on Mt. Matutum

Mt. Matutum was a dormant volcano, declared as a forest reserve in 1964 through Presidential Proclamation No. 293.

- **Height:** 2,286 m. above sea level.
- **Total Area:** 14,773 has distributed among four municipalities belonging to the provinces of South Cotabato and Sarangani.
- **Total Reserve Area:** 14,008 hectares.
- **Total Forest Area (1992):** 3,200 has.
- **Total Forest Area (1996):** 2,500 has. (Primary growth forest was estimated to be only 1,000 has; secondary forest cover was about 1,500 has).

The rest of the original Mt. Matutum area had been converted into agricultural lands or had degenerated to grasslands.

Total MMPL area covered:

South Cotabato:

- Tupi : 8,320 has
- Polomolok : 3,353 has
- Tampakan : 1,205 has

Sarangani:

- Malungon : 1,895 has

SOCSARGEN's Technical Working Group (TWG) tasked an international consultant, Louis Berger International, Inc. (LBII), to conduct a baseline study of the Mt. Matutum landscape. The study sought to determine the issues and concerns affecting the mountain as a watershed area. The results of the study were presented to a multi-sectoral group. After some consultations, it was clear that developing Mt. Matutum as a watershed would not be a simple undertaking. It would require an integrated development approach.

⁵ Refers to South Cotabato and Sarangani Provinces and General Santos City. Later, the Province of Sultan Kudarat was added to the growth centre calling it SOCSKARGEN area.

⁶ "Focusing in South Cotabato", The Mt. Matutum Integrated Conservation and Development Program (unpublished material), copy provided by South Cotabato Foundation, Inc.

III. The Mt. Matutum Protected

Landscape (MMPL)

Mt. Matutum supplied 25% of the water required to support the different agricultural, industrial and commercial activities being undertaken in the SOCSARGEN Growth Area. Mt. Matutum had some critical problems, however, and the most urgent of them included the following:

- Rapid extinction of wild life (flora and fauna);
- Flash floods resulting in soil erosion, siltation, and soil fertility depletion;
- Shortage of water supply for domestic, agricultural, and industrial uses; and
- More frequent occurrences of droughts and longer dry seasons.

These problems were attributed to (a) denudation of forest cover due to illegal logging and forest fires, (b) timber poaching and conversion of forest areas into agricultural lands for economic activities, (c) migration and massive buying of local occupancy rights, (d) lack of political will and coordinated plans to enforce relevant environmental laws that protect the Mt. Matutum forest areas and (e) lack of participation and economic opportunities of the settlers.

About 68% of the total area was characterised by flat to rolling terrain ideal for various agro-economic activities. Surrounding the MMPL were 14 *barangays* and 56 *sitios/puroks* populated not only by the indigenous B'laans (original inhabitants of the area), but also by migrant-settlers from other parts of the country. A 1995 socio-economic survey by MICADEV reported that there were 1,592 households or a total of at least 8,000 individuals, occupying the MMPL communities. About 41% of these were B'laans and 59% were migrant-settlers. Average household monthly income was estimated to be PhP1,988.00.

IV. Initial Development Interventions

Development interventions were already underway in the MMPL area even before the design for MICADEV was finalised, most of them spearheaded by Mahintana Foundation, Inc. (MFI). Some of these interventions included tree planting and livelihood support projects financed by MFI, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and Dole Philippines, Inc. The Philippine Australian Community Assistance Program (PACAP) also supported livelihood projects in the *barangays* of Palkan and Maligo, both within the MMPL area, in Polomolok, South Cotabato (See Box for MICADEV Activities Prior to MICADEV-AFA).

By 1994, the MICADEV Technical Working Group (TWG) started preparing the proposal and documents needed for the inclusion of MMPL as one of the protected sites under the National Integrated Protected Area System (NIPAS). After a thorough study and review of the proposal, the Mt. Matutum landscape was declared a protected area in March 1995 under Presidential Proclamation 552 (otherwise known as the NIPAS Law).

The NIPAS law strengthened the legal and institutional framework for the protection and conservation of the MMPL. The MICADEV TWG became the Protected Area

Management Board (PAMB) and was tasked with the overall implementation of the MICADEV program. Appropriate government agencies (including local AFP units) and civil society organisations were mandated or otherwise encouraged to implement and support the declaration. LGUs at the provincial, municipal and *barangay* levels established their own implementation mechanisms and allocated funds to enforce the NIPAS law.

A. FPE Involvement

In March 1995, the Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE) approved MICADEV and provided funding for environmental improvement programs in the MMPL. FPE's financial support enabled the CSDO-SC to begin organising about 40 core groups in the MMPL areas, some of which later developed into full-fledged people's organisations (PO). These core groups/POs helped the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the LGUs, and the

CSDO-SC members in the conduct of community mapping and in the delineation of the MMPL into different management zones.⁷ By August, 1995, the MICADEV TWG had been transformed into the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) and a month later Dolefil started annual support for MFI's Agroforestry Project.

⁷ These management zones are the following: Strict Protection Zone—areas of high diversity which is strictly closed for all human activity except for ceremonial or religious use by the indigenous people. Restoration Zone—degraded areas for restoration or regeneration of the natural wildlife habitat. Other Management Zones—areas delineated for specific uses but also based on sound land use management. Among these zones are cultural zones, habitat management zones, recreational zones, and other special zones.

Multiple-Use Zone—areas where settlement is allowed but should adhere to prescribed land use and management plan.

Buffer Zone—areas that serve as social fence to prevent encroachment into the protected area. This perimeter layer provides livelihood to the settlers based on sustainable resource utilisation.

CSDO Activities in Matutum Area Leading up to MICADEV-AFA

Ecosystem Management

- Conducted socio-economic survey and inventory of development plans
- Conducted bio-resource assessment
- Perimeter survey and monumentation of MMPL
- MMPL declared as part of the NIPAS Law
- Drafted Initial Protected Area Plan

Community Organising

- Conducted IEC in 14 *barangays*
- Conducted capability building & community organising, resulting in 4 *barangay*-based and 6 *sitio*-based POs
- 8 POs developed policies and management systems for economic and advocacy activities; linked to LGUs, DENR, DA, etc.

Sustainable Land Use Technologies

- 8 POs underwent training and exposure trips, developed demonstration farms, and availed of livelihood assistance to implement sustainable land use technologies

Rehab Of Degraded Areas

- Established central and community-based tree nurseries
- Planted 1,048 hectares of forest trees in water heads and critical drainage gullies
- Planted 124.9 hectares of fruit trees
- Planted additional 244.7 hectares of forest trees

Protection Of Resources

- Core groups organised in 14 *barangays*.
- Community-based and multi-sectoral institutional mechanisms in place for resource management:
 - Multi-sectoral Forest Protection Committee
 - Protected Area Management Boards (PAMB)

Internal policy changes in PACAP sought to move assistance away from unrelated stand-alone programs, towards area focused resource-based programs that featured integrated and complementary initiatives.

