“Managing our families and coastal resources for a better future”

IPOPCORM Monograph Series No. 3

Integrated Population and Coastal Resource Management (IPOPCORM) Initiative

Partnerships Matter for Success and Sustainability

PATH Foundation Philippines, Inc.
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Foreword

The positive correlation between overpopulation and coastal resource depletion has been quite obvious for some time in the Philippines. We think that both issues (overpopulation and resource depletion) have to be addressed simultaneously and their cause and effect relationships explored. Thus, it has become necessary that the management of human populations and the practices in coastal/marine resource management be considered in an integrated manner. We believe that the Integrated Population and Coastal Resource Management (IPOPCORM) Initiative of PATH Foundations Philippines Inc. is the approach that will achieve the desired goal of balanced and sustainable development in coastal populations.

The foregoing view is by no means subscribed to by all sectors of Philippine society, and is to a certain extent disputed by certain quarters. But we have good evidence that the most affected communities, namely, the fisher communities, are in agreement with our view. Two or three years ago, we had the opportunity to work with poor fisher communities who confirmed that one of the primary causes of their dwindling fish catches was that too many fishers were searching for too few fish. Certainly, available statistical data would show a positive correlation between depleted fishery stocks and low fish biomass on the one hand and overpopulation on the other. Empirical evidence has been accumulating showing that in coastal areas of the country fish biomass has declined by as much as 90-95% of that at the turn of the 20th century. The factors responsible for this decline are the subject of most of the papers in one section of the recently published book in 2004, In Turbulent Seas: The Status of Marine Fisheries.

The PATH Foundation presents the documentation of its integrated program, IPOPCORM, in four monographs. The program was implemented in 12 focal areas in 33 municipalities in the provinces of Palawan, Bohol, Siquijor, Cebu, Negros Oriental, Camiguin, Surigao del Sur and Tawi-Tawi, the Philippines in 2000-2006.

IPOPCORM Monograph Series No. 1 contains the Overview, Key Lessons and Challenges. This volume presents the background and baseline materials on population and fisheries, the indicators and the accomplishments based on indicators such as number of family planning acceptors, contraceptive prevalence, decrease in fertility rates, management of new and old marine protected areas with improved management, and the possibilities for future expansion beyond the areas and regions already covered as well as the impact of the initiative on food security and biodiversity conservation.
Monograph Series No. 2 takes off from the classic paper of Dr. Daniel Pauly, the famous fishery scientist, who, as early as 1994, had advocated the “roll-back” of over-fishing as a key strategy in population management. This volume presents three case studies in the Bohol and Palawan areas to illustrate the integration of reproductive health and family planning into resource management of coastal ecosystems (mangroves, coral reefs, etc.) as examples of how the prevalent practice of over-fishing and its causes, or consequences on population, may be addressed.

Monograph Series No. 3 affirms what is widely accepted successful development strategy for developing countries: participation and deep involvement of local government units, local communities, and local groups to bring about fundamental changes in attitudes and behavior that are needed for adoption of new practices and new technologies to improve the quality of human life. Six cases are presented to show the importance of local participation for sustainability of the interventions that address overpopulation and overexploitation.

Monograph Series No. 4 presents information and data from IPOPCORM’s ongoing operations research and program monitoring systems showing integrated approaches to population and coastal management can generate added value and synergies that are not found in projects that only work within a single sector.

It is our hope that the lessons learned from PATH Foundation, Inc. IPOPCORM Initiative will find application throughout the Philippines.

Angel C. Alcala, Ph.D.
President
PATH Foundation Philippines Inc.
Makati City, Philippines
I. Introduction

The six cases in this series are clustered according to the three IPOPCORM strategic objectives: (1) improve reproductive health (RH) outcomes of people living in coastal communities, (2) enhance management of marine and coastal resources at community level, and (3) increase awareness and support for linked reproductive health/family planning (RH/FP) and coastal resource management (CRM) activities and policy reforms.

All of these cases exemplify various strategies in engaging local community participation in achieving project goals as well as sustaining conservation gains and reproductive health initiatives. It is evident from the cases that these strategies have made definite impacts in their respective lives and locality.

The first case shows how a volunteer peer educator and a barangay leader can make a difference in the community. Through her active involvement in the project, she recognized the project’s benefits and thus became an advocate in sustaining program activities at her village.

The next case deals with federating peer educators and community-based distributors as an innovative strategy to sustain the integrated approach at the barangay and municipal levels. These associations and its umbrella federation serve as link between the NGO and the community as well as partners of the Rural Health Unit in delivering basic reproductive health services. Through series of trainings, these local volunteers are equipped with knowledge and skills in providing reproductive health services and behavior change communication to their respective peers and the community at large.
The third case discusses how a simple tool in coastal assessment helps a local NGO in engaging community participation and making them aware of the status of their coastal resources.

Protection of critical coastal habitats and giving them time to recover, through the establishment of marine protected areas, becomes more acceptable when accompanied with an alternative livelihood. By providing their wives livelihood opportunities, the project enables resource-dependent fishers to support their families while they wait for the fruits of their conservation activities. How their lives changed through the community-banking program is the focus of the fourth case.

The last two cases are on NGO experience with local government and the youth as an important sector in our society. When working with local government units, partnership among key players engenders a big difference in the project’s success. How to encourage youth as stewards of the environment and their sexuality? Find insights here in the last case of this series.
II. IPOPCORM Cases by Strategic Objectives

A. Improve reproductive health (RH) outcomes of people living in coastal communities

BOX A.1

Sustaining Local Access to Health and Education Services: 
The case in Barangay Banban, Municipality of Siquijor, Siquijor

By Grace Abines, Community Health Worker, Rtn. “Ting” Matiao Foundation Inc.

“Stop discriminating Joan and Stanley! They deserve our help more than our gossips and criticisms for having many children. We are leaders of Barangay Banban,” scolded Dina to the women gathered in her house one Sunday morning. They have just finished hearing a holy mass and were having breakfast at Dina’s house. “Let us support for the passage of our barangay action plan for municipal approval to continue reaching couples like Joan and Stanley,” advocated Dina to her friends.

Dina is a community volunteer and, at the same time, a barangay leader of Banban a village in the municipality and province of Siquijor, Siquijor. Active in IPOPCORM as a community-based distributor (CBD) and a couple peer educator (CPE), Dina expressed her concern on the need to sustain the CBD operations after the project closes.

Before she became a CBD and a CPE, Dina participated in series of trainings. The CBD training is given to selected sari-sari (convenience) store owners in the different sitios (sub villages) covered under the IPOPCORM Project. Both CBD and CPE volunteers were trained on family planning, reproductive health, and coastal resource management and the benefits of linking these strategies to improve food security.

CBDs were also taught on how to market contraceptive information, products, and services, how to do inventory of commodities, and how to fill up CBD forms. It was in February 2005 when Dina established the CBD in her sitio.

Likewise being a CPE, Dina goes around barangay Banban visiting potential clients, such as her neighbors and friends, and conducts interpersonal communication (IPC) on family planning and reproductive health. Along with the community health outreach workers (CHOWs), Dina informs, discusses and convinces her clients to use modern FP methods. In one of her visits, Dina referred a neighbor - who was in her 13th pregnancy, to the CHOW for counseling. Because of this referral and the endless visits of Dina and the CHOWs, the neighbor elected to undergo bilateral tubal ligation (BTL) after her pregnancy.

Aside from conducting IPCs, Dina handles mother’s class organized by the CHOWS. Conducted every two months, these classes are similar to IPCs but the mothers are organized into groups. While the IPCs are effective in
reaching out to individual clients, the mothers class is open to all providing wider audience and more clients to be recruited for FP methods. And because the group is big, women are less shy or embarrassed to ask questions about FP and RH. The participants also act as a sounding board to each other.

Another IPOPCORM activity where Dina, together with the mothers and other community volunteers, is actively involved is the conduct of coastal clean-up every two months. Barangay leaders and local residents also take part in this activity. While the activity is simple, it is one way of showing responsibility and stewardship of the environment.

Through these activities and her role as CBD/CPE, Dina was able to internalize the importance of the IPOPCORM Project and the need to continue giving family planning and reproductive health services to the community.

