IIRR IDRC CRDI RECOFTC

Combined Technical and Narrative report for

Community Based Management Planning for Community Forestry: an Action Research Project
Phase I
The Philippines component: August 2000 to December 2002

COMMUNITY FORESTRY

LINKING PEOPLE TO POLICY?
Rights with responsibility?

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[1] Logo developed by the research team for the 'Linking People to Policy?' Community Forestry Writeshop in November 2002. The figure holding the seedlings in one hand and an axe in the other signifies the common viewpoint among forest dependent community members that rights to use the forest and responsibilities to manage the forest should be inextricably linked. T-shirts with this logo were distributed among key community forestry actors in the Philippines who attended the writeshop.

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List of acronyms used

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CF	community forestry
CFP	Community Forestry Program
CTF	communal tree farming
CBFM	community based forest management
CBFMP	Community Based Forest Management Program
CENRO	Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources (Philippines)
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
CBNRM	community based natural resource management
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
ESSC	Environmental Science for Social Change (Philippines)
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations
FAR	family approach to reforestation
FOM	forest occupancy management
FMB	Forest Management Bureau of the DENR (Philippines)
GIS	geographic information system
GO	government organisation
IDRC	International Development Research Centre (Canada)
IIRR	International Institute of Rural Reconstruction
IK	indigenous knowledge
IPC	Institute for Philippine Culture (Philippines)
ISFP	Integrated Social Forestry Program
KSA	knowledge, skills, attitudes
KEF	Kalahan Educational Foundation (Philippines)
LATIN	*Lambega Alan Tropika Indonesia* (Indonesia)
LGU	local government unit
MENRO	Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officer
MOU	memorandum Of understanding
PAR	participatory action research
PFEC	Philippine Federation for Environmental Concern (Philippines)
PLA	participatory learning and action
PRA	participatory rural appraisal
RRA	rapid rural appraisal
RECOFTC	Regional Community Forestry Training Center (Thailand)
RUP	resource utilization permit
SLF	sustainable livelihoods framework
SWOT	strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats
TLA	timber licensing agreement
UNAC	Upland NGO Assistance Committee (Philippines)

1. Executive Summary

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada and the Regional Community Forestry Training Center (RECOFTC), Thailand has provided support and partnership to the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) since 2000 for field-based research, information sharing and policy advocacy to advance community forestry in the Philippines. This project has been carried out in collaboration with the NGO, *Lambega Alan Tropika Indonesia* (LATIN). This report focuses exclusively on the component of the project conducted by IIRR in the Philippines, and apart from in the financial report does not encompass LATIN's work. LATIN will submit their technical and narrative report separately.

Within this report there are numerous overlaps with previous project documents, such as annual and semester reports and the project proposal for Phase II. This report is a consolidation of key existing research findings, with additional analysis and an elaboration of how Phase I of the project links to Phase II. The report is a combination of both 'technical' and 'narrative'. Because of the subject matter contained within the report it was found to be difficult to separate the content into two clear components, technical and narrative.

The project had 3 coordinators in Phase I, Mr. John Freeman from August 2000 to November 2000, Mr. Ed Sabio as interim project coordinator from December 2000 until May 2001 and finally Mr. Peter O'Hara[2] from May 2001 until the project's conclusion in December 2002. These different project coordinators in combination with the responsive shift in strategies over time during the project cycle has meant that between August 2000 and December 2002 there has been an evolution of project strategies. Within this report, the learning journey is highlighted with the report containing details of the proposed initial strategies as well as what evolved through experimentation and reflection. Having both together in one document provides the reader with a better understanding of the research team's learning journey. The learning journey was a process initiated by exploring issues related to community forestry through several entry points, particularly through learning from community perspectives. At the end of Phase 1 a much more focused and specific set of strategies for Phase II were developed, nested firmly in the experiences (both of what worked and what did not work) of the research team in Phase I. At times the research team struggled to find its niche and was admittedly sometimes confused! The research team commends IDRC for providing it with the luxury to learn in Phase I, a luxury that many other donor-supported forestry project teams do not have.

In general throughout Phase 1, the research team explored and came to grips with the 'big issues' that affect community forestry in the Philippines, then adapted existing and developed new concrete strategies that matched the comparative advantages of the research team with the most pressing challenges to community forestry that emerged.