PACAP assistance sought to encourage multiple stakeholders to commonly address objectives like environmental protection or enterprise development. PACAP hoped to do this by means of holistic programs that included environmental, political, law-enforcement, economic, cultural and social activities. These activities were in turn linked to each other by means of common multi-level plans, logistical frameworks, operational mechanisms and mutually shared standards and success indicators.

What made this seemingly complex task manageable was that the programs would be undertaken in clearly delineated geographic areas where relevant initiatives already existed and were ripe for further development and up-scaling.

The creation of the CSDO-SC was considered a pioneer initiative in the Mindanao development sector.

Its member organisations had coalesced to unify their members' vision and direction, consolidate their resources, and to mainstream their development efforts into the greater SOCSARGEN area.

MICADEV Program Coordinator, Engineer Fred B. Fredeluces of the MFI said, “It was the FPE that impressed (upon us) the concept of a site-focused approach. It funded critical activities like the socio-economic survey, bio-resource assessment, and inventory of development plans (LGUs and others). It likewise provided small amounts to support livelihood activities of the POs. We can say that FPE really started the massive social preparation activities in the MMPL.”

V. PACAP-CSDO Partnership

Following a 1997 Administrative Review, the Philippine-Australian Community Assistance Program (PACAP) was tasked to transform its assistance scheme “from an aggregation of individual projects into a responsive program of area development with a strong

capability building focus”. PACAP was moving towards giving “consideration to further developing non-exclusive sectoral priorities within priority sectors... developed at the level of the local area program... and in close consultation with local partners”.

To operationalise this transformation, there was a need to focus PACAP interventions on a specific geographic area where integrated and complementary interventions could be delivered using a “holistic and programmatic

approach”. PACAP referred to this scheme as the “area focus approach” or AFA. AFA was expected to “encourage a resource-based program that (would) promote the participation of area-based delivery structures to implement integrated and sustainable development activities”. The objective was to create a sizable sustainable impact by mobilising a

NGO Members of CSDO Operating in the MICADEV Cluster

- Mahintana Foundation, Inc. (MFI),
- South Cotabato Foundation, Inc. (SCFI),
- Maguindanaon
- Development Foundation, Inc. (MDFI),
- *Samahan ng mga Magsasaka sa Timog Kutabato* (SAMATIKU)
- Justice and Peace Program of the Social Action Centre (JP-SAC) of the Catholic Diocese of Marbel, and
- Landan People's Multi-Purpose Cooperative (LPMPC).

“critical mass” in support of priority issues and development activities.

PACAP chose the SOCSARGEN area as the regional focus for its first AFA after having conducted a thorough review of area conditions, existing initiatives by NGOs, donors and the government, and an evaluation against key PACAP criteria.⁸ After conducting a series of consultation-workshops with key development players⁹ in the SOCSARGEN area, PACAP identified South Cotabato as the pilot province. These consultation-workshops also identified three networks of non-government organisations as possible implementers of the approach. Among the three, the 21-member CSDO-SC were seen to be more advanced than the others, both in terms of the scope of its initiatives and in its level of organisational development.

The CSDO network worked in area-specific clusters where they operationalised integrated approaches for multi-stakeholder partnerships and promoted their agenda through community participation, environmental protection and conservation, and socio-economic development activities. These clusters included:

- MICADEV cluster, covering the Mt. Matutum area
- Tantangan cluster, covering the Municipality of Tantangan,
- Allah Valley Watershed Development cluster, covering Lake Sebu, T’boli, Surrelah, Sto. Niño, and Norala.

PACAP decided to initially support the MICADEV cluster where activities were being implemented by six CSDO-SC members. These NGOs were identified to implement the initial MICADEV-AFA project over a period of three years. The project was expected to directly benefit 11 people’s organisations (mostly cooperatives).

Although a MICADEV program had already been developed when PACAP entered the picture, project actors from both sides (PACAP and CSDO) agreed that these past and ongoing initiatives still needed a unifying thread. The problems in the area were complex and, though the CSDO had a vision of where it wanted the project to go, it had not really concretised this or established the details of how it would be achieved.

There was also a need to consider the fact that the project has had a number of supporters from among the donor, government and NGO communities, with each bringing in its expertise and resources to specific areas of interest. There was a need to pull all of these efforts together into a unified whole that would ensure that different areas of expertise were optimised, duplications were reduced and plans were unified. It was also necessary to ensure that over-all progress of the project could be tracked not only against the different actors’ individual program objectives, but against the over-all MICADEV goal and objectives.

According to Martiniano Magdolot, the entry of PACAP and the AFA scheme served to

⁸ A full discussion of the evaluation procedure that led to the identification of the SOCSARGEN Area and South Cotabato as focus for PACAP interventions is found in “Focusing in South Cotabato, the Mt. Matutum Integrated Conservation and Development Project”, an unpublished PACAP study.

⁹ CSDO-SC, Philippine Business for Social Progress, SOCSARGEN-Project Management Unit (PMU), Community Aid Abroad (CAA), Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD)-National Economic Development Authority (NEDA)-United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Southern Mindanao Agricultural Program (SMAP), Local Government Support Program (LGSP), Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO)-South Cotabato (SC), Protected Area Management Board (PAMB), Provincial Health Office (PHO), and others.

crystallise their plans and targets. PACAP gave assistance and advice to MICADEV as it sought to clarify its development perspective and long-term vision and, later, in concretising these concepts in formal documents (see attached MICADEV program's goal statement). Because of the many actors involved and the sheer scope of the initiative, the MICADEV-AFA project concept had to be revised 8 times in 1998.

VI. The MICADEV-AFA Program

The concerted efforts of PACAP, CSDO and affected communities in program conceptualisation resulted in the up-scaling of the original MICADEV into what became known as the MICADEV-AFA. Primary focus of the project was the development of buffer zone communities. The project's forest rehabilitation component, however, also covered the multiple-use zone, restoration zone, and other management zones. The project was to be implemented in ten different locations (*sitios/barangays*) within the MMPL.