Consequently, when Dina found out that the project was about to end in October 2005, she expressed her concern on the need to continue CBD operations in terms of having access to commodities. Good thing though that IPOPCORM supports the conduct of annual barangay development planning where members of the barangay council outline their development plans for funding next fiscal year. Dina, being a barangay leader, took this opportunity and participated in the barangay development planning held in June 2005. During the planning, she gave a short talk about the benefits of the IPOPCORM Project. She advocated about the need to continue what has been started because the project has already made a great difference in the barangay.

For Dina, if the project ended and the CBD discontinued, the progress and efforts made by the project would go to waste. Because of her talk to the barangay council, the barangay captain decided to allocate PhP3,000.00 (US$60) yearly for the purchase of FP commodities in order to continue CBD operations even after the IPOPCORM project has ended. This motion was approved by the council and integrated into the Barangay Development Plan of Banban.

From Dina’s example, one sees how the IPOPCORM project involves the community to achieve project goals. By involving the CPEs and CBs in regular activities such as conducting IPCs, mother’s class and coastal clean-ups, they are able to understand better the essence of the integrated approach. And because of Dina’s unique position in the community as CBD, CPE and barangay leader, she used her influence to promote and sustain the project.

Although the IPOPCORM project was extended until August 2006, this initiative started by Dina ensured her coastal community a continuous supply of commodities even after project life.
I heard the trumpet sounding and the drums banging. It was 7:00 in the morning of December 5, 2003, I can see over 300 participants from the eleven barangays and the municipal officials of Busuanga joining the parade to start the Community-Based Reproductive Health/Family Planning (CBRH/FP) Awareness Day Celebration. This is really a big Day for the Busuaneños. In the long lines of the people, someone tap over my shoulder and walk along with me. It was Sarabeth, an Outstanding Couple Peer Educator from Barangay Bogtong that says, "This is the most wonderful and most memorable activity that we’ve ever done, can this be done again if the project will end, and who will facilitate and lead the activities? My answer is “the project might be extended because of the support that every partner in Busuanga has given for the project.”

Again, she asked me, “How about if the project will really end, is there anybody to distribute the FP products to the CBD outlets and how are we going to submit our reports?” That voice is not just a voice coming from Sarabeth. Before today, I have heard similar questions raised during meetings and discussions with the peer educators and CBDs and the Barangay leaders. I can feel the willingness of the CBRH volunteers to continue their work but the fear of doing the tasks without the guidance of our NGO’s CHOWs is also apparent. The tension among our team to respond to the issue is aroused.

One Tuesday morning in December 9, 2003, I had a meeting with the Community Health Outreach Workers (CHOWs) to discuss lessons gained during the month long CBRH Awareness Celebration, from November 12 to December 5, 2003. The CHOWs gave feedbacks on how well the peer educators (PEs) worked and actively participated in project activities especially during the awareness celebration. The PEs assumed some of the responsibilities and enthusiastically worked with the CHOW to implement the tasks. During the meeting, the CHOWs presented issues and concerns expressed by the communities regarding the nearing end of project. We’ve brainstormed on the different approaches to sustain the project activities in response to community’s needs.

One of the CHOWs, Albert, said “it is possible for us to organize the trained peer educators and the CBDs to become one of the People’s Organization in the community, it will help us deliver our activities efficiently if there is a point person or a core leader among the trained volunteers of our project”.

CHOW Waki said, “I agree with the idea of forming the PEs and CBDs into an association. In my sites Barangays Old Busuanga and Quezon, although it’s informal, the peer educators may choose among themselves a leader to whom they’ll submit their IPC and CBD reports”.

BOX A.2
Federation of Peer Educators and Community-Based Distributors in Busuanga, Palawan
By Melinda Buñag, Supervising Community Health Worker, Culion Foundation Inc.
Desiree, also a CHOW, said “I also agree in this idea because as we have seen throughout the implementation of the project, the PEs and CBDs performed their duties and functions well. Their enthusiasm to participate was obvious every time we’re in the community asking for a meeting or carrying out other CBRH-related activities.”

CHOW Noel stated that “the idea of organizing peer educators and the CBDs is good but how sure are we that they can be mobilized and this will sustain project activities? It’s not indicated in our plan of activities and as of now we don’t have budget for that.”

As I ended the discussion, I told them that our Program Manager will be coming over on January 30 to meet with us. “We’ll raise this issue to Sir Mario so he can guide us in bringing more appropriate strategies for the sustainability of the project.”

In January 30, 2004, during our meeting with the Program Manager, Mr. Mario Articona approved the idea of organizing the peer educators and the CBDs into barangay associations and to federate them at the municipal level. He also assisted the team in conceptualizing the organizational and structural framework of the proposed federation. He laid the plan of activities to the PATH Foundation Philippines, Inc. for the approval of the plan and budget. It was approved.

In February 2004, the team of CBRH/FP Busuanga started to facilitate efforts to organize the PEs and CBDs in the 11 covered barangays of Busuanga by February 27th the assembly meeting of all the officers in 11 barangays was held to form the federation.

The Culion Foundation, Inc. (CFI) has been implementing the Community-Based Reproductive Health/ Family Planning Project in the Municipality of Busuanga in partnership with PATH Foundation, Philippines since May 2002. It took two years for CFI to organize the peer educators into an association. This is timely as the interest and willingness to become a formal group has grown.

In retrospect, the project covered only four out of 14 coastal communities in the municipality during the first year of implementation. On its second year, however, another seven barangays were added totaling 11 assisted barangays under the project. To improve the quality of life of people living in the coastal communities of Busuanga, the project aims to promote responsible sexual and reproductive health attitudes and behaviors among the men, women of reproductive age, male fishers, adolescents and other coastal dwellers through life planning skills and other related activities such as interpersonal communication (IPC), and information, education and communication (IEC) campaigns.

Since the project started in 2002, the team has gained tremendous support from various stakeholders (clients, barangay and municipal local government units, and government rural health unit personnel) in the community. In less than a year, the project will end. Only a few months are left for CFI to implement and monitor remaining project activities.

In this light, the Team encouraged PEs and CBDs of each barangay to form themselves into an association and organized the 11 associations into a municipal-wide federation.
A series of capability building trainings and workshops were given to the associations and federation such as Basic Parliamentary Procedures for officers of the barangay PE and CBD associations, and Training Workshop on the formulation of Policies and Guidelines and By-Laws for the PE and CBD Federation.

Likewise in September 2004, the CHOWs assisted the federation officers in conducting a Strategic Planning Workshop and came up with a plan of activities which include:

- Schedule of federation meetings;
- Finalization of the policies and by-laws;
- Institutionalization of the CBRH/FP Awareness Day Celebration every year;
- Meetings with the Barangay Council and Punong Barangay for the support and participation in the Awareness Day Celebration and other IEC campaign activities and the registration of the organization at the municipal level and recognition at the barangay level; and
- Continuation of the community-based activities such as the conduct of the interpersonal communications (IPCs), motivation and recruitment of clients for ligation and vasectomy.

Based on the formulated plan, the following activities were completed: Bilateral Tubal Ligation and Non-Scalpel Vasectomy conducted at the Coron District Hospital on September 2004; Municipal Awareness Day Celebration and recognition for the CBRH/FP volunteers on December 1, 2004; Assistance with the PEs and CBDs Family Day and the IPC outreach at the sitio level.

Furthermore, the Barangay Peer Educators and Community-based Distributors Associations were accredited at the barangay level and the organized federation was accredited at the municipal level, which means they are now eligible to receive funds from the government and other agencies.

In May 2005, the project field staff completed their assignments and only the Supervising CHOW was left to complete the Phase out activities. Despite this, the work has continued and the communities have sustained the delivery of RH/FP services through the organized PEs and CBDs associations and federation. Also, funds that were leveraged for RH/FP activities from the municipal government (20% Barangay Development funds) are helping to keep the effort going. This would not have been possible if the CHOWs, together with the 11 barangay associations, had not worked out the budget allocations prior to leaving their respective area of assignment.

To be able to perform their tasks, the associations’ and federation’s capacity were strengthened thru meetings and trainings (formal/ informal trainings). Further, the federation was given training on environment-friendly enterprise development, and had formulated project proposals on their identified group’s livelihood project.

The Community-based Distribution System strategy, through the CBD-Pop Shop of DKT in partnership with PATH Foundation, is an opportunity to sustain the reproductive health gains of the CB RH/FP project.
In September 2005, the SCHOW facilitate the federation meeting with the Punong Barangay from 11 covered barangays to discuss the new strategy and systems for the community-based distribution, collection and pricing schemes. In October 2005, the project staff (SCHOW and Admin/bookkeeper) conducted workshop orientation on the CBD-POP SHOP Operation to the federation and barangay association officers.
B. Enhance management of marine and coastal resources at community level

BOX B.1

Of Fish and Men: When Communities Care about Conservation
By Nicole Angela Tria Tirona, Assistant Executive Director, The Andres Soriano Foundation, Inc.