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[2] Contact details: Community Forestry Specialist, Regional Center for Asia, International Institute for Rural Reconstruction, 4118, Silang, Cavite, Philippines. Tel No.: + 63 46 414 2417, Fax: + 63 46 414 2417, Email: Peter.Ohara@iirr.org

This report reflects this transition, the 'big issues' are discussed at length; historical background, general community perspectives on forest policy, some discussions on the political context, speculation on multiple agendas of stakeholders etc. which all leads to a very specific set of well defined planned activities for Phase II.

Throughout Phase I the project team has been active in both vertical and horizontal networking and information sharing on community forestry issues in the Philippines. It has conducted participatory research in depth with three communities to grasp the complexities of the implications of the current forest governance from the community perspective(s). It has facilitated a process, after lengthy immersion with and trust building within communities, which has led to the development of practical recommendations to improve community-based forest management (CBFM) guidelines. In addition to this work, numerous participatory case studies were conducted hand in hand with farmer-to-farmer cross-visits to increase the sample size and experiment with farmer-to-farmer experience sharing methods. All key lessons to date have been presented during national level consultative workshops with the Philippine Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), organised so that field based experiences can inform the development of new national CBFM guidelines[3]. In November 2002, the project provided a national platform for community related forest policy analysis in the form of a 'writeshop' entitled 'Linking People to Policy? Community Forestry in the Philippines' The writeshop was designed to test policy advocacy methodology that harnesses multiple and often conflicting perspectives on forest policy in a constructive way which encouraged participants to look for concrete steps forward together[4]

Lessons from the project have to date been shared through an article in (the FAO) Forest Trees and People Newsletter, Issue 46 ((http://www-trees.slu.se/newsl/46/Kap46.pdf) which was distributed in hard copy to 10,000 forestry practitioners/organisations worldwide). Other lessons from the project are found within articles on the RECOFTC and IIRR websites. The publication resulting from the 'Linking people to Policy? Community Forestry in the Philippines' writeshop as well as geared towards informing policy makers and those who influence policy makers, it is hoped to in general add to the Philippine community forestry discourse. A video that documents the writeshop process and some of the discussions that took place was made by RECOFTC in partnership with the research team as part of their Collaborative Documentary Series. The series is designed to provide examples of innovative community forestry related policy advocacy strategies in the Asia region.

The 'means' of producing the publication - the process - may be as important as the end, the publication itself. The writeshop with its multi-perspective interactions provided an example of how institutionalising multi-stakeholder interactions, including substantial community involvement, in the development of forest policy in the Philippines could be a possibility if the process is conducted in an appropriate way.

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[3] The 3 new guidelines are geared at improving CBFM implementation. The guidelines are (a) Strengthening the Development and Management of CBFM Areas b) Guidelines for the Establishment of Production Sharing System in CBFM Projects c) Guidelines on the Implementation of Joint Venture and Similar Forest Management Agreement. Contributions from the project team were sought by the DENR to feed into the guideline review sessions in August and September 2002.

[4] The writeshop was attended by key representatives from communities, academia, NGOs and the DENR. The publication will be printed in September 2003 and a video documentation of the write shop process is available from RECOFTC.

The project team in 2002 also laid the foundations for the development of a new international training course on PAR for CBNRM, to be run in partnership with IDRC and RECOFTC beginning in 2003. A customized 'travelling course' has also been developed.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background (From the initial project proposal document in 1999)

The overall project goal was 'to assess and document processes for strengthening the capacity of local communities to produce community forestry management plans, which address actual community and natural resource needs'.

Overall research goals were to 'contribute to the global body of knowledge on community-based management planning in forestry' and to 'contribute to community development and sustainable natural resource management'.

2.2 Problem Statement (From initial project proposal document in 1999)

From initial project proposal document in 1999: Current community-based management planning in the Philippines suffers from:

1. Overly complex and bureaucratic procedures;
2. Input orientation as opposed to focus on outputs and impacts;
3. Poor local capacity of stakeholders to engage in the process; and a
4. Narrow focus on forest and timber management.

2.3 Objectives of the Study (From initial project proposal document in 1999)

a. Assess current, broader experiences in community development planning, including management of natural resources and especially community forests, and to characterize those socio-economic and biophysical parameters which affect a community's ability to develop and implement such plans;
b. Design and test, through implementation, on-farm and natural resources (inc. community forest) planning strategies and processes based on site-specific parameters and specific community priorities and needs.
c. Identify and develop strategies for strengthening the skills and capacities required within the site community, and by those 'outsiders' working with the community, to plan and implement community development, natural resource and forest management plans; and

d. To evaluate, for sharing and advocacy, practical tools and methods for communities in developing, implementing and evaluating community-based planning, especially community forestry planning.

