

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.

Rizal Mangrove Rehabilitation Subproject is located in the tidal mudflats and coastal waters of Mucielagos Bay within the municipalities of Rizal, Zamboanga del Norte and Sapang Dalalga Mabini and Balinagao, Misamis Occidental. The subproject covers parcels of inadequate stocked mangrove lands and open or denuded areas interspersed along the coast.

The people's organizations, Rizal Federation for the Coastal Resource Management Inc. (RIFCOREM) was organized by Environmental Cooperation and Linkages Inc from Sept.1, 2000 to Sept. 8, 2003. Under the Comprehensive Site Development contract, the PO's rehabilitated a total of 550 hectares of mangrove and mudflats which were planted with bacauan or *Rhizophora* spp. The CSD contract was implemented from January 2001 to June 2003 with a total cost of Php 7.111 million. To assess the quality of established plantations and the socio-economic impacts of the project, GASALBO, Inc. were 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 mangrove plantation was 90%.

To improve the accessibility of the barangay residents and marine products to nearby markets, JAEDA Construction was contracted to rehabilitate the 0.8 km. of farm to market road, which will be maintained by the Local Government Unit of Rizal.

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 latest socio-institutional survey conducted by Green Shield Association revealed that the average household annual income of the community members increased by 46 % from PhP 76,652 to PhP 111, 911.

The success of the project can be attributed to the unified efforts by the PO, LGU and the SUSIMO. The environmental awareness of the community has heightened to the extent that illegal cutting of mangrove and the conversion to fishponds in the province has decreased.