When working with coastal communities, often the phrase “teaching man how to fish” takes on a very literal meaning. Such is the work of the Andres Soriano Foundation (ASF) in the small island of Manamoc, northeast off mainland Palawan.

Tiny and isolated, Manamoc can hardly be seen on your average Philippine map. There, Manamoc appears as a tiny speck, some 36 miles to the left of a small dot that represents the Island Municipality of Cuyo to which it belongs.

The people of Manamoc – 1,801 according to 2002 data from the National Statistics Office – come from three ethnic backgrounds: Cuyunen, Agutaynen and Cebuano. As diverse as their individual cultures are, these three peoples have nevertheless managed to co-exist in relative calm, dialectic differences notwithstanding. It has been noted, often with much interest and not without some amusement, that Agutaynens can also understand and speak Cuyunin; Cuyunens can understand, but not always speak, Agutaynin; while Cebuanos can understand and speak only Cebuano.

Families in Manamoc have established tenure rights and land is often handed down from generation to generation. Of interesting note is Manamoc’s unwritten, one-worded “law” when it comes to acquiring land in the area: marriage.

An outsider would have to first go through the complex and often confusing process of falling in love, courtship and marriage to a native of Manamoc before being approved by the barangay (village) development council to acquire land. An unorthodox way of controlling the population perhaps, but at 292 households in a total land area of 1,200 hectares, it seems to be working.

A people of the sea, most of Manamoc’s residents are seaweed growers and fishermen, though some have ventured into rice and vegetable farming. The people of Manamoc take pride in their industry,
resourcefulness and their lovely island. Small as it is Manamoc Island is rich in natural resources, lying within a Mangrove Forest Reserve and National Game Refuge and Bird Sanctuary. It has an approximate land area of 516 hectares, 40% of which is mountainous while the remaining 60% is flat terrain.

There are three mountains, each with a height of 216 feet, 201 feet, and 171 feet. The coastline surrounding the whole island has a tide flat area of 974 hectares.

Manamoc’s “claim to fame” is through its next-door neighbor, the world-famous Amanpulo Resort, set on nearby Pamalican Island. With an impressive coral reef of its own, Manamoc is often frequented by the jet-setting rich and famous, who cross the 2 mile distance to swim in waters rich with exotic marine life, or sunbathe on the pearly white, 500-meter long sand bar.

Living with a Wealthy Neighbor

The story of Manamoc cannot be written without mentioning its famous neighbor, Amanpulo Resort. The island of Pamalican on which the resort is built is a hamlet of Manamoc, from where roughly eighty percent of the resort’s personnel come from. The only corporate presence in the area, the resort is a partnership between the Philippines’ Seven Seas Resorts & Leisure (as owning company) and Singapore’s Amanresorts (as managing company).

“Aman” is Sanskrit for “peace” and “pulo” is Tagalog for “island”. When the peacefulness in Amanpulo gets a bit too overwhelming, guests speedboat over to Manamoc either to picnic in the sandbar, or dive in the waters midway between the two isles. It is through such leisurely activities that rich foreigners, usually from Europe, the United States and Japan, get to visit the village of Manamoc and learn more about the way of life there.
In the Beginning

Traces of the visiting wealthy can be seen in several public infrastructures like on school perimeter walls and water systems. Prior to these however are many visible and invisible fruits resulting from a long relationship with the ASF, even before Amanpulo started operating in the early 1990s. ASF is the corporate foundation of A. Soriano Corporation (Anscor), the parent company of Seven Seas, which in turn is the local partner of Amanresorts. As such, the Foundation and Amanpulo share a convoluted brotherhood of sorts. But the island of Manamoc and its people were brought to the attention of the Foundation as early as 1986, when, prior to the resort’s development, the island of Pamalican served as the Soriano Family’s home away from home, and the island of Manamoc a favorite side-trip.

Conditions in Manamoc were then very poor, with waterborne illnesses a common occurrence due to the lack of a potable water system and unhygienic practices. The Foundation’s first order of business was to help improve the delivery of health care services in the island, followed by community organizing, the provision of college scholarships, marketing of local goods and handicrafts, water resource development, and values formation.

After some five years of community development work in the island, a careful study of the Foundation’s Small Island Development Program was commissioned to determine impacts made on the community. In terms of infrastructure, the community could now boast of a multi-purpose building, a church, a village health center, a central plaza and others. Because the Foundation required the community to provide whatever counterpart it could (land, labor and minimal funds), natives began to involve themselves more actively in community affairs such as sports festivals, fiestas and benefit dances that helped raise funds for such construction projects.

The deeper impact however lay in the community’s recognition of their village development council (which the Foundation helped organize) as a conduit for development.

Partnerships in Paradise

The organized barangay (village) development councils or BDCs play an integral part in ASF’s work in the small islands since no program or project is undertaken without first consulting them.
When the initial work in the island of Manamoc was expanded in 1990 to include the two neighboring islands of Concepcion and Algeciras, assistance was “re-designed” to include the strengthening of the capabilities of organized local government units to effectively manage community projects on their own. Under this new strategy, the BDCs were able to acquire leadership skills that helped them lead and manage their respective communities. These skills were put to a test in their management of various projects done in partnership with the Foundation. Such included the construction of potable water systems, school buildings, and the delivery of health care services (through medical missions and the training of barangay health workers and community health volunteers). Multi-purpose cooperatives and income-generating projects like vegetable production, livestock production, and seaweed trading were also developed, which helped improve the financial conditions of cooperatives and its members.

Over the years, the program has been implemented in partnership with many local non-government organizations, foreign funding institutions, and like-minded individuals, all with the aim of improving the quality of life in small islands while preserving the environment's natural integrity. One such program is the Community-Based Coastal Resource Management (CB-CRM) Program, funded by PATH Foundation Philippines (PFPI).

The CB-CRM Program serves ten barangays in the Cuyo and Magsaysay municipalities of Palawan. It aims primarily to improve the quality of life in selected coastal communities while maintaining biological diversity and productivity of coastal or marine ecosystems.

The program also supports the active participation of people’s organizations and the organization of local enforcement units. These units monitor and enforce compliance with existing laws and ordinances that may be established as a result of policy advocacy efforts implemented under the program.

The CB-CRM Program is in partnership with people’s organizations (primarily the fisher folk), the youth sector, barangay and municipal resource management councils, local government units and barangay development councils (BDCs). Primary program objectives include the establishment of a Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Bgy. Manamoc and increase the capacity of fisher folks (especially those affected by the MPA establishment) to develop and implement sustainable alternative livelihoods.

PFPI supported ASF in CB-CRM activities such as participatory coastal resource assessment (PCRA), capacity building for Peoples Organization (PO), organization and empowerment of Municipal and Barangay FARMCs, formulation of Barangay Development Plans and Budgets for CRM activities, assistance to fisherfolk to initiate alternative livelihood/enterprises and assistance to communities to establish and/or strengthen marine protected areas.
Fish versus People?

In an interview with Metro Society Magazine, Foundation Chairman Andres Soriano III shared with readers the challenges faced by such a Program:

Every development effort done in the islands is anchored on the idea of preserving the natural environment without denying the human population opportunities for socio-economic growth. Development work is geared towards maintaining the balance between the responsible use of natural resources and the need to make a living in order to live a decent quality of life. The key to any environmental project is that one must give the people an alternate source of income for them to respect their environment.

In the Quiniluban Group of Islands where fishing communities are assisted, ecological protection such as mangrove reforestation, the promotion of responsible fishing methods and skills development training remains a strong advocacy. However, the promotion of such methods that will lessen the traditional dependence on marine resources must be augmented by alternate sources of livelihood that will, at the very least, lessen the negative impact of this “shift” in livelihood. Of course, the ultimate goal is that the family’s income is actually made better by the shift to this alternative livelihood. Striking this balance is a challenge: protecting the environment in the small islands cannot be done at the expense of the people who make their living out of the sea; and the desire to uplift the quality of life by improving household income also cannot be done at the expense of the environment.