2.4 Research Procedure (From initial project proposal document in 1999[5])

1. Assess current, broader experiences in community development planning, including management of natural resources and especially community forests, and to characterize those socio-economic and biophysical parameters that affect a community's ability to develop and implement such plans.

ACTIVITIES	METHODOLOGIES
i) Collect and document SE Asian experiences in community development planning	Consultations with LGUs, government agencies, NGO's etc.; Literature review
ii) Collect and document experiences in planning for community-based natural resource management.	Consultations with LGUs, government agencies, NGO's etc.; Literature review
iii) Use participatory methods to evaluate forest management planning processes among communities surrounding the target communities.	PRA / PM&E with communities, LGU, government agencies, NGO's etc.; Literature review
iv) Define the social, economic and biophysical parameters most likely to affect successful development and implementation of community forest management plans based on experience	Social-economic analysis; biophysical assessments; literature review; key informants among experienced CF practitioners
v) Extract policy lessons implied by these studies at the community, local government and national levels	Desktop gap analysis between existing policy and practice (indicated in i to iii)

This research step is largely "desktop" with validation to answer the question: "what parameters are most likely to affect successful development and implementation of community forest management plans?" The initial interest is in broad regional experiences in community development planning, particularly, scope and process. The next activity is more focused on natural resource management planning in Indonesia and the Philippines and finally on community-based forest management planning around the selected sites. Site selection (described in more detail below) will have been completed prior to the third activity and will draw on international and national data from the first two activities. It is assumed at this point that the communities finally selected will be already organized to some extent, having at least some community organizations in place.

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[5] In response to lessons learned whilst implementing the project the project team was responsive and adopted, adapted or disregarded the procedures outlined below. The details of the revised research procedure are contained within the methodology, results and findings sections listed for each objective. A justification for the changes is also presented.

Data will be collected from literature, institutions, some communities (perhaps 5 around each site) and other key informants in the region (e.g. Province) surrounding the target communities. Much of the data will be subjective and some ranking will be required to extract significant variables. The output from this Specific Objective will serve as input to the next.

Some of the socio-economic parameters are expected to be: degree and nature of community organization; origin of population; gender balance and roles; immediate history with government; degree and nature of current support; and, degree of local consensus. Particular attention will be paid to gender since there are well-documented variations in gender roles in relation to forestry and resource management generally. The community forestry "policy environment" is one other critical socio-economic parameter to be defined. This exists at a wide range of levels from government to *barangay* (the smallest political unit of the Philippines) and is expressed in a variety of ways from national laws to departmental guidelines to local government "standard operating procedures". The last, in particular, is highly dependent upon local personalities (e.g. mayors) and culture.

Biophysical parameters are expected to include area and nature of forest; location with respect to community, government services and transport; and, access to markets, information and technical assistance. Finally an attempt will be made to explore, for each of these parameters, means to address them within the context of management planning for community forestry. For example, the potential of participatory processes to offset unfavourable attitudes in the local executive will be investigated. Another example might be whether local level Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaigns can successfully address negative community preconceptions.

In the above problem analysis, the need for broader planning was discussed so it will be important to understand the various imperatives to community planning. Where planning is to occur outside of projects (e.g. CBFM) other incentives may be required.

2. *Design and test, through implementation, on-farm and natural resource (inc. community forest) planning strategies and processes based on site parameters and specific community priorities and needs.*

ACTIVITIES	METHODOLOGIES
i) Characterize project sites particularly in relation to the natural resource base, cultural characteristics of the community and other critical site parameters identified above	Community resource appraisal; RRA; PRA; Social and gender analysis; institutional analysis; local impacts of NRM policies
ii) Identify priority community needs particularly in relation to food security, livelihood needs and natural resource management requirements	Community resource appraisal; RRA; PRA; literature review; consultations with LGUs, NGOs etc.
iii) Develop a community development plan, natural resource management plan and	IK analysis, participatory community planning workshops;

community forestry management plan for each site / community	PAR;
iv) Assist the community to identify and mobilize available resources (community and "outside") to implement these plans.	Group formation; training; institutional capacity building; networking; PAR
v) Implement and test site-specific community forestry "mini-projects" to address community needs related to forests (e.g. rehabilitation, reforestation, institutional development, livelihood development, NTFP management etc.)	Stakeholder workshops; training; technical support; PAR
vi) Develop supporting action research activities to enhance short-term benefits and contribute to food security, particularly with relation to community forestry activities (e.g. vegetable intercropping, thinning harvesting, grazing etc.)	Stakeholder workshops; training; technical support; on-farm research; agroforestry research; farmer-to-farmer technology transfers; sustainable livelihood option development; PAR

This is the core development objective whereby various community level plans and planning processes are tested through implementation. Each site will first be characterized according to the critical parameters identified in Specific Objective 1. This, together with expressed community and other resource management needs, will form the basis for the preparation of the plans. Plans will be prepared covering three levels: community development, natural resource management; and community forest management. As much as possible the community will be disaggregated for needs identification, thus, the particular needs, values and expectations of women and other marginalized groups will be addressed. These plans will be prepared by and for the communities themselves and incorporating the principles of Participatory Action Research (PAR).