The MICADEV-AFA allowed massive community organising. It also substantially increased investments in environmental restoration and rehabilitation, as well as in the socio-economic development of communities within MMPL. PACAP funding made up about 63% of the total PhP54,087,274 investments in MICADEV-AFA, and of this amount 37% and 25%, respectively, were utilised for forest rehabilitation and socio-economic development, respectively.¹⁰

The overall goal of MICADEV-AFA was “sustaining (the) MMPL watershed using an integrated area development approach, developing viable community enterprises, promoting multi-sectoral partnership, and enhancing community participation.” The project carried the following major components:

- Environment/Resource Management
- Community Organising/Organisational Development
- Economic/Livelihood Assistance
- Basic Social Services
- Infrastructure
- Advocacy

Over a span of three years, the project hoped to meet the following objectives:

- To organise at least 14 viable *barangay*-based community organisations (one per *barangay*) around MMPL with at least 80% of MMPL occupants and 30% of entire *barangay* households, sustainably managing community resources, responding to the needs of their members and acting as conduits of development assistance in their respective communities.
- To provide livelihood and other economic assistance to at least 70% of the qualified members of the *barangay* cooperatives, increasing their productivity and income by at least PhP2,500 per month per beneficiary.
- To increase the forest cover of MMPL and adjacent areas from 2,500 to 9,500

¹⁰ Financial report on MICADEV program interventions, March 1995 to December 2000, by the Mahintana Foundation, Inc.

hectares through protection, assisted natural regeneration (ANR), reforestation, agro-forestry, river bank rehabilitation, stabilisation, and gully tree planting.

- To provide basic social services (health and education) to *barangay* households.
- To provide infrastructure support to community development programs within MMPL, adjacent areas and the 14 *barangays* covering the MMPL.
- To develop and implement a coordinated development plan for MMPL and its adjacent communities in partnership with different stakeholders in the area.

VII. Implementing the Area-Focus

Approach

Basic to the implementation of the MICADEV-AFA project was the area-focused approach. AFA¹¹ was a management and implementation strategy that sought to unite stakeholders with common and/or complementary agenda, and focus their development initiatives and resources on a single geographically contiguous and clearly delineated area.

LGU Support. MICADEV was able to harness the resources and support of affected *barangays*, municipalities, and provinces in the MMPL initiative. LGU officials showed ready support for the program. Having seen their people suffer the effects of calamitous floods and continued water depletion, they were optimistic that MICADEV could avert the recurrence of such calamities. The LGUs put counterpart funding and other resources at the disposal of the project. The LGUs also issued resolutions, ordinances, and executive orders to provide a legal mandate to support MICADEV activities.

Multi-Sectoral/Multi-Level Coordination. The AFA approach implied close coordination among key development players, especially between and among developmental NGOs and LGUs. Thematic or sectoral concerns like environment, gender development and women's concerns, ecologically sound agricultural, indigenous peoples' (IP) concerns, and others, were all incorporated into educational and social awareness-raising activities and in the processes for implementing specific project components under MICADEV.

Learning Process Focus To Project Management, Evaluation and Monitoring. AFA used a learning process approach wherein project accomplishments, positive changes, and transformation in one area would lend insight and learning to project implementation in other areas. This learning approach also helped to rationalise decisions related to expansion or replication of project initiatives to new areas.



¹¹ In some sectors, the AFA strategy is known as "convergence", where resources from various sectors are concentrated on a priority area where problems are at such a level of urgency, magnitude and complexity as to require concerted multi-sectoral action. A similar approach was being implemented in Agrarian Reform Communities, although on a much smaller scale.

A. Participation and Subsidiarity

MICADEV encouraged multi-stakeholder participation. Specifically, it encouraged people directly affected by issues in the MMPL to participate in the program. Both CSDO and PACAP wanted the final project design to reflect the perspectives and concerns of various stakeholder groups in the MMPL. To ensure this, consultations, community discussions, and consensus building activities were conducted as early as the project conceptualisation phase. Project implementers could honestly claim that the project had been “identified and designed by the beneficiaries themselves.”

Bottom-up Planning. Project implementation started with multi-level planning, from the *sitio/purok* to the Municipality. Using the LOGFRAME planning technique, MICADEV-AFA project officers (coming from CSDO-SC member-organisations) facilitated *sitio/purok* level planning. Outputs from these activities were then consolidated into *barangay* plans. Inter-*barangay* consultations and planning sessions were then convened to develop municipal development plans that would guide project implementation at the municipal level. These municipal plans were then incorporated into provincial plans. LGU officials or their representatives, concerned national government agencies, and other key stakeholders, actively participated in all of the above planning activities. The planning process took about 10 months to complete. Each LGU level (*sitio*, *barangay*, municipal, and provincial) planning activity took about 8-10 days to complete, including documentation.

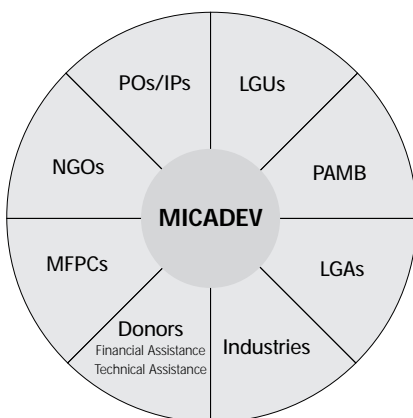
While *barangay* and municipal plans incorporated MICADEV-AFA agenda, plans, and priorities, implementation and accomplishments of these plans and priorities were mutually the accomplishments of the *barangay* and municipal LGUs. This mutual- accomplishment pattern could also

be said with the People Organisations in the area.

At the program level, MICADEV’s development agenda were already embedded into *barangay*, municipal, and provincial development plans, contributing to the institutionalisation of MICADEV approaches and strategies in the LGUs. Resolutions, ordinances, and executive orders had been issued to pursue specific

issues, policies, and activities. Municipal and provincial governments had allocated money from their Internal Revenue Allotments (IRA) for various MICADEV-related activities. For example, PhP200,000 was allocated by the South Cotabato Provincial Government for MICADEV-related purposes.

Figure 1. MICADEV-AFA Institutional Arrangements



These initiatives hoped to ensure that in future implementation MICADEV could be continued and sustained through other mechanisms triggered by PACAP’s substantial financial contributions through the MICADEV-AFA. The recent entry of other development agencies¹² into the MICADEV area could be attributed to concrete development results that were visible at the community level.

Coordinated Project Management. Committees were formed to monitor the accomplishments of the MICADEV-AFA project at the *sitio/purok* and *barangay* levels. Representatives from LGUs at the *barangay* and municipal levels, as well as other stakeholder groups, sat in these committees and actively participated in the monitoring and feedbacking process. This helped deepen the wider society’s sense of awareness and ownership of the project.

Each participating CSDO-SC member-organisation was responsible for the implementation of the project in a specific area. They were also accountable for the funds brokered from PACAP. Overall management and supervision of the project was lodged in the CSDO-SC’s Project Management Committee (PMC). The committee met monthly (every third Wednesday) to ensure effective project implementation. The committee was composed of the Executive Directors and Managers of the CSDO-SC member-organisations.

To maintain unity of purpose and ensure attainment of commonly set objectives, a Project Implementation Team (PIT) was organised, composed of project officers (field staff) and roving bookkeepers of participating CSDO-SC member-organisations, representatives of the people’s organisations in the area, LGU representatives and representatives from concerned national government agencies. PIT meetings were held monthly, with the venue regularly rotated among the *sitios/puroks* or *barangays* where there were participating POs. These meetings were opportunities for review and formulation of common policies, exchange of experiences, opinions, and ideas, and sharing of information and new knowledge. The host PO in the *sitio/purok* or *barangay* got the chance to

¹² Some of these identified agencies were the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) and the Upland Development Program (UDP) of the Southern Mindanao Agricultural Program (SMAP). Recently, the Canadian-supported Local Government Support Program (LGSP) had expressed interest to participate in the program.