The CB-CRM Program of the Foundation was therefore designed with this balance in mind. Implemented in ten island barangays, the Program aims to facilitate the establishment of marine protected areas (MPA) in the barangays of Manamoc and Canipo and facilitate the role of these communities in co-managing, enforcing, and maintaining their MPAs. To balance this obvious emphasis on protecting marine resources, the Program also aims to increase the capacity of fisher folks to develop and implement sustainable alternative livelihoods, especially since the establishment of the MPA will radically affect their main source of living. To support these objectives, the Program also aims to increase the awareness of local policy makers and the general public on the “Three Critical Results Needed to Assure Sustainability of Coastal Resources”.

To attain these objectives, the Program called for strong and dynamic interaction with affected residents, particularly the fisher folk sector.
Behold the Fish

As with many programs that deal with communities—particularly with communities heavily reliant on just one resource—the idea of a "coastal resource management program" was not immediately met with warmth and happy acceptance, never mind if it was preceded by the words "community-based". Ideas on "management" ranged from having an external entity (that is, a non-islander) control the use of coastal resources to a total ban on fishing. Such misconceptions had to be dispelled or corrected, particularly among seaweed growers and fishermen whose livelihood was to be affected.

Interestingly enough, the concern of Manamoc residents over their marine resources did have some "external" influence. The superb coral cover off Manamoc Island first caught the attention of Amanpulo Resort. In line with their own reef protection efforts, Amanpulo encouraged local fishermen to take care of their marine environment.

By happy coincidence, a few months later, a participative coastal resource assessment or PCRA was conducted in the island of Manamoc, as part of the Program’s objective to increase the capacity of fisher folks to develop and implement sustainable alternative livelihoods.

The PCRA proved to be an eye-opener for the participants. Swimming off Manamoc is like plunging into a huge aquarium so maybe there is something to be said about simply appreciating the beauty of marine life in their natural environment, rather than always looking at them as the next meal.

In other words, to quote a popular animated film, looking at fish "as friends, not as food" can bring about some positive changes in the mindset of those on the top of the food chain.
Carlos Jardinero, a fisherman, says, “Nung hindi pa ako nakakapag-training, wala akong pakialam kasi ang isip ko lang, basta may barya ako pambili ng isda okey na yun… (Prior to our training, I couldn’t care less. I thought that, for as long as I had money to buy fish, it was okay.)” Carlos Jardinero is now the Leader of Manamoc Island’s Marine Protected Area Management Team.

The training on participatory coastal resource assessment – funded under the CB-CRM project with PFPI, brought together local fishermen (and fisherwomen) under the express aim of teaching them how to assess the condition and state of their marine natural environment based on data gathered from ocular marine surveys. It is as literal as its name: an assessment of coastal resources participated in by residents themselves. The PCRA is, first and foremost, a data gathering tool and, secondly, a validating mechanism so that indigenous knowledge can be augmented, supported, or corrected by scientific data.

Being a data gathering tool, the PCRA taught the fishermen a range of interesting skills like classifying corals, identifying fish with their scientific names, how to take a fish census, and how to lay transect lines (how to stay alive while doing so as well). Some of the lessons learned were terribly practical and drew much amusement, the favorite of the class being “ang snorkel ay nakamamatay” or, literally, “snorkels can kill”. Well, what can one expect from people who have learned how to swim sans diving equipment and who are therefore practically part fish!

Such humorous instances however were interspersed with deeper lessons and realizations. One example is that fish, while seemingly prolific, cannot regenerate as quickly as they are caught and consumed, that the economic law of supply-and-demand is not applicable to nature and the environment. Says Jardinero, “Nuong nakapag-training, yun pala kahit na nga pag-naubos ang isda kahit mazami kang pera wala kang mabiling isda, wala kang mabibili talaga. Kasi yung cyanide fishing kahit malit na semilya namamatay. At saka yung blast fishing yun ganun. Rampant kasi noon dito kaya medyo bumaba ang mga huli ng mga tao dito. (When I went through the training, I realized that if the fish stock is depleted, it didn’t matter if you had plenty of money, there is no fish to buy – there is simply nothing to buy. With cyanide fishing, even the small fry die. With blast fishing, it’s the same. It is rampant in this area that is why the peoples’ fish harvest has decreased.)”
Trouble (-shooting) in Paradise

Another realization resulting from the PCRA is that coastal resource management efforts need the active involvement of people. In a situation that most (if not all) coastal communities find themselves in - that of a limited resource on which a growing number of people rely on - it is not simply a matter of man fending for himself while nature takes care of herself. As an international environment group so succinctly puts it, “Nature can satisfy our needs... But not our greed.” So caring for the environment is every man, woman and child’s concern. It is a governance responsibility, first and foremost, of the people themselves.

The importance of community involvement in activities that will properly train them in monitoring and evaluating their coastal resources should ideally also result in a better understanding of one’s coastal habitats. When a data-gathering tool such as the PCRA is used to transform facts and figures into concrete steps that will ensure environment protection, a developmental approach is thus taken.

One tangible result of the PCRA was an intensive, per sitio information-education campaign (IEC) among fisher folk and policy makers on the importance of having a marine-protected area (MPA). The fisher folk were organized into a people’s organization and a Barangay Fisheries & Aquatic Resource Management Council was formed. The two groups drafted a resolution identifying a site for Manamoc’s MPA and endorsed this to the Barangay Council. The Barangay Council then went on a signature campaign asking that a 108-hectare MPA be established in Sitio Kanike.

The campaign strengthened their endorsement for an MPA establishment until it was eventually approved at the municipal and provincial levels.

When the endorsement was approved at the municipal level, the Foundation and FPPI provided funding for the installation of buoys and markers in the area and helped organize the MPA Management Team and the Bantay Dagat from concerned volunteers.

From Consumption to Conservation

The people of Manamoc still eat fish. Of course they do! But catching the next meal (and the next...) is now done more responsibly, using community-approved, environment-friendly measures that help guarantee food security and a healthy marine environment.

For example, there are now “open” and “closed” seasons for fishing in areas away from the marine protected area. Fishing is also restricted to just the hook-and-line method, definitely no dragnet fishing, cyanide poisoning, or dynamite blasting.

With a friendly nudge from the Foundation, Barangay Manamoc now provides the 10-man MPA Team with a P600/month incentive, as well as P10,000 for the purchase of banca fuel and other patrolling-related activities.
Patrolling the area is done thrice weekly at four hours per outing. A floating security outpost built in the area – funded by the Foundation with a little “overseas development aid” (that is, a foreign Amanpulo guest) – provides the Bantay Dagat with a base from where visual surveillance of “non-Manamoc” bancas and illegal activities can easily be done.

At night, monitoring in the area is again done in cooperation with Amanpulo – unfamiliar craft detected by radar are radioed to Bantay Dagat members who live in the area of the MPA, for quick action. Nightly patrols are also done randomly every week so as not to give illegal fishermen a pattern of monitoring activities.

Two years after its establishment (and two and a half years after the PCRA), such efforts to protect the MPA have borne much fruit. A substantial change has already been observed in the benthic habitat coral cover and fish abundance both in and out of the area. There is a marked increase in abundance of target reef fish families, an apparent indication that the community’s efforts in protecting and managing their MPA is very effective. Even to an “unscientific” eye, the positive change is readily apparent.
### Average Fish Abundance Inside Manamoc MPA (11.20 cm in size)

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### Average Fish Abundance Inside Manamoc MPA (21.30 cm in size)

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**Partnerships Matter for Success and Sustainability**

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**Average Fish Abundance Inside Manamoc MPA (11.20 cm in size)**

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**Average Fish Abundance Inside Manamoc MPA (21.30 cm in size)**

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Rosalino Quirino, a fisherman, says, “Nakakatulong ito ng malaki kasi na-obserbahan naming dumadami na yung isda dito sa Manamoc, lalo na dyan sa may MPA. Kung nag-su-survey kami, visual survey, marami na ang nakikita namin at saka di na mailap ang mga isda katulad noon. (This has been a great help because we have observed that the fish-stock here in Manamoc has increased. This is most apparent in the MPA (marine protected area) where we now see more fish as compared to before when fish was scarce.)”

With continued vigilance, compassion towards their environment, and support from like-minded groups and institutions, the people of Manamoc hope to ensure the continued protection of their precious marine resources, for the benefit of future generations.

### Nineteen More Islands to Go

The beauty of the Manamoc experience is that with equal zeal and commitment (a lot of funding will help too), the people in the nineteen other islands under the Small Islands Sustainable Development Program can have a shot at protecting their marine environments too.