PAR is a shared approach to problem solving through a reiterative cycle of action and reflection. It will be directed to answering research questions generated for each particular need identified. For example, if a need for better marketing of non-timber forest products is identified, then the research questions relating to this might include: "what impact does product quality / presentation have on sale price?" and "does better market information increase net profit to the producer?" PAR strategies might thus include market testing of various packaging and cost / price monitoring of local markets.

All efforts will then be applied to implement the plans beginning with community resources and, where these are insufficient, other "outside" resources. These latter might come from the Project itself, government at all levels, NGOs, church groups etc.

The Project will support a number of "micro-projects" as a small starting point for the community to plan and implement PAR in addressing actual community needs. Some degree of micro-planning will also be undertaken in preparation for each mini-project and this will be used to test the macro-planning procedures. These "micro-projects" will concentrate on community forestry although an effort will be made to ensure that short-term benefits are sufficient incentive for communities to engage in longer term forestry activities. Such benefits will directly address needs in food security and building local financial assets (e.g. livelihoods). IIRR has solid experience in the area of sustainable agriculture which is expected to play a major role in this respect. In this fashion a "bundle of options" can be generated for each site / sub-site.

If formal recognition of local management is identified as a community need, community generated forest management plans will be matched with the bureaucratic requirements for recognition. Where these requirements are perceived to be overly bureaucratic and obstructive advocacy will ensue for policy change.

All initiatives will be supported through our site partners, the People's Organizations, Local Government and National Government agency. The latter's involvement is vital if subsequent change in behaviour is to be promoted (this is expected) and, particularly in the Philippines, discussions are well advanced in how the project might assist local efforts by the Municipalities and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

3. *Identify and develop strategies for strengthening the skills and capacities required within the site community, and by those "outsiders" working with the community, to plan and implement community development, natural resource and forest management plans.*

ACTIVITIES	METHODOLOGIES
i) Identify and analyze relationships of all stakeholders present at each site	Stakeholder analysis; SWOT analysis; PRA
ii) Analyze existing and required capabilities for each to engage in the development and implementation of community forestry management plans	Institutional analysis; training needs analysis;
iii) Build knowledge, skills and attitudes where they are deficient; where KSAs already exist document how they were formed	Training of local facilitators; Exposure-visits; development of leadership and planning skills
iv) Institutionalize knowledge, skills and attitudes in local groups / organizations	Training; workshop; demonstration sites; MOUs; establish round-table discussion groups among stakeholders
v) Link with external supporting institutions to sustain and develop these knowledge, skills and attitudes	Networking / linkaging
vi) Build capacity of LATIN in participatory action research, training and materials production	Trainings; workshops

Occurring largely in parallel with Specific Objective 3, this objective is more analytical seeking to extract needs in relation to local capacity for community forestry planning. It focuses on institutional capacity building for both "insiders" and "outsiders" and the training methodologies will reflect a "learning by doing" strategy where "outsiders" assume the status of facilitators. Where at all possible knowledge, skills and attitudes to be transferred to the community members will come from among the community itself i.e. a farmer to farmer approach. Some adjustments to the structure and operation of the institutions may also be required to reflect changed realities and, again, the PAR process can be utilized for this.

Building of local capacities in the area of community forestry planning is expected to fall into the following categories:

- The capacity to effectively undertake PAR;
- The technical know-how required for sustainable tree and land management; and
- The ability to cooperate and form effective partnerships.

The Project will rely heavily on local government and local offices of national agencies during implementation. Hence, it will be important to review the capacity of these offices in community level planning. In the Philippines, the interface between the devolved local government Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officer (or MENRO) and the DENR Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer (or CENRO) is particularly critical.

