

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community-Based Forest Management Program (CBFMP) revolutionized forest development and rehabilitation efforts of the government when it was institutionalized in 1995 by virtue of Executive Order No. 263.

Before the adoption of the CBFM approach, the sole motivating factor of contract reforestation awardees was primarily financial gains. With the implementation of the Forestry Sector Project (FSP) using CBFM as its main strategy to rehabilitate the upland ecosystem, it empowered beneficiary communities economically, socially, technically and politically while transforming them into environmentally responsible managers. The tenurial right to develop subproject sites alongside the various inputs from the Subproject deepened their commitment to collaborate with other stakeholders in the implementation of these subprojects.

The Lake Mainit Watershed Subproject site covers Barangays San Pablo, Bunga, Magdagooc, San Jose and San Vicente in the Municipality of Jabonga, in Agusan del Norte. The rehabilitation of the watershed area is noteworthy, it being a portion of what used to be the concession area of the Lake Mainit Timber Corporation which was subjected to severe degradation in the eighties. The Subproject envisions a turn-around in its condition and the socio-economic situation as well of the upland communities.

The Subproject had been plagued by problems early on. There were lapses, among others, in the implementation of community organizing activities as there were in the comprehensive site development and even in the monitoring and evaluation component because of failure of contractors to perform some provisions in their contract. Change of contractors in some cases resolved the constraints.

There are benefits too, however. For one, savings from the CSD funds and the Community Forest Development Fund enabled the communities to engage in various livelihood projects. Income from these projects coupled with the wages earned from CSD activities increased their income from PHP 20,690.81, registered at the start of the Project, to PHP 57,892.00 during the Project or a raise of 56%.

In terms of infrastructure, the Subproject turned over a six-km farm-to-market road; a three-km concrete pathway; two-km concrete road and a one-km all-weather road all of which provide access and mobility to community members.

The Lake Mainit Watershed Subproject has definitely given valuable learning to all those who have been involved in its implementation. Out of these experiences, they are now ready to face new challenges to sustain the Project.