Institutional Arrangements

PAMB

- Policy-making
- Over-all administrator
- Implements, coordinates development plans

LGAs

- Technical support
- Legal assistance
- Law enforcement

Industries

- Financial support
- Logistic support

Donors

- Financial support
- Technical assistance
- Direction setting

NFPCs

- Advocacy
- Forest protection
- Legal assistance
- Monitoring

NGOs

- Community organising
- Resource mobilisation
- Capacity building
- Linkages

POs/IPs

- Active partners and planners
- Recipients of development assistance
- Implementer

LGUs

- Legislative
- Economic development
- Regulatory/enforcement

Case Study

report on its organisational situation and its accomplishments in project implementation.

Issues and concerns affecting field implementation were discussed and resolved in PIT meetings. Issues that could not be resolved in the PIT were raised to the PMC for appropriate action or resolution. Issues and problems the PMC could not resolve were elevated to the PAMB for final decision.

B. Sustainability

Another basic ingredient of the MICADEV-AFA project was the concern for sustainability at the level of the CSDO-member-implementers, the POs, and the project itself. Although some CSDO-member-implementers opted for piecemeal, short-gestating sub-projects (pure reforestation and rehabilitation, advocacy, etc.), the concern for sustainability was always emphasised.

Financial Sustainability. Financial sustainability mechanisms were built into their project designs. Certain targets (85%) were set for the collection of livelihood revolving funds. A portion of these funds went to the PO while another part was kept by the NGO-implementers to be used for replication and expansion of the livelihood program to other areas. Any income or increment derived from the revolving fund could be used for the NGO's administrative expenses. CSDO-SC members decided to establish a Trust Fund (taken from 10% of their livelihood funds) to sustain the coalition's operations. Mahintana Foundation, Inc. already remitted PhP27,000 to this fund.

Project/Commercial Sustainability. In agro-forestry and fruit tree production projects, a minimum number of hectares were set to establish viable economies of scale. A minimum of 30 hectares for timber trees and 20 hectares for fruit trees and a survival rate of 80% survival rate was considerable doable for the POs. POs fully

The implementers of MICADEV-AFA knew the kind of issues they were up against. To implement the project, they risked the ire of those who earned huge amounts of money from timber logging.

Five trees of mature age was equivalent to PhP200,000 to PhP300,000 worth of timber. A hectare would harvest timber that, when sold, could bring returns of up to PhP1.8 million.

With so much at stake, there was bound to be a lot of resistance—some of them leading to bloodshed. People actually put their lives on the line when they enforced the laws protecting the environment, and already there were heroes who had died fighting for what they believed in.

met these targets. MFI's Engr. Fredeluces reported that some POs even went beyond their targets. In addition, a percentage of timber tree incomes or a number of kilos of fruits from fruit trees were taken as shares of the PO and the CSDO-member-implementer. Written contracts between the PO and its members, and the PO and the CSDO-member covered these arrangements.

Institutional Sustainability. The POs also set a common annual target of PhP1,000 share capital per member. The money generated through this was intended to increase institutional capital, expand business operations and improve organisational sustainability. Overall, POs only accomplished about 40% of the target. Most members were farmers and earned incomes only every 3 or 4 months. POs divided the target amount into several installments according to the estimated harvest months. But most members were only able to

give partial contributions. In *sitio* Datalbaca, for example, only 3 out of 45 members (7%) of Datalbaca Protected Area Multi-purpose Cooperative were able pay their PhP1,000 capital share in full. The rest had already made partial payments and hoped to be able to pay the full amount over a reasonable time.

VIII. Highlighting Critical Issues and Felt Needs

MICADEV-AFA interventions also sought to respond to felt socio-economic needs of the communities affected by the MMPL. The people living in and around the MMPL area suffered disastrous floods, droughts and deadly forest fires—calamities that were linked to growing environmental stresses. Degraded soil quality caused diminishing crop yields that significantly affected people’s farm incomes. Women and children had to walk at least a kilometer to fetch drinking water from a spring—a spring that kept receding, making them walk a little farther every year. On the other hand, however, people in the area could earn incomes from cutting trees and selling timber (see Box)

MICADEV was aware that sustainable development objectives could only be achieved through interventions that also responded to the increasingly dire circumstances in which the people around Mt. Matutum lived. If the program were not linked to meeting people’s survival and security needs, it would not be as socially acceptable. Concrete responses to felt needs were built into the design of community organising activities, technology dissemination and skills transfer, and advocacy campaigns and community meetings. This helped generate support and cooperation from the beneficiaries and society at large in MICADEV-initiated activities.

An important component of the MICADEV-AFA was the development of commercial forests, where people and communities planted trees in areas where they could harvest them in the future for domestic needs as well as a means of earning income. When MICADEV-AFA went into the communities to encourage people to participate in this commercial forest venture, they linked their efforts to people’s dreams of one day having enough money to send their children to college. After eight to ten years, the project espoused, they could harvest the timber. The harvest from one hectare of commercial trees (at 71 board feet per tree, and PhP15 per bf) would earn about PhP652,000, of which, according to the project’s sharing system, 80% would go to the farmer. This would be more than enough to put at least one child through school.

IX. Initial Results and Impacts

1. Macro-Level and Program-Level Impact and Results

The MICADEV program was conceived to respond to the problems posed by Mt. Matutum as the premier watershed of SOCSARGEN. These were problems that, if not effectively arrested, could threaten the development and growth of the SOCSARGEN area and any development initiatives in the surrounding communities of the MMPL.

Examples of LGU Initiatives Supportive of the MICADEV-AFA

- In Polomolok, the Municipal Mayor issued an Executive Order mandating graduating high school students to plant at least 5 timber trees in areas identified for reforestation. Mahintana Foundation was helping to implement this order. The municipality also came up with an ordinance prohibiting the cutting and selling of Igem, an indigenous tree species found in Mt. Matutum.
- In Tupi, the Municipal Government came up with an ordinance prohibiting the buying and selling of occupation rights of the B'laans in the MMPL area. *Barangay* chairpersons in the area were prohibited from “legalising” such transactions.
- *Barangay* Palkan in Polomolok adopted the Palkan River watershed as their own *barangay* project, reforesting the area and policing the *barangay* against logging and timber poaching.
- In *Barangay* Cebuano, *barangay* officials were able to stop the transport of cut timber passing through the community. He said that they planned to reforest a 46-hectare *barangay* reservation to showcase their support of the MICADEV-AFA project.
- The four Municipalities within MMPL established their respective Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office (MENRO), even if this office was optional at the municipal level under the Local Government Code. The LGUs allocated funds for specific activities relative to MICADEV program implementation.
- LGUs also provided various financial and in-kind counterparts and additional funding assistance to expand the reach of specific sub-projects like multi-purpose pavements and water supply systems.