4. *To evaluate, for sharing and advocacy, practical tools and methods for communities in developing, implementing and evaluating community-based planning, especially community forestry planning.*

ACTIVITIES	METHODOLOGIES
i) Establish participatory monitoring and evaluation systems for community and project levels	PM&E Training; workshop
ii) Conduct cross-site workshops to review, share and document experiences	Exposure-visit; workshop; publication
iii) Develop case studies and training materials	Workshop; documentation (unpublished)
iv) Advocacy for change	Media; Newsletter; Lobbying; Seminar
v) Share project broader insights and experiences in community development, CBNRM and community forestry	Attend conferences; journal contributions
vi) Institutionalize sharing within IIRR, LATIN and RECOFTC	International Training Course on Community Forestry (Yr. 2000) with modules on Management Planning; National (Indonesia) Training Course on Community Forestry (Yr. 2000)

This important objective seeks to extract lessons and maximize sharing of these lessons among both "insiders" and "outsiders" with the ultimate objective of social and political transformation. The primary learning mechanism will be a Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation framework). For sharing, a range of methods will be used (cross-site workshops, case studies, conferences etc.) and thorough documentation will assist later packaging of these lessons for use in advocacy and planned training courses in both Philippines and Indonesia.

Another tool of considerable use throughout all stages of implementation and monitoring will be a Geographic Information System (GIS) that is proposed for each site. GIS will assist in the collation, storage and analysis of locally generated spatial data however, there will be no attempt to establish a comprehensive dataset covering all aspects of each site. The GIS will be used critically and strategically for maximum effectiveness.

2.5 Site Selection (from initial project proposal in 1999)

An early activity will be the scoping and selection of suitable project sites.

A general criteria for site selection is to gain broad representation from across the continuum of management planning for community forestry. Where a degree of planning has already occurred, some retrospective analysis will be conducted to determine community perspectives on previous activities. This will serve to interpolate the continuum of management planning process. A secondary criteria is to sample across a range of socio-political parameters.

Specific criteria will be developed from the following considerations:

- Stressed Ecosystem – in general, ecosystems should be threatened and already stressed but not so degraded as to seriously limit management options;
- Representativeness – to facilitate sharing, extension and scaling up;
- Access should be reasonable (all weather, cost effective etc.) for researchers and for purposes of sharing;
- Communities preferably be socially disadvantaged / marginalized people and groups – if migrants, they should be already very familiar with the area;
- A mixture of agriculture and forestry land use and livelihoods would provide a range of options at community, natural resource and forest levels;
- A small watershed area would be ideal providing a natural planning area;
- Security risk for researchers should be minimal;
- Community and local government initiative, support and resources should be strong;
- Recent and current external project initiatives should be minimal; and
- Not protected area / buffer zone – particularly where this status limits management options.

As mentioned above, site selection will ensure a range of management planning experiences from initiation to implementation. This is simply for convenience, as the management planning cycle at any one site may only proceed so far within the term of the project. Thus, it is not suggested that sites can ensure representation across the range of likely situations, nor is this seen as necessary.

2.6 Theoretical or Conceptual Framework/Section (that evolved during phase I)

The project team went through a learning process in which through planning, experimentation and reflection with different stakeholders, the original boundary of the conceptual framework shifted. Project activities enlarged beyond emphasising management planning with the communities to a more concrete exploration of policy advocacy strategies as well as an exploration of new training approaches for senior CBNRM professionals. This shift also had implications on the way PAR was applied by the team, as it took the emphasis of the research team to an extent away from only the 'site'. Saying that, working with and learning from community members at the study site remained an essential component of the research team's work.

With this shift in emphasis, the learning journey of the community research participants was effectively halted when they reached barriers that were not 'at site' but rather imbedded in the larger political economy and in the nature of professional training, in effect beyond their present sphere of influence. The write shop was an attempt to enable community members directly to extend their potential sphere of influence.

In this report it was thought to be more useful to map out the systematic learning process of the research team (who attempted to systemize their learning and action by using the PAR spiral (See fig. 1 on page 23) as a guide). The learning process that the research team went through in Phase I is documented in figure 3 on page 28.

The essence of the ideological arguments that create the driving forces that shape community forestry strategies in the Philippines seem to be characterized at one end of the spectrum as the 'How? and What?' argument...community members lack the know-how, awareness, level of responsibility and organisation to manage forests, and at the other end of the spectrum the 'Why?' argument...community members lack rights over the forest resources and hence lack a rationale to manage their forests. A critical question for community forestry actors in the Philippines which surfaces time and time again is whether 'rights' should come first, or whether 'capacity building' should come first or where the emphasis should lie? Communities and community affiliated advocates tend to favour the advocacy leaning-'rights first' approach, whereas NGOs and GOs tend to favour the community education leaning -'responsibility first' approach.