The PCRA can again be used to provide other coastal communities with a basic framework by which they can participate in the coastal resource management process. Skills are also enhanced as fisher folk learn simple scientific processes that can be used to support local knowledge. Inspired by the developments in Manamoc, a committed community can even use coastal resource management issues as basis in electing future leaders. Data gathered from PCRAs can be transformed into advocacy campaigns and included in school curricula...

The possibilities are as vast as the sea.

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1 Under Proclamation Numbers 2152 and 219, respectively

2 The patriarch of the Soriano Family then was Andres Soriano Jr., a known and wealthy businessman-philanthropist. His father, Col. Andres Soriano, is credited with being one of the pioneers of corporate social responsibility in the Philippines through empowering strategies.


4 Community-based CRM Project Agreement between PPPI and ASF.
BOX B.2

Environment-friendly Enterprise Development (EED) and Women’s Lives: The Story of Lucia

By Concepcion Sanchez, Project Manager – Community Banking and Microfinance Program, Feed The Children Philippines, Inc.

The province of Bohol is an oval-shaped island with a total land area of 4,117 sq.km. It is located in the heart of central Visayas, which is approximately 803 km south of Manila and 79 km southeast of Cebu. It is the 10th largest island in the country with 47 municipalities/towns and with Tagbilaran City as its capital. The province is inhabited with roughly 1.13 million people as of NSO census in 2002.

The productive force of Bohol is almost 58% of the total population, of which around 89% are engaged in farming and fishing. Agriculture remains the biggest sector in the province in terms of working population and land use. While employment is 91.1%, the agriculture sector remains the biggest employer but despite rich natural resources, arable land and abundant seas, Bohol ranked one of the top twenty poorest provinces in the country (16th of the total 79 provinces). While malnutrition is 15.92% for children aged 3 to 5 years old according to National Nutrition Council.

Who could forget Bohol and its splendor? The long white beaches in Panglao island that serves as haven for souls that needs time out from the noise in the cities. The must see sites that makes the province known worldwide, the Chocolate Hills and the world-famous Philippine Tarsier (Tarsius syrichta), and the Bohol Marine Triangle with its diverse coral reefs and reef fish. Indeed, Bohol is a land of a very remarkable beauty yet many contrasts.
Many poor families in the province earn barely enough to buy food and clothing and send their children to school. People would resort to borrowing from moneylenders who charge high rates. For the past ten years, various interventions have been made by the government, non-government organizations and the private sectors to help alleviate poverty. Among the programs implemented by the organizations is microfinance, mostly patterned from the successful implementation of the Grameen model, aimed at augmenting family income by increasing the economic participation of women, housewives, who are more often than not, economically inactive.

Research studies show that micro and small enterprises contribute roughly 32% of the Philippine economy, providing around 69.9% in formal and informal employment. But while this is the tremendous effect of micro and small enterprises to the economy, it is common knowledge that small businesses have underlying negative characteristics - low educational level, or basic or no business records, no access to formal sources of credit coupled with active participation in informal sources of credit, unpaid labor of entrepreneur and workers, and low technology.

Microfinance institutions answer this emerging problem by providing the collateral-less, low interest financing coupled with training and capacity building. The interventions are hoped to increase technical capacity of entrepreneurs in managing their businesses while providing them access to the needed capital, thus increasing their income.

Feed The Children Philippines (FTCP) is a non-stock, non-profit organization duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission on May 12, 1989. In 1990, it was awarded a “License to Operate” by the Department of Social Welfare and Development and granted a status of “Donor- Donee Tax Exempt Institution” by the Bureau of Internal Revenue. The vision, mission and goals of the organization is anchored on the phrase, “Assisting in the development needs of children, families and communities”. Currently, the organization is engaged in the implementation of programs that focuses on the three major interventions: child and family development, resource management and community banking.

In 2001, a partnership was forged by the FTCP and PATH Foundation and launched the Integrated Population and Coastal Resource Management (IPOPCORM) project covering the municipality of Tubigon. The project aimed to address economic condition of the coastal communities, which is highly affected by illegal fishing practices and high population growth. The IPOPCORM initiative is envisioned to integrate interventions on coastal habitat enhancement as well as reproductive health to address the problem. While conservation, protection and habitat enhancement is being introduced to lessen pressure on coastal resources; economic enterprise development is needed to respond to the supplemental income sources of the affected communities.

The Environment-Friendly Economic Development (EED) Component of the IPOPCORM project employed the Community Banking (CB) model as the credit and savings delivery tool to its targeted clientele in the communities.
It utilizes the following project features:

- **Self-selected groups of five individuals who compose the cell/small group.** Six to eight small groups compose the community bank or CB.
- **Credit is linked to savings.** CB members are required to do mandatory savings. Savings is promoted as part of maintaining credit discipline.
- **Graduated loan scheme.** Individual CB members are provided with loans with amounts gradually increasing every cycle.
- **Collective guarantee for loans.** The peer group replaces the need for collateral through peer pressures to enforce collection of loan repayments and compliance with the policies of the program.
- **Management committee.** The management committee is composed of the elected officers that are responsible for running the activities of the CB.
- **Weekly meetings are held purposefully to collect the loan repayments and to closely monitor the activities of the individual members and the group in general.**

**The Story of Lucia**

Lucia is a woman who mirrors most of the typical IPOPCORM woman beneficiaries in the municipality of Tubigon. A woman who has dreams yet not just for herself but also for the well being of her family. Her husband is a fisherman who used to have abundant fish catch years back, but now has been experiencing a decline in the abundance of the marine resources.

The couple has three kids who in a couple of years will be due for college education. “What future awaits my children if we stay like this?”, she laments during the series of orientation sessions prior to her joining the community-banking project. Like any other family in the province, she is among those who can barely earn enough to buy food and clothing for her children.

Lucia’s husband believed that what happened to the marine ecosystem is all of man’s doing. He actively participates in almost all activities the IPOPCORM project initiated relative to the conservation, preservation and enhancement of the coastal resources hoping that marine destructions might be minimized somehow. The couple was recruited as peer educators since they themselves are strong believers and advocates of the idea of reproductive health and family planning.

Prior to joining the (EED) component of the IPOPCORM project, Lucia has several attempt of starting up her homemade breads and pastries business but failed due to lack of capital. She even had an experience of borrowing from loan sharks and yet experiences another failure in the business since paying back loans with high interest rates is so difficult.
In June of 2002, Lucia finally made one last attempt of starting-up her bakery business utilizing the loan capital from the Community Banking project. She religiously underwent series of orientation sessions prior to membership and eventually was granted some fresh capital for her business.

Her leadership potential was seen by her group members so that she was consistently elected as an official of the organization of borrowers. Being the group leader she showed a nearly perfect performance that her group members are truly proud of.

Lucia increasingly availed of more capital at the end of each loan cycle and finally reaped what she considers to be “small yet valuable triumphs and successes.” “What you see in my flourishing business is only a small facet of what I have become now”, states Lucia. To her, real change and development is found within. “I am now the person I never thought I would become”, she added. In many informal conversations with the staff, Lucia would recount again and again how her life changes as well as how she now can somehow figure out the future of her children with her becoming a IPOPCORM beneficiary and more importantly her decision to join and be part of the microfinance component of the project.

Presently, Lucia is now operating a successful homemade breads and pastries which she and her husband manages. She already had expanded her market to neighboring barangays in the municipality.
C. Increase awareness and support for linked reproductive health/family planning (RH/FP) and coastal resource management (CRM) activities and policy reforms

BOX C.1

Win-Win Situation: Opportunities from having a Strong Relationship between the NGO and LGU in Project Implementation

By Gianani Gloria, Administrative Assistant, Silliman University Angelo King Center for Research and Environmental Management (SUAKCREM)

The perfect island getaway: white sand beach, a cool ocean breeze lapping the sea waters into small gentle waves, a rich coral reef teeming with marine life, wide sea grass beds for beachcombing during lowtide, and friendly island residents. Ten minutes away by pumpboat (motorized outrigger canoe) from mainland Camiguin is the 5.6 hectare island of Mantigue. Located in Barangay (=village) San Roque in the municipality of Mahinog, Camiguin province, Mantigue Island boasts of 55.3 hectares coral reef, 45 hectares of rich seagrass beds. Fish biomass and density increased three times since 2001 when the marine reserve was established. Mantigue Island is one of nature’s wonders that make Camiguin a tourist spot with its waterfalls, cold and hot springs, an active volcano, challenging mountain trails and white sand beaches among others.