Two years into the project MFI Executive Director Magdolot and Jimmy Belonio, chairperson of a MICADEV-AFA covered *barangay*, observed that “volume and incidences of flooding had been reduced. This could be attributed to reduction in timber poaching, the planting of trees along gullies, and the prevention of further encroachment into forested areas.” Magdolot claimed that incidence of slash and burn agriculture and forest fires had been minimised.

SCFI Executive Director Fecundo agreed there had been some reduction in timber poaching resulting from effective implementation of environmental laws but was cautious about agreeing with her colleagues about a reduction in incidences of flooding. In the absence of an impact study, it was difficult

to measure the reduction in the encroachment to forest areas, land conversion, floods, soil depletion, wildlife extinction, and siltation, as well as the improvement of water resources as results of MICADEV-AFA project intervention.

What was clearly evident, though, was the deep involvement and partnership created between and among key stakeholders of the project (See Box for municipal and *barangay*-based initiatives). Worthy of mention, too, was the role of the PNP and the local AFP units (Philippine Army and Philippine Air Force) who provided effective law enforcement services. Undeniably, these were the products of multi-sectoral participation and partnerships leading towards sustaining initiatives to fully restore, rehabilitate, protect, conserve, and develop the Mt. Matutum watershed.

Besides broad-based advocacy and strict enforcement of land use policies in the MMPL, environmental interventions centred mainly on planting timber trees in reforestation areas and fruit trees in the multiple-use zone and on agricultural lands. Through the project, participating communities had already planted a total of 808,334 trees covering an area of 1,261 hectares (50% of target). Martiniano Magdolot of Mahintana

Foundation, Inc., reported that reforestation efforts and advocacy to protect the environment had successfully reduced the deforestation rate in the MMPL from 326 hectares a year (1992-1996) to 186 hectares per year (1998- 2000).

The MFI was concerned, however, that at this rate, they were just breaking even. Deforestation was occurring just as quickly as the project could reforest. The project hoped to be able to reduce the deforestation rate to the point of reviving lost forest cover, and this would require continued and massive tree planting efforts in contiguous areas and heightened people's awareness to arrest further forest cover depletion. He noted that though reforestation efforts under MICADEV-AFA were considerable, they were done in separate small patches, while deforestation was done in large contiguous areas, making the impact of the latter much more visible.

Fred Fredeluces, the MICADEV Project Officer, noted the return of wild pigs, deer and monkeys to the MMPL area which had been driven away in the past when massive logging destroyed their habitat.

By February 2001, implementation of the MICADEV-AFA project was still ongoing. No thorough evaluation of its impact on the communities and the beneficiaries had been made, but certain trends could already be established based on the program's accomplishments in the previous two years (1999-2000).

From the targeted 14, a total of 17 community organisations (mostly cooperatives) had been organised in the MMPL communities. Altogether, these organisations had a total membership of 2,315, with combined capital contributions of at least PhP2 million. All of these organisations were conduits of MICADEV-AFA in implementing livelihood, reforestation, and basic social services programs targeting their members. While acting as conduits, these coops were also struggling to increase their internal resources and improve their capacities to sustain and improve their operations. A few of these coops were already becoming self-reliant and self-propelling. The Landan People's Multi-purpose Cooperative (LPMPC), for example, was granted a PhP20 million credit line by the Land Bank of the Philippines for its pineapple-growing project with Dole Philippines, Inc.

- A total of 1,092 (47% of target) individual members of six cooperatives had benefited from various economic and livelihood assistance, most of them in the form of agricultural production support. In the pineapple- growing project of the LPMPC informal reports from beneficiaries indicated that increase in monthly incomes of coop members could easily go beyond the targeted PhP2,500 a month. In this particular project, a coop member could earn between PhP50,000-PhP70, 000 net incomes from a hectare of pineapple in a period of 18 months. This net income could even be higher during the ratoon period of 12 months due to lower cost of inputs and maintenance.

Basic social services like health and education provided benefits to at least 1,566 individuals. In terms of infrastructure, the project helped to construct six multi-purpose buildings, three multi-purpose pavements/solar dryers, and five water supply systems (mostly Level II) in different *barangays* within the MMPL. In Malungon, the local government's counterpart helped improved and expand the water supply system sub-project in the area.

Case Study

As a pilot initiative, the MICADEV-AFA was a fertile learning ground for fine tuning the design of future area-focused initiatives. PACAP staff involved in the project noted that preparation of the LOGFRAME for the MICADEV-AFA was completed only after the first year of program implementation. Because of the learning process, project actors employed a great degree of flexibility in finalising the framework. However, this process and the lessons learned by the people who participated in it helped simplify and systematise the preparation of LOGFRAMES for other areas targeted by PACAP for AFA implementation.

Martiniano Magdolot identified several key features that facilitated smooth project implementation.

- It was a multi-stakeholder initiative but there was a focus on common concerns. Project actors identified the protection of the environment as the core activity and this facilitated coordination of interventions.
- Strong partnerships were developed among different stakeholders, with each organisation or agency clear on their specific roles and responsibilities.
- The project was able to encourage broad-based participation, and the reason for this was tied to the fact that different participants shared ownership of the issue and making it easier to commit to its solution.
- The project sought only voluntary participation, and identified advocacy champions to address pockets of resistance (e.g., if a government official who was identified as a key actor was resistant, the project would send someone trusted to bear down on his or her resistance).
- The fact that program initiatives were confined to a delineated area made implementation more manageable.
- The objective of learning from project experiences pervaded all aspects of implementation.

Cooperative Level. Perceived results at the level of cooperatives and individual households showed concretely how these different factors came into play on the ground.

The success of the Landan Multi-purpose Cooperative in improving the lives and incomes of its members served as an inspiration to many people in other *barangays*. Trekking through the Matutum area, the only concrete houses one could see were in Landan—testimony to the cooperatives' success.

The CSDO used Landan and other success stories in its advocacy to encourage people to participate in MICADEV-AFA initiatives.

The cooperatives had proven to be effective agents of empowerment and socio-economic transformation. The positive results of their work could not be clearer than among the indigenous inhabitants who had long been discriminated against and excluded from socio-economic opportunities and basic services. Two years into the project, they could manage their own organisations and implement development activities. This was empowering particularly for the women in

these indigenous communities, who were generally regarded as the “properties” of men, or second class citizens. Women became active members of their cooperatives and were able to avail of the same privileges and benefits as the men.

In the Landan People's Multi-Purpose Cooperative (LPMPC), about 85% of total membership were indigenous B'laans. Fifty percent (50%) of the members of the Board of Directors (BOD) and 50% of the management staff were B'laans. On the other hand,

about 40% of total memberships were women. Women also comprised 50% of the staff and 50% of the BOD members.