The argument for 'responsibility first' often presented by GOs and NGOs is...

- With the more extreme argument, that local actors in general lack awareness, education, organizational skills and the necessary scientific technical sophistication to manage their forests.
- With the more tempered argument, that 'customary' resource management institutions have been undermined or replaced by state management, eroded by market forces, population increase or an erosion of social or cultural cohesion so community capacity and expertise has to be rebuilt.

The arguments for 'rights first' that often comes from communities and community affiliated advocates is...

- With the more extreme argument, that government actors and NGOs know very well that the most pressing issue is the 'rights first' one but nonetheless like to use a 'lack of responsibility' of local actors, primarily as a convenient argument for self-legitimisation, self-empowerment and thus a provision of a rationale for funding.
- With the more tempered argument, that government actors and NGOs often wrongly interpret the reasons behind a local reluctance to manage forests as a lack of capacity within communities when the reality is that professionals have created a forest governance structure that does not provide a sufficient rationale for communities to invest in forest management.

In the next few pages there is an exploration of some possible origins of these varying lines of thought and some possible reasons why certain actors so readily adopt one view over another. What is strongly argued is that core of barriers to community forestry in the Philippines are issues embedded in the political economy, and not issues concerning the merits of one silvicultural system over another or whatever. The research team conceptually over phase I increasingly focused on 'people issues' and less on 'tree issues'. It is now assumed by the research team that to advance community forestry there has to be a greater understanding among professionals working with CBNRM of why some decision makers make policy that seems to have a negative impact on the vast majority of trees and the vast majority of people. Some of the issues of relevance to this discussion are found in the following section.

A key question to contemplate when reading through the following overview of forestry issues in the Philippines is:

> 'Is forest policy and forest governance that is bad for the vast majority of the people and trees more a result of informed intentionality among decision makers or aloof ignorance?'

2.7 An overview of key issues related to forestry in the Philippines[6]

Historical Overview of important events of relevance to community forestry in the Philippines: For thousands of years up until invasion by the Spanish, scattered indigenous groups who practiced hunting and gathering, shifting cultivation as well as permanent agriculture developed complex management systems of their forests, in remote areas some of these systems have survived even until today. In pre-Spanish times forest cover was estimated to have covered as much as 90% of the country.

1521 Arrival of Spaniard, Magellan, immediately claiming the entire archipelago of the Philippines for the Spanish monarchy. This claim was known as the 'Regalian Doctrine', which later became the foundation of the Philippines's modern land tenure system. Land registration only applied to individuals and legal corporations, customary tenure rights were not considered legal. Land was appropriated by the Spanish or local elites.

1863 The first forestry bureau was established in 1863, marking the beginning of systematic government land control through laws and regulations which overrode any customary laws.

1894 Maura Act required villagers and individual landowners to officially register their land holdings, those who failed to do so officially became squatters. The registration system was alien to most village dwellers, so almost two thirds of the Philippine's territory was unregistered. Unregistered lands legally belonged to the Spanish governed state and not to those inhabitants with customary rights. No matter how long they had lived there, they were now classified legally as 'squatters'.

1898 Beginning of American rule. The land seizure that had been instigated by the Spanish was preserved by the American governors, including the recognition of land ownership based on the Maura Act.

1900 Forest cover estimated at 70%.

1946 Full independence from America. The Philippine government adopted forestry policies in line with the colonial administrators. The Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) unilaterally declared nearly 60% of the Philippines's 30 million ha of land as state forest (much of it being the unregistered land under the Maura Act), giving the DENR sole authority to allocate forest land uses and resource management rights.

1949-1960s A period of massive timber exploitation by tropical hardwood timber companies receiving concessions from the DENR. In 1949 forest products accounted for [illegible] percent of the total value of Philippine exports, growing to [illegible] percent by 1955 and reaching [illegible] percent in the late 1960s. Deforestation was at a rate of [illegible] hectares per year at the end of this period. The government often pointed the finger at shifting cultivators (called *kaingineros* in the Philippines) rather than at logging companies (many politicians were linked to logging companies) as the culprits of forest destruction. In reality the *kaingineros* often only moved into an area after the forest had been opened up and degraded by concessionaires.

