

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

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

Lebak Mangrove Rehabilitation Subproject is located in the tidal mudflats and mangrove swamps in the municipality of Lebak, province of Sultan Kudarat. The subproject covers parcels of inadequate stocked mangrove lands, foreshore areas, beach ridges and mangrove forest (adequately or inadequately stock).

The people's organizations, Taguisa Mangrove Developers Association Inc. (TMDAI), Babato Tran Mangrove Developers Association Inc. (BTMDAI) and Datu Karon Mangrove Developers Association Inc. (DKMDAI) were organized respectively by Subproject Site Management Office (SUSIMO). Under the Comprehensive Site Development contract, the PO's rehabilitated a total of 753.11 hectares of mangrove and mudflats which were planted with *bacauan*, *tangal* and *nipa* species. The CSD contract was implemented from March 2001 to June 2003 with a total cost of Php 5.652 million. To assess the quality of established plantations and the socio-economic impacts of the project, S'ntobong Foundation Inc. was contracted to undertake Physical Validation and Institutional Project Benefit Assessment on the area. Based on the latest evaluation, the overall weighted average survival rate of the subproject is 87% with an average height of 1.3 meters.

To improve the accessibility of the barangay residents and the transport of their farm commodities to the nearest market, C. Solongon Construction was contracted to rehabilitate .867 kilometers of farm- to-market road and constructed small irrigation system for the potable water system of the community and irrigation of their agricultural crops. However, the construction was delayed by 1 month due to the heavy rains.

The project has provided regular employment not only to its members but also to non-members of the PO's. They participated in plantation establishment, construction of infrastructure and livelihood projects. The project has

generated 63,870 man days during the implementation of the Project. The latest socio-institutional survey revealed that the average household annual income of the community members increased by 21% from PhP 30,343 to PhP 36,784.

The Project did not only alleviated the social and economic conditions of the participants to the project but also promoted environmental awareness on the importance of the mangrove ecosystem in the lives of the community.