Mantigue Is. and underwater photos of marine sanctuary.  
*Photo by J.P. Maypa*
However, not all is idyllic in this white sand paradise. The steady increase in the population of the residents on the island had resulted in a greater demand on its marine resources as a source of food supply and income. Illegal fishing methods such as dynamite fishing was reported from between late 1970s to early 1980s and more recently, spear fishing using compressor by fishermen from adjacent towns. The study by Maypa, Alcala and Russ¹ (2002) reported over fishing in Mantigue Island.

Setting the Stage for IPOPCORM

In order to preserve the marine resources that the island community of Mantigue is endowed with, the Silliman University Angelo King Center for Research and Environmental Management (SUAKREM) in cooperation with the Local Government Unit of Mahinog, began a Coastal Resource Management (CRM) project in 1999 under a Pew Fellows Grant in Marine Conservation given to Dr. Angel C. Alcala and Dr. Garry R. Russ. Aside from Mantigue Island, Brgy. Binaliwan and Brgy. San Roque were also included in the CRM Project (See Fig.1). The CRM project focused on establishing marine protected areas (MPA) in these villages. The approach used was community-based, which entails organizing and capacitating the community to manage and protect their marine resources through the established MPA. The CRM project took three years of community work/organizing by social workers, with experience in doing community work and who stayed in the community on a full time basis.

While the social workers are based in Dumaguete City, they stayed at the project site at regular intervals.

In the process of implementing a CRM project, a series of activities were conducted and one of these is the courtesy calls to key individuals and stakeholders. This includes the officials of the Local Government Units (LGU) at all levels: Provincial, Municipal and Barangay, and most importantly, to the community. It is through these visits that SUAKREM personnel are able to impart to these individuals the significance and importance of the project and the benefits that can be expected from a success implementation. Community leaders, fisherfolks and residents who also organized into a people’s organization (PO) tasked to manage their marine reserve. Support to these POs included equipment needed for protecting their marine reserve, setting up buoys to delineate their reserve, and leadership and capacity-building activities. In time, three marine reserves were established: one in Brgy. Binaliwan - Binaliwan Marine Sanctuary, and two in Brgy. San Roque - San Roque Marine Sanctuary and Mantigue Island Marine Sanctuary. People’s organizations composed of fishermen and their wives manage and protect the marine reserve in Brgy. Binaliwan and Mantigue Island and the barangay council of San Roque protects and manages their marine reserve.

³ Figures are from unpublished SUAKCREM-IPOPCORM quarterly reports.
By employing skilled community-organizers/social workers, the rapport is established between the NGO and the LGU and the community. For any community-based project, there is first and foremost the need to gain the trust and support of your stakeholders. While the concept behind marine protected areas and coastal resource management can be very scientific and technical, the goal is to be able to impart these concepts to the stakeholders. To be able to do these, social workers with experience in community organizing were assigned to the project site. By staying at the community for long periods, the social workers are able to get to know the residents better and vice versa. With their presence becoming known among the residents, the social workers are able to interact freely with them. Through formal and informal meetings and discussions, the rapport and trust is developed between the NGO representatives and the residents. At the same time, the residents begin to learn more about CRM and marine protected areas.

By 2003, SUAKCREM Director Dr. Angel C. Alcala decided that the CRM project in Camiguin can be complemented with the Integrated Population and Coastal Resource Management (IPOPCORM) Project implemented by PATH Foundation Philippines Incorporated (PFPI).

In January of 2003, SUAKCREM staff met with key LGU officials to tell them about the IPOPCORM Project and the need to hire project staff from Camiguin.
The IPOPCORM Project was initially presented to Provincial Governor, Provincial Health Officer and Mayor of the municipality of Mahinog as well as to the Barangay Captain (=village leader) of Binalixan and Brgy Kag. (=village representative) of Mantigue Is., San Roque. At the local level, the municipal mayor and village leaders have a very strong influence over their constituents which form the target stakeholders of the IPOPCORM Project. In the course of project implementation, these key individuals, among others, time and time again showed their support to the project; which proved to be a key in ensuring the attainment of project goals.

**Lessons learned**

By establishing a good working relationship between the NGO and the local government unit (LGU), the community benefits in terms of:

1. Protection of their marine resources
2. Ensuring their food supply in terms of spillover from the marine reserve
3. Residents are capacitated to become managers of their marine reserve
4. Tourists have started to go to Mantigue Is. because of their MPA

By establishing a good working relationship between the NGO and LGU, the LGU benefits in terms of:

1. Technical assistance from SUAKCREM in the protection of their marine resources
2. Tourism have increased because of their marine reserve
3. Regular monitoring of fish biomass and fish catch
4. Technical assistance from SUAKCREM in advocacy efforts for sustainable use of marine resources

By establishing a good working relationship between the NGO and LGU, SUAKCREM benefits in terms of:

1. People Organizations have successfully managed and protect their marine reserve
2. Efforts at CRM is successful in terms of having the stakeholders understand the concept behind and the need for CRM
3. A sustainable community-based CRM project is established

**Introducing the Project**

As soon as the project staff of IPOPCORM was formed and trained, between March and April 2003, they made a series of courtesy calls and presented the project among LGU officials at the provincial, municipal and barangay levels. Through this activity, the project staff were slowly establishing their identity in the community as Community Health Outreach Workers (CHOWs) as well as to inform the community about the project.
Aside from the officials, the project staff also introduced themselves to key persons namely presidents and members of People’s organizations and Barangay Health Workers (=village midwives). This series of courtesy calls was complemented by the spot-mapping (creating a map of the community with a focus on target clients) conducted by the project staff. By going around the target barangays, the CHOWs were also introducing themselves to future clients, peer educators and community-based distributors (CBD) of family planning products.

**Finding a Place to stay**

As the project was slowly being implemented, the project staff decided that they needed an office space so that their clients will know where to find them and so as to give the project visibility and a sense of permanence in the community. The project staff decided to ask Mayor Castañares to give them office space as a counterpart of the LGU to the project. This request was easily granted. The mayor offered an office located at the back of the municipal gym, which was in line with the other municipal offices. While this was being prepared for use, the MHO allowed the project staff to share a room at the Rural Health Unit. The Municipal Health Officer (MHO), Dr. Juanita Llacuna and her staff of barangay health workers (BHW) accommodated the project staff in their building. The project staff stayed at the RHU between March to April of 2003 before moving to their present office. This stay at the RHU proved to be very valuable because it allowed the staff to confer with the BHWs and Dr. Llacuna. Though this, data were shared and a referral system was set up between the two groups. It was very convenient then for a midwife to recommend a client to the project staff because their office was just a few steps away from the clinic. At the same time, the visibility of the staff within the RHU allowed them to meet target clients. But more importantly, by staying within the RHU, the community learned to recognize the staff and to trust them. Being able to stay within the RHU showed to the community the LGU’s support to the project. Because of this, the staff easily gained the trust and confidence of their target clients as well as develop a good working relationship with the BHWs.

For the project, this reflects an NGO-RHU partnership wherein the NGO project is complementary with the RHU, and not as competitors. In the whole scheme of the IPOPCORM Project, getting the support of the MHO and her BHWs is indeed a key in the successful implementation of the project.

**Home in where the heart is**

The project staff was able to move to their permanent office in May, 2003. The office is located in the Poblacion (=center) of the municipality and is accessible to the target clients. Thus the office was able to further establish the identity of the project within the community. To fully give the IPOPCORM project its credibility to the community and to formalize its implementation, a project launching was held in line with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The project staff formally presented the project to the Sangguniang Bayan (SB) in one of their regular sessions. The SB is the local body responsible for making legislation at the municipal level. By presenting the project to the SB, the chief executive (municipal mayor) was given the permission by the SB to enter into an MoU with SUARCREM for the implementation of the IPOPCORM Project in the municipality of Mahinog.
The SB facilitated the finalization of the MoU and endorsed this to the mayor. Once the MoU was drafted, it was made ready for signing by SUAKCREM Director Angel C. Alcala and Mahinog Mayor Hon. Benedicto Castañares. The project launching was well attended by LGU officials including the governor, Provincial Health Officer (PHO) and Municipal Health Officer (MHO). Target clients, fishermen, peer educators and community-based distributors were also present.