1970s With dwindling forests, growing [illegible] and growing national and international concern about the deforestation rates, [illegible] social forestry programs were undertaken, all geared towards reforestation with various incentives including [illegible] on the part of the government, aimed at [illegible] the frustrations of the [illegible]. The programs were the Forest Occupancy Management (FOM), Communal Tree Farming (CTF) and the Family Approach to Reforestation (FAR), which was adapted from the Burmese *taungya* system. In total only [illegible] hectares of [illegible] was established in this way. [illegible] from the programs [illegible] that they were not fully successful because they were designed as [illegible] with community members only as [illegible], not as active participants. [illegible] being too [illegible] tenure rights, tenure, etc.

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[6] This is geared towards the reader without an in depth knowledge of forestry issues in the Philippines.

1982 With the assistance of the Ford Foundation, the 3 earlier programs were consolidated into the Integrated Social Forestry Program (ISFP) that unlike its predecessors also provided long term tenure security to farmers. Certificates of Stewardship were given to inhabitants with a 25 year tenure security; farmers were given training in agroforestry methods and encouraged to plant trees on at least 20% of their land. Natural regeneration in the plots legally still belonged to the government and harvesting of planted trees was difficult because of complex and costly procedural requirements. Indigenous peoples on the whole did not apply for these Certificates of Stewardship as they believed it acknowledged government control (with them only as Stewards) over lands they considered they should have full rights over.

1986 The restoration of democracy in the Philippines after the fall of President Marcos was followed by the explosion of long suppressed societal demands for peoples' participation in all aspects of governance including forestry. Also there was an explosion of people's organizations (POs), community based development projects and NGOs.

1991 Massive floods on the island of Leyte that killed nearly 5000 people were attributed to deforestation of local watersheds. This outcry over the disaster by NGOs put pressure on the government for action. A logging ban was introduced throughout the country, although a number of concessions were allowed to continue until the concession period will run out.

1993 Ancestral domain claims (ADC) for indigenous peoples' land rights were more greatly recognized by the government which safeguarded customary ownership rights. The ADCs unlike the social forestry programs, were kept under central management of the DENR, so local people dealt directly with those at the top, whereas in social forestry programs decentralization of responsibilities for implementation has taken place to local level DENR offices.

1995 All previous community forestry initiatives (excluding ADCs) were brought under one umbrella: the Community Based Forest Management Program (CBFMP), which is now the primary strategy for the country's sustainable forestry planning and development. The program focused on organizing communities and providing alternative livelihood strategies so that pressure would be taken off the natural forest. A handful of communities whose forests were considered to be sufficiently stocked were granted *utilization rights for wood products but utilization was often hindered through costly and complex procedural requirements stipulated by the DENR.*

1999 Forest cover 18.3%

2003 A review of the CBFMP is being undertaken and new revised guidelines are being developed based on consultations by the DENR with numerous NGOs, academic and community members. Some proposed revisions make the procedural requirements for utilization more appropriate both in terms of complexity and also cost for communities. The revised guidelines are expected to be approved within 2003.

Source: Various literature sources (see bibliography) and personal communications with various forestry actors.

What follows is a synthesis of the analysis of community forestry related issues in the Philippines. The above historical background provides a chronological overview that is useful for the discussions that follow. The discussions are based on relevant literature reviews, presentations by/discussions with numerous stakeholder representatives, 2 years immersion with 3 communities and the development of participatory case studies with 3 other communities from other areas in the Philippines.

For community forestry to work, 'perceived benefits must exceed the costs of management in the long term' (DFID 1999). There has to be a clear and secure rationale to invest in forest management from the community perspective.

Within the Philippines over the last 30 years, forest projects and programs have come and gone, but yet the forest resources are still declining and on the whole a strong enough rationale for community members to invest in forest management is lacking. Forest project interventions have often been focused on 'solution' provision at the micro-level, usually in the form of 'capacity building' communities. The stated assumption among professionals working with CBFM has often been that the most pressing problem that causes a lack of investment in forest management by communities is the lack of knowledge (or organisation or capacity) in the communities themselves. Thus the emphasis of project interventions have often been focused on teaching the 'How' and 'What' of forest conservation and management instead of exploring the 'Why', the rationales, the incentives that determine whether communities will invest in forest management or not. Often the simple truth is that under past and current policy and institutions it simply did not and does not make sense for communities to invest in forest management, and site-specific pedagogic forest projects are not 'hitting the nail on the head'.

This lack of 'hitting the nail on the head' has greatly diminished the potential of a positive impact by donor assisted forest projects in enabling a widespread rationale to emerge for communities to invest in forest management. In the clamour for site-specific forest project success stories, often through very unsustainable service delivery practices the communities' voice has often not been heard, and when it is heard it has often been manipulated for donor consumption.