The cooperative had been able to access resources and established their own socio-economic projects for the benefit of the members. Its pineapple contract growing arrangement with Dole Philippines, Inc. was reported to have been able to increase members' monthly income by more than 50%. The coop had been registering net profits from 1997-2000. Its average net profits averaged PhP322,616.25 per year.

MSFC in *Barangay Cebuano*, Tupi had been gradually transforming itself into a self-reliant people's organisation. Its membership grew steadily from about 30 when it started in 1997, to 87 at the end of year 2000. About 33% of total membership was composed of women. Officers and staff were trained on leadership, coop management, and bookkeeping, and were being developed to eventually make the coop a self-reliant and independently managed organisation.

The coop recently opened a consumer store to service the needs of members for consumer goods. MICADEV provided the coop with a solar dryer and a corn sheller. Corn marketing was a major business activity of the coop. Its gaining financial operations indicated a trend towards self-sustainability.

Not all MICADEV-AFA-assisted coops were as successful as LPMPC or MSFC, but most of them were exhibiting indicators that showed improved capacities for self-reliance and sustainability. Cooperatives in *Barangay Datalbila* and *Sitio Datalbaca* in Malungon, Sarangani province were reported to have been registering financial net profits. About 20% of the total membership was B'laans and 40-60% were women.

Household/Individual Level. In the absence of a thorough evaluation, effects of program implementation on individual coop members or their households could only be established by observation.

In Landan, Polomolok, most members of the LPMPC had been able to make improvements on their dwellings. They had also been able to purchase appliances, vehicles, and other conveniences. Many B'laan coop members were able to afford to send their children to high school and college. Much of their increased income and economic capability came from the pineapple-growing project with Dole Philippines, Inc.

In *Barangay Datalbila*, Malungon, MFI project officers observed that coop members had improved their productivity and income. They attributed this to the project's livelihood assistance program. Access to potable water was improved by the construction of a safe domestic water supply. Improvements in the quality of life of coop members was also deduced from the way they dressed when they attended community meetings, and by the fact that the temporary materials they used for constructing their houses were gradually being replaced by more permanent materials that offered increased security. ■

Reaction Paper

- *Mt Matutum Integrated Conservation and Development (MICADEV) Project*

Reaction Paper on

The Mt. Matutum Integrated Conservation and Development (MICADEV) Project

of the Coalition of Social Development Organisation of South Cotabato (CSDO-SC)

I. Introduction

The Mt. Matutum Integrated Conservation and Development Project represents an interesting case of the integrated approach in the management of a protected area, The Mt. Matutum Protected Landscape (MMPL), which can serve as a model for implementation of the more than 200 sites of the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS).

The overall goal of the project under review is simply stated as “sustaining the MMPL watershed using the integrated area development approach, developing viable community enterprises, promoting multi-sectoral partnership, and enhancing community participation” As implemented the project has the following features:

- 1) it addresses critical problems of watershed degradation and poverty of local communities;
- 2) it uses the watershed, in this case Mt. Matutum, as planning area, which is a declared protected area under the National Integrated Protected Areas System;
- 3) the project rationale is to support the growth of the SOCSARGEN Growth Area by providing sustainable water supply for agriculture, industry, and domestic uses

- through forest preservation within the watershed;
- 4) it is participated in by four municipal LGUs in two provinces, South Cotabato and Sarangani;
 - 5) the local communities of which 40% indigenous tribes, are organised and actively participating in the project;
 - 6) the project enjoys assistance of an in community organising, livelihood development, technical assistance and accessing of external resources;
 - 7) a multi-sectoral support system has been established including a Multi-sectoral Forest Management Council, Protected Area Management Board, policy, program management and technical support from DENR and other national government agencies, LGU involvement and funding assistance primarily from PACAP-AFA; and
 - 8) PO's have formed partnership with private business for production system up and for marketing.

These features exemplify MICADEV-AFA as both community-based (people-centered) and area-based (geographic coverage). The project is strikingly evolutionary in its development, starting with various efforts before 1994 to organise people's organisations for environmental and livelihood projects, generating support from NGOs, USAID and DOLE Philippines, to the creation of the MMPL by Presidential Declaration and the preparation of a Protected Area Management Plan with technical support from the Foundation for Philippine Environment in 1995, to the multi-component, up-scaled integrated area development project that it is today with the support of PACAP-AFA

What is immediately observable is the adherence of the planning process to the guidelines for protected area management that are provided under the NIPAS Implementing Rules and Regulations. Thus the various land-based project activities are dictated by the management requirements of various zones: i.e strict protection zone where only ceremonial or religious activities of indigenous peoples are allowed; restoration zones for regeneration of natural wildlife habitat, multiple use zones for non-destructive economic activities are allowed; and buffer zones, where communities can build their settlements and serve as social buffer to keep out destructive elements from the protected area.

These layered protection/production forest zones provide the logic of the relationship between the community, NGOs, LGUs and national government in their joint efforts to conserve the protected area. What distinguishes the project from other foreign-assisted NIPAS sites is its expanded social buffer zone that is more than three times the area of the MMPL. Most other projects limit their management activities and technical and financial assistance within the delineated boundary of the protected area.

The number of NIPAS sites that experience similar interventions as MICADEV is few, including: the WB-GEF funded Conservation of priority Protected Areas (CPPAP, which is implemented in nine sites including Mt. Kitanglad in Bukidnon, Agusan Marsh in Agusan del Sur, and Surigao Protected Landscapes and Seascapes in northern Surigao del Norte; 7 sites supported by the European Union, and several NGO-assisted individual sites in Palawan and the Cordilleras. When placed beside these projects MICADEV will have something to share that would significantly improve the performance of these other projects as well as learn lessons that would ensure its own success as conservation and

socio-economic development project.

The project's multi-sectoral components are a common feature of most NIPAS projects, the difference probably only in the strategies that would result in more effective implementation in one project than another, or creating synergies that would accelerate the achievement of project objectives. The components address six areas of concern, or themes, namely: 1) environment/resource management; 2) CO/CD, 3) economic/livelihood, 4) social services, 5) infrastructure and 6) advocacy. In other projects, advocacy is not counted as a distinct and major component but as a cross-cutting strategy. Unfortunately, most other projects lag behind their advocacy plans and could not get the required political and financial support from public and private biodiversity stakeholders.

Partnering with private business for livelihood project development is another feature that is common to NIPAS projects, and in which MICADEV seems to have reached a more advanced stage of development. This may be due purely to the unique favorable circumstances of climate and soil characteristics, and the presence of a major agro-industrial investment in the area, namely Dole Philippines. Nevertheless the process of partnering can be studied as a model for other project with similar opportunities in their own locations.