Project Staff (from left to right): Ms. Dahlia Co, Ms. Zusith Valles, Ms. Mary Ruth Millado and Ms. Gladys Abao. Ms. Geraldine Lopez is from SUAKCREM. Photo by G.A. Gloria

After the project launching the following project activities were well participated in by the community and LGU leaders. For instance, the regular coastal cleanups held twice a month in the marine reserves are headed by the barangay captains and barangay kagawads. The Barangay Action Planning Workshop was facilitated by the project staff with representatives from government line agencies (the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture, MHO, Bureau of Fisheries and Agricultural Resources, the Municipal Agriculture Officer, etc.) as resource speakers. In many activities, the mayor is invited to give the welcome remarks. Counterpart support such as pumpboat use for traveling to Mantigue Island, snacks during coastal clean-ups, use of communication facilities were given to the project at both barangay and municipal levels.

In turn, the project staff updates the mayor, governor and MHO of the project accomplishments. Quarterly reports are reproduced in triplicate to ensure a copy for the LGU. The project staff regularly shares their data on family planning acceptors to the MHO as well as refers to the MHO health-related concerns of their clients. When the SUAKCREM staff visits the project site for monitoring, they make sure that they drop by the Mayor and the MHO to give them updates on the project as well as to get their feedback in turn.
Lessons Learned

By establishing a good working relationship between the NGO and LGU, the community benefits in terms of:

1. Reproductive health services are delivered to the community
2. Residents learn more about reproductive health and family planning
3. Community-Based Distributors (CBDs) earn additional income from sales of commodities.
4. Selected individuals benefit from micro-financing.

By establishing a good working relationship between the NGO and LGU, the LGU benefits in terms of:

1. IPOPCORM project support the delivery of reproductive health services to the community
2. Project staff assist in RHU activities i.e. immunizations, referral of clients
3. Project sponsors medical mission for delivery of permanent methods of contraception e.g., NSV and BTL operations
4. Data gathered by project staff is shared with the Rural Health Unit
5. Residents earn additional income from alternative livelihoods established through micro-financing.

By establishing a good working relationship between the NGO and LGU, SUAKCREM benefits in terms of:

1. Implementation of Project Activities i.e signing of MoU, formulation of Barangay Plans, etc.
2. Counterpart support (office space, communication services, technical assistance, fuel, etc.)
3. Visible support of municipal and barangay officials to the project facilitates the people’s acceptance of the project. In turn, the project staff gains credibility and trust of the target clients through the endorsement of the municipal and barangay officials.
4. Residents follow the advice/leader decisions of the officials regarding project implementation.
5. Project activities are attended by LGU officials and project activities are implemented with the cooperation of community/participation of target clients i.e. barangay captain organizes the residents to conduct coastal clean-up, a resident gives counterpart support for rental of pumpboat.
Internalizing IPOPCORM

From 2003 up to the present, the IPOPCORM Project in Mahinog has achieved visible results. The number of family planning acceptors has increased, with 446 acceptors (as of October 2005). Barangay action plans have integrated family planning into their coastal resource management activities. Recruiting for BTL and NSV acceptors have been successful, with 49 women undergoing BTL and 1 man undergoing NVS. Counterpart support is given regularly at all levels and project activities are well participated. More importantly, the fertility rate has dropped to 6.3 in 2005 from 7.4 in 2002.

Seaweed farming on Mantigue Is. as an alternative livelihood. IPOPCORM file photo.

Summing up the lessons learned

From the case study presented above, the lessons learned point towards a win-win situation because of the strong relationship between SUAKCREM and the LGU. On one hand, by establishing a good working relationship between the NGO and LGU, the community benefits in terms of receiving reproductive health services and practicing coastal resource management. At the same time, by establishing a good working relationship between the NGO and LGU, the LGU benefits in terms of assistance in giving reproductive health services to the community and technical assistance in managing their coastal resources. At the receiving end, by establishing a good working relationship between the NGO and LGU, SUAKCREM benefits in terms of support to project implementation. This support to the project is a key factor is ensuring its success.
Thus it is important that the target stakeholders (community and LGU) involved realize and understand the benefits each will be receiving in going into a collaborative undertaking. By this understanding, each will be willing to invest into the undertaking.

In any partnership, community leaders have been identified as key players in strengthening the relationship between two entities. In this case, for the LGU, the Camiguin Governor, Mahinog Municipal Mayor, Municipal Health Officer, Mantigue Island Barangay Kagawad and Binaliwan Barangay Captain. Without the receptiveness and willingness of these individuals to go into partnership with SUAKCREM, the CRM and IPOPCORM projects would not have been successful in Mahinog, Camiguin.

The next step forward

Given what SUAKCREM and the LGU has accomplished since 1999, the next step forward is to further enhance the strong partnership that has already been established. At the same time, as is the nature of most non-government projects, mechanisms must be set up to ensure the sustainability of the project. The approach will be the same - capacitating the people to enable them to continue the project thrusts, with the support of the LGU. Deputizing more Bantay Dagat (=sea wardens) will allow for more manpower to guard their respective marine sanctuaries. Establishing a marine reserve in Barangay Hubangon (adjacent to Barangay Binaliwan) will strengthen the CRM project in Mahinog. As the Mantigue Island marine reserve continues to grow because of its protection, it is expected that more tourists will visit the island more often. With this anticipated, a user fee system can be set up in order for the island and the LGU to earn additional income. The micro-financing component of the IPOPCORM Project must be strengthened in terms of encouraging beneficiaries to continue their alternative livelihood and avail of re-loans as well as setting up another batch of borrowers. In terms of continuing the family planning project in the municipality, the Barangay Action Plans must be followed through and implemented. More importantly, the supply of family planning commodities must be ensured, that the CBDs will continue to disperse these to the community. At the other end of the spectrum there is the need to ensure that the next generation will continue what their parents are doing. Inculcating into the youth the value of an integrated coastal resource and population management is a must in order to sustain what has been accomplished thus far.
Underwater scenes from Mantigue Is., counterclockwise: an endangered hawksbill turtle, a batfish, and a school of jacks. Photos by B. Stockwell and J.P. Maypa.
BOX C.2

All the World’s a Stage: Behind the Scenes of Olango’s Youth Community Theater Group

By Jesselle Solivas, Administrative Manager, Coastal Conservation and Education Foundation Inc.

At the backstage, Glen, Ronil and Jaime were leading the dance group as they polished their dance steps. On the other side of the room, you’ll catch a glimpse of Herminia and Arnel reading through their scripts.

Three more minutes, and the Teatro Paglaum is about to perform!

Coming from all corners of the room, everyone assembled into one big group—everyone waiting for the lights to dim. Herminia waited for her cue, as the rest of the group watched in awe, the huge crowd gathered in the Talima Community Stage.

Everyone in the group knew that this is not only the typical drama or dance number. They want to convey a more meaningful message to all—the youth of Olango has a role in building of a responsible family and a healthy environment.

As Herminia peeped through the entrance, she felt both fear and excitement. Whenever she performs, it always feels like the first time. Together with the rest of the Teatro Paglaum, Herminia has been with the theatre guild for more than seven months now.

Teatro Paglaum means Theatre of Hope. And looking back at why and how it was conceived, the group was a dream, pieced together by the youth themselves and made into an astonishing reality.

It was in 2003 when the Integrated Population and Coastal Resource Management (IPOCORM) Project was introduced in the small island of Olango by the PATH Foundation Philippines through its local partner, Coastal Conservation and Education Foundation, Inc. (CCEF), which provides on-the-ground resources.

The island of Olango and its satellite islets can be found along the eastern coast of Mactan, in Central Visayas, Philippines. It has a total land area of 1,030 hectares, subdivided into 11 barangays (smallest government unit). Olango island is one of Cebu’s extensive coral reef areas. With its inherent physical and oceanographic characteristics, the
marine environment is considered the main resource base. Hence, like the many coastal areas in the Philippines, Olango has been exposed to the threats of dwindling resources, burgeoning population and declining economic and social conditions.

Prior to the entry of the IPOP CORM project, coastal conservation initiatives were not new to the island. Several programs on coastal resource management were already introduced by various groups such as the Coastal Resource Management Project of USAID and Department of Environment and Natural Resources and CCEF. However, reproductive health linked to coastal conservation was another story.