According to Kummer (1993), 55% of the forest cover of the Philippines in 1950 no longer exists. This deforestation took place during a period of consolidation of centralized state control over the forest resources, where the state was regulator. However until recently, policies on the commercial utilization of the country's timber resources consistently favoured the wealthy and politically more influential concessionaires under the so-called timber license agreements (TLAs). This whole scenario is bad for the forests, the rural people and has set a pattern of centralized decision making over the forest resources (UNAC, 1998)

In the 1970s under president Marcos timber licensing agreements were given out as gifts by Marcos to retired generals and veterans. One of Marcos's own laws was that TLAs could only be granted for areas up to 100,000 hectares. What is notable is that his sister Fortuna Marcos-Barba had a concession of about 200,000 hectares of forest. The logging industry created many new millionaires, many who entered politics and remain in politics today. In provinces where logging thrived, election results were largely determined by the industry. Concessionaires' support for candidates was pivotal. Money from logging sent people to Congress (UNAC 1998). In return senators would favour the loggers withlegistation. For example the application fee for a timber concession was only one Peso (15 US cents at the time) per hectare in the 1970s. Kummer (1992) goes as far to suggest that this led to a scenario where the post-war Philippine government has never really been concerned with development in the forestry sector; rather, it would appear that forests were viewed as an asset whose benefits should flow mainly to politicians and the well connected.

According to the FAO's state of the world's forest report 2001 (a compilation of official government figures on forest resources) statistics show that of the 5 789 000ha of forest in the Philippines in 2001, 6 935 000 ha are under forest management plans, that is 119.8 % of the forest cover. Although there must be some logical explanation for these statistics, it is interesting to note that with these incredible figures the Philippines is the only country in this publication to break the challenging barrier of 100%.

Kummer (1992: 59) argues that for the period of 1970-1987, the rate of deforestation based primarily on data from satellite remote sensing, is 250% higher than official government figures in the Philippines. Statistics can be very useful in masking the truth and in perpetuating myths. One of the greatest myths in the Philippines about forest management may be that the forest is best placed under the control of the central government.

As well as being regulator the state has also increasingly become gatekeeper of services to communities especially to encourage reforestation, under the label of social forestry. There has been a dizzying array of community friendly acronyms concerning government programmes and projects dealing with natural resource management in the Philippines over the last 30 years. In the 1970s there were 3 three government programmes, Forest Occupancy Management (FOM), Family Approach to Reforestation (FAR), and Communal Tree Farming (CTF). On the ground they amounted to little more than a public relations exercise, with villagers no more than labourers in the programmes. But interestingly this dichotomy came into being, of government as very public implementers of reforestation programmes whilst some government officials and their cronies being privately the biggest violator of the forest resources.

With the change of administration to Aquino in the late 1980s, donors were keen to step in during this period of economic goodwill for the Philippines. Donors were flooding the country with money and much of the money earmarked for the environment went to debt repayment, but a lot did go towards helping the environment. As money waned from the exploitation of timber concessions, from 1988 to 1992 the DENR received forestry loans from ADB, the World Bank, and the Japanese government totalling US$726 million, plus an additional US US$130 million in grants from USAID and ADB. Numerous forestry programmes sprang up with the DENR as the implementer. To look cynically at the situation it seems as if as the value of the forest asset declined, donor money somehow filled the gap. The lack of forest, rather than the forest itself, was now becoming an asset!

During the 1980s came the Integrated Social Forestry Program (ISFP) and the Community Forestry Program (CFP). ISFP incorporated the 3 programs from the previous decade, with an emphasis on small agro-forestry plots, but now with a 25year security of tenure. CFP theoretically extended the sphere of influence of communities beyond the plots to natural forest, with rights for utilization included but subject to complex technical and social conditions. Additional land-use types included in the 1990s were increasingly denuded lands.

These programmes and projects or what is left of them today are amalgamated under the umbrella of the Community Based Forest Management Program (CBFMP), which came into being in 1995. The DENR's Strategic Action Plan for CBFMP envisions that 9 million hectares of forestland will be placed under community control. An executive order on CBFM was accepted by the government 'Adopting Community-Based Natural Resources Management as the Primary National Strategy for Conservation and sustainable Development of the Country's Natural Resources.' There are 4000 groups selected by the DENR/NGOs with Community Based Resource Management Agreements (CBFMA) today.

Hiding behind the CBFM acronym seems to be rather blueprint approach, developed at national level and underpinned with a pattern of top-down service delivery with an emphasis on community organizing and alternative livelihoods projects. The idea is that