One may also refer to the indicators of project objectives and goals which are expressed as tangible targets that can be monitored on a regular basis to see how well the project progresses toward its objectives. The MICADEV indicators are minimal, straight forward, simple, measurable. In three years' time the project shall have achieve the following: at least one PO in each *barangay*, with 80% of watershed dwellers being members of the POs; 70% of cooperative members receiving livelihood and economic assistance; increase in income of each beneficiary by PhP2,500; increase in forest cover from 2,500 to 9,955 hectares; provision of basic social services; provision of infrastructure support; and development of a participatory management plan for the protected area.

II. Reactions on the Case Study

The case study is comprehensive, providing a total characterisation of the project, from its history, role players, development frameworks and strategies, development components, management systems, implementation experience, etc. From all these information, a few dominant themes can be inferred which we are highlighting as the project's positive contribution in operationalising certain approaches in the implementation of NIPAS site development and other IAD projects.

These approaches include: 1) the geographic area focus of planning and resource allocation, or AFA, as applied to a protected watershed area; 2) community participation and social development; 3) multi-stakeholder assistance in project planning and management; and 4) CO-private business partnership for socio-economic development. These approaches have become inseparable elements in the goal achievement framework of the project.

Area-Focus Approach. The study has, in my opinion, clearly elaborated on the AFA, which not only defines the spatial-geographic platform for project activities but also maximises the synergy of coordinated decision and use of project resources. The

area framework of AFA is shown to be clearly harmonised with the spatial structure of NIPAS areas, which consists of a hierarchy of management zones, from strict protection, to limited restricted use zones, to multiple use zone, to social buffer zone. In addition, AFA provides for the “up-scaled” area which we presume to be the portions of *barangays* that are outside the MMPL boundary, and contain the production areas that can be used for forestation/agroforestry and agricultural production of the buffer communities. AFA also provides for opportunities for livelihood enterprise assistance from various donors which are intended to reduce poverty and divert the communities’ economic activities away from the forest protection zones.

Planning for AFA is deliberately bottom-up, starting with *sitio* plans prepared by the locally constituted planning teams. The *sitio* plans are consolidated into the *barangay* plan, which are in turn inputted into the municipality and provincial development plans as “program plans”. Program plans are supported by resolutions/policies for their enforcement and budget allocations/counterparts to support their implementation.

Environmental protection and biodiversity conservation is the unifying element in the MICADEV-AFA, with the intention of reversing the past experience with disastrous floods, drought and forest fires indicative of environmental stress, and income that is kept low because of declining fertility of soil. Women and children had to walk distances for water. A harsh environment spared no one. Everybody feared the future. It is a strong unifying element.

Social participation. The other side of the coin in the AFA approach is the social participatory approach, which promotes the involvement of organised community members in their own socio-economic upliftment and in the protection of the watershed. Concrete activities to this effect are the land-based economic enterprises that ensure sustainable income for poor households, and forest rehabilitation activities in multiple use and restricted management zones inside the MMPL.

Socio-economic improvement as the driving force behind community participation gives premium to gender sensitive development. Women’s social and economic role enhancement became the rallying point for empowerment of women. Upgrading of the inferior status of women among the B’laans was given emphasis. Access to potable water was justified in terms of reducing the physical burden of women and children, allowing them to focus more on economic and personal growth-oriented activities. Women membership in POs and their occupancy of BOD chairs is given emphasis since in this manner, women are empowered to pursue their independent contributions to decisions affecting their community and their locality.

The program for environmental conservation is linked to social life—concrete responses to household felt needs, which is built into the design of CO and livelihood. Environment may be a common goal. But poverty is a driving need. Take care of poverty first in order to have a clearer vision for the environment.

A sub-case study is presented on the Landan People’s Multi-Purpose Cooperative (LPMPC) to demonstrate one of the “best practices” or outstanding MICADEV–AFA

experience. We observe that the main AFA case study highlights the network relations of the participating NGOs, POs and GOs, which is dependent on the committee system coordination and monitoring of implementation activities of the CSDO network. Not clearly discussed is how these relationships are structured in relation to the PAMB, MFCI, DENR or LGU structures. On the other hand the internal structure of LPMPC is given emphasis, indicating that perhaps it is the institutional strength and financial viability of the people's cooperative that will carry the burden of sustaining the AFA in the long run. It is presumed that the present status of the LPMPC is envisioned for all community organisations in the MICADEV-AFA.

It appears that the consensus of CSDO members in assuming responsibility for a specific area, e.g. MFI for Landan *barangay* and other CSDO network members for other *barangays* is neater for as long as their roles fit properly in the management zoning adopted by the AFA.

Multi-stakeholder assistance. The distinctive feature of the cooperation among stakeholders is that it has “history”, is cumulative, is anchored on systematic division of roles and responsibilities and each assisting NGO seems to relate to a partner PO in a relationship of mutual trust and teamwork. Such relationship is something that other NIPAS sites have yet to develop. The term “cumulative” is characteristic of the institutional arrangements and applies to both spatial, temporal and demographic sense: that is, “at time goes by”, as areas of coverage expands, and as more people “join the band”. We can interpret the partnership as a process of capital formation, which only involves personal and social connectiveness, yet in the end probably accounts for increase in productivity and financial returns.

CO–private business partnership. Finally the case study, through the sub-case of the LPMPC, highlights the successful business partnership between the cooperative dominated by of B'laans, an indigenous tribe, and Dole Philippines, a large agribusiness company in South Cotabato. Here the same mutual trust and efficient business relationship have proved fruitful and promises continuing progress. NIPAS sites with indigenous communities, such as Mt. Kitanglad (Higaonon, Tala-andig), Mt. Kanlaon (Bukidnon), which are near large agricultural plantation areas can explore possibilities for similar undertakings as the MICADEV-AFA.

III. Insights and Learnings

From the foregoing highlights of the MICADEV project, we have distilled the following invaluable lessons:

Planning: The bottom-up approach is generally recognised today as the appropriate tool of participatory planning and democratic governance. How it was operationalised in MICADEV and how the approach was smoothly harmonised by the CSDO network members in order to arrive at the provincial and watershed planning level can be emulated by the other projects who want to carry out bottom-up planning effectively and in the right way.

Reconciling social objectives with environmental protection and conservation is an area

where harmonisation with technical-environmental and social/poverty parameters will have to be worked out through consultation and consensus building among stakeholder government, non-government institutions and community groups. How this was done in MICADEV-AFA, will provide added insights to managers and leaders who wish to do the same in their areas of operation. NIPAS area managers as well as national staffs may be invited to MICADEV-AFA as the first step in a replication process of its bottom-up planning approach and other learnings.

Project implementation. Carrying out the project components has been relatively smooth because of the following reasons, which were gathered from various sections of the case study, including certain items that have not been highlighted in previous sections of this paper.