The IPOP CORM initiative underscores the critical link between population management, environmental conservation and sustainable development. Specifically, IPOP CORM aims at addressing the rapid population growth and the migration towards the coastal zone that increases the pressure on the coastal environment. The program thrusts are guided by principles of better quality of life, overall improvement of family welfare, and capacity to make informed choices and responsible parenthood. IPOP CORM advocates simultaneous implementation of community-based reproductive health strategies, environment friendly micro-enterprise development activities, and coastal resource management education and advocacy.

In implementing the project in Olango, IPOP CORM has been conducting peer education, through the community members or volunteers, providing access to family planning commodities, through the community-based distributors, and addressing specific primary health care concerns such as fresh water supply and affordable medicines for the children.

**Youth as partner and beneficiary**

Adolescents are likewise considered both target beneficiary and partner of IPOP CORM. Realizing the youth’s vulnerability and ignorance towards their sexual health, adolescents are open to risks on unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and the likes hence, the dire need for them to be educated on reproductive health, as well.

According to Analeh Patindol, the project’s Community Health Outreach Worker, “in-school and out-of-school youth of Olango, ages 17 up to 24 can volunteer to become peer educators. They just need to be open-minded especially when it comes to sensitive topics on youth sexual and reproductive health”.

However, Gary, one of the core group members of the youth group, found the topic of adult sexuality and responsibility a bit sensitive to be discussed in front of his friends, neighbors, classmates, let alone strangers. During the meeting of the youth peer educators held a month after their first training as advocates of the IPOP CORM project, this sentiment was found to be not only of Gary’s but the rest of the YPEs, as well.

Hence, the challenge of looking for a more creative way of doing IPOP CORM work for the youth became a concern.
Then, Annabelle Fajardo, a Social Work student from Saint Theresa’s College was working as intern for CCEF. As a member of the Theatre’s Guild in St. Theresa’s College, Annabelle suggested in her internship work plan forming and using Community Theatre for the youth sector’s information campaign.

As the I-POPCORM gradually seeped through culture of Olango and Gilutongan islands, the youth’s gusto for I-POPCORM work also gained momentum. On September 28, 2003, during the International Coastal Clean-up day, an astounding number of youth showed up as clean-up volunteers. While there were 12 youth peer educators that attended the clean up drive, each teenager made it a point to bring with him/her a friend, a neighbor or a classmate. More than 30 youth filled the shores of Sta. Rosa in Olango.

The program was also seen as an opportune time for the youth to flaunt their unexplored talents. The intermission numbers and the simple talent presentation was the affirmation that the CHOWs and the STC intern needed, that the youth of Olango were indeed very talented. Particularly for this youth group, it was seen that Community Theatre might be an effective method to make I-POPCORM more interesting, entertaining yet equally effective.

Theatre workshop for the youth core group

Twenty four youth expressed their interest to join I-POPCORM’s youth component and theater group. All 24 attended the weekend workshops in November 2003, held in one of the resort in barangay Sta. Rosa.

During the three workshop sessions, Herminia Arong from barangay Sta. Rosa and Arnel Ompad from barangay Baring stood out from among the youth.
Both Herminia and Arnel joined the peer education program after the coastal clean-up.

The workshops squeezed out the youth’s creative juices and further developed their leadership skills through dynamic activities, such as paint me a picture and trust fall. After three weekends of workshops, 15 talented youth were chosen to be the core group of Teatro Paglaum.

**Testing the waters**

On November 28, 2003 the IPOP-CORM had their first Peer Educator’s Assembly, which gathered close to 200 community volunteers in the Sta. Rosa Sports Complex. The activity was a witness to a lot of pioneering efforts for the project and the community, which included the first ever presentation of Teatro Paglaum.

“Salamat sa Damgo” (Cebuano term meaning thanks to a dream) was an adaptation of the PATH Foundation Philippines’ comics about the common aspirations, struggles and temptations faced by a teenage couple forced into early marriage because of an unexpected pregnancy. The couple had to stop schooling, while the husband had to go fishing for their livelihood. Ignorant of the concepts of birth control and contraceptives, the young family conceived more children than they can handle, which made the husband resort to illegal fishing, to tend to his family’s needs. Their condition personified the situation of the whole fishing village, which eventually resulted to the drastic decline in fish catch in the area. With more mouths to feed and less resources to use, the couple faced their greatest dilemma...then suddenly the girl woke up and realized it was all just a dream!

The skit had its simple plot, matched with modest costumes and raw acting. But despite these, the message that Teatro Paglaum conveyed was received openly by the congregation. What made the skit entertaining for all were using names of famous soap opera couple and adding more local color to the original script.

Taking-off from the positive feedback they got from their first presentation, the youth steadily embraced the concept of a community theater and IPOP-CORM message.

In December 2003, Teatro Paglaum was given an opportunity to present a short drama before the misa de galo or dawn mass. The short plays, which presented the positive results of responsible parenthood, portrayed common social problems found in the island like gambling, drinking, physical abuse and their consequences, were written by the youth themselves.

Teatro Paglaum was becoming more and more visible in the community. And while this had a positive overall effect for its members and the whole community, the economic limitation of some member’s became a concern, especially when attending practices and performance entail transportation cost, which were additional burden to their family’s very tight budgets.
Being sensitive to these fears and issues, the community health outreach workers held a dialogue with the parents in January 2004. It was an opportunity for the Ate (big sisters) and Kuya (big brother) of Teatro Paglaum to explain what the group is all about and how this group has been helping the community. On the other hand, the parents were able to air their concerns to the project. Particularly, some parents fear that their child’s homework and schooling might suffer, especially when their kids are becoming more absorbed into the group. Another parent voiced out not having the kids helped them in fishing and other livelihood especially during weekends or vacation.

Having assured that Teatro Paglaum will not in any way hinder in the member’s academics and family obligations, the parents felt relieved. Likewise, the Ate’s and Kuya’s assured that they will see to it that the children will be brought home safe, when having late night practices and performance.

**Teatro Paglaum’s Community Campaigns**

At around 8:00 in the evening, around ninety community members gathered around barangay Baring stage. The gathering aimed to feedback to the community the results of the community survey that set-up the community profile for barangay Baring. As a program highlight, the Teatro Paglaum was performed their skit before the community. They further enhanced their repertoire with a modern dance number that perked up the anxious crowd.

When the music came to a halt, the YPE’s froze... Arnel, Herminia, and Analeh were anxiously waiting for the reaction from the spectators. But what they heard were the thunderous claps from the audience, and cheers from their fellow youth.

After the performance, Talima National High’s principal approached the group and invited them to perform for the Teacher’s Night come August 26. Before the night ended, the Teatro had their schedules full - they were expected to perform for other fiestas, school celebration, and visitors from other organizations.

As everyone enjoyed the sumptuous fiesta food, Glen thought ”Next time, we’ll use the new dance steps. I can’t wait for the next practice!”

While Ariel, with his big wide green excitedly tapped Analeh’s back, “Endless Love nasad gamiton nato sa sunod”.

**Signs of success**

As a developmental project, IPOPCORM’s goals are changing attitudes, behaviors and remedying wrong practices and misconceptions. While change and concurrence come gradually, especially in a rural and conservative community, after three years of implementation, project milestones can be seen through anecdotes and occasionally supported by statistics.
While a number of members have graduated and moved out of Olgano, more youth have joined the group; to date, Teatro Paglaum has more than 30 members and more have been expressing their interest in joining the group. The group is still requested to perform during community fiestas, represent Olangon during other festivities and occasionally present before CCEF and IPOPCORM guests.

Armed with more confidence and respect, the youth peer educators can discuss youth sexuality without batting an eyelash, without any reservations. They can help explain what the IPOPCORM project is all about and what their role is in the development process.

Another milestone achieved by the project was their linkage with the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) or youth council of Olangon.

More importantly, it was noticed that teenage pregnancies in the island were lessened, as observed by the rural health workers in the area.

Lessons and challenges from the experience

- The activity proved that the youth has a critical role in the RH/CRM link, especially when educating and bringing about behavioral change among other youth.

- Enthusiasm among the youth can be sustained by having result-oriented activities, such as youth camps, clean-up drives (or cross visits), otherwise, their interest might wane down.

- Strategies that improve their communication skills allow the youth to develop their confidence and be motivated to deliver messages to the community, in general.

- Having equally talented CHOWs helped in facilitating the youth activities, and tapping their artistic skills and talents; since most of the CHOWs were relatively young professionals, they found it easy to relate with the interests of the youth in the area; openness to new learning should also be considered.

- A strong support system for the youth is equally essential, especially in building their confidence and creativity.