- Multi-stakeholders initiatives are focused on common concerns: environmental protection as core activity. This consensus has facilitated coordination and integration
- Strong partnerships developed among stakeholders, with each organisation clear on its role and responsibility
- Broad-based participation – participants shared ownership of any issue raised and committed to its solution
- The project sought only voluntary participation and identified advocacy champions to address pockets of resistance (A champion is a person who carries out a mission to resolve a specific issue or negotiate with a specific person.)
- Assisting NGOs focused initially on a manageable area for project implementation, small and homogenous such as a *sitio* or *barangay*.
- The objective of learning from project experiences pervaded implementation. Learning process approach is adopted as organisational value.

Initial Impact of the Project

- Flooding had been reduced (after 2 years)–attributed to reduction in timber poaching, planting of trees along gullies and prevention of further forest encroachment. Slash and burn and forest fires had been minimised.
- There has been marked reduction of deforestation rate from 326 has/year from 1992-1996 to 186 has/year from 1998-2000. The return of wild pigs, deer and monkeys to MMPL has been noted.
- Performance of Cooperatives. Coops are effective agents of empowerment and socio-economic transformation–model is the B'laan cooperative. Women also exercise leadership role as active members and BOD.
- Household/individual level. Living standards have improved for a significant number of households, who have improved their dwelling units from light to better materials
- LGUs have issued resolutions, ordinances and executive orders to support the project, but at this point they are mostly obliged by MOAs for external funding. Time would come when the carrot and stick will not be needed to move the LGU actors.

- Multi-sectoral/multi-level coordination bodies, specifically MFPC and PAMB brings to the policy discussion and formulation forum LGUs, NGA, NGO/private sector and PO representatives. Thematic concerns include environment, gender, ecologically sound agriculture, economic and social mainstreaming of IPs, among others.
- Learning process applies to project management, evaluation and monitoring. Project accomplishments, positive changes and transformation in one area would lend insight and learning to project implementation in other areas—the ever widening ripple when stone is thrown into the pond.
- Coordinated project management: committees have been formed to monitor accomplishments with representatives of *barangay*, municipality, other stakeholder groups; CSDO-Project Management Committee for overall management, composed of the executive directors and managers of the CSDO members—meeting every month; PIT –composed of project officers and roving bookkeepers of CSDO members, PO and LGU representatives, NGAs concerned—meeting every month; PIT discussed/resolved issues or elevated these to the PMC.
- Financial sustainability is envisioned if POs are able to sustain the growth of their Livelihood Revolving Fund – which is built-in as percentage of project fund. Proceeds from the LRF are apportioned to PO to implement livelihood projects and to NGO for replication of the livelihood program. Increment could be used to sustain NGO administrative expenses.
- Project/commercial sustainability refers to the viability of agroforestry and fruit tree production as well as commercial/production timber. Partners agree that a portion of products from tree crops is taken as shares of PO and CSDO member.
- Institutional sustainability is assumed to result from full capitalisation of cooperatives through capital share of its members, targeted at PhP1000.

Trends toward sustainability of efforts and benefits

Both the physical development and the institutional development components are moving at an acceptable pace. More than 800,000 trees have been planted in more than 1200 hectares of degraded forestlands –50% of target.

Seventeen COs organised with membership totaling 2,315, and capital contribution of PhP2M, 1092 individuals received livelihood assistance; there has been a marked increase in monthly income of cooperative members.

Potentials for Replication

There seems to be no spectacular aspects about the planning and operational processes that would make replication difficult. The procedures are simple and easy to follow after the preconditions for action are in place. In MICADEV, these included the proper definition of the project goals, spatial organisation for resources management, definition of roles after the actors have been properly organised and agreements reached; mobilising people's participation, and always, efforts to reduce stress on the environment stemming from economic needs through provision of livelihood opportunities.

What is spectacular is the determination of the key actors that could make the system work, requiring for sure a lot of sacrifice on the part of dedicated individuals such as the

PAMB, PCM and PIT members and community leaders. The complex system of PA will not work unless there is unity of purpose and willingness to work together.

We come to the role of financial and technical assistance. Obviously the case study recognises the critical contribution of FPE and PACAP which enabled the local actors to finally discover a framework for planning and action, including the initial technical studies and resource assessments, and formulation of strategies to turn around the negative inter-sectoral relationship into a dynamic management system.

A cursory look at the funding requirements would show that a major percentage would go to asset formation including commercial enterprises (production forest/agroforestry) and livelihood capitalisation. These are recoverable cost and provides a high financial feasibility to warrant any funding assistance. If planned in the same way, other projects would pass evaluation for external funding. Cases in point are cited for several cooperatives that are moving toward self-reliance.

IV. Conclusion and Recommendations

To conclude this review of the MICADEV case study, we only wish to reiterate that we note the projects' most important potential contribution to the search for effectiveness in area-based development, particularly for the NIPAS areas.

The most important is the operationalisation of a wide expanse of social buffer zone outside the MMPL legal boundaries, bringing the total AFA area to more than four times the size of the MMPL. This allows more area coverage and more participants in non-destructive livelihood activities that will balance the protection and poverty alleviation objectives of protected areas.

The second point we wish to emphasise is the evolution of MICADEV from community-based to area-based project approach, which might yet be the secret for its institutional stability and socio-economic and environmental sustainability. The evolution took time; should a project be planned for the first time in a protected area, we suggest that planning should identify first the stakeholder communities, organise them and assist them in planning their livelihoods, then, only afterwards, introduce the planning approach of integrated area development/AFA.

Our third point is developing a systematic advocacy strategy as a major project component. The case study mentions the involvement of advocacy "champions", individuals enjoying respect and trust of the community who will work to resolve pockets of resistance to a sound decision for the good of the project.

Our next point is the formation of social capital through the nurturing of partner-specific role and responsibility of participating NGOs. If an NGO starts small and the PO group also starts small, like in a *sitio* or *barangay*, but has an open membership system so that it can grow at its own rate, the maturation process is more steady and stable. NGOs should sustain their relationship with the PO until the PO becomes self-reliant.

Another point we wish to emphasise is the strategic cumulative inter-agency involvement as the concept is expanded/up-scaled. Too many, too early might not be the right way to start inter-agency collaboration, although many projects assume that this is good and that the more agencies are eager to participate the more chances of success of the

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project. As a start it is advisable that only a few really relevant agencies join the project. Their number can increase as the project expands its activities and require more institutional inputs.

One other point we wish to mention is the project's adoption of clear minimum performance indicators which can be monitored from the lowest PO level and consolidated at higher cumulative levels until the data applies to the entire project area. The only poverty indicators used are increase in household income, provision of social services and provision of infrastructure. Environmental indicators are reduction of flooding and deforestation. There may be other more specific measurements but to be sure they can be clustered under these major indicators.

Finally we wish to note the project's success in promoting a successful business partnership between a people's cooperative and a private business, which should be considered by other NIPAS managers for possible replication in their respective project areas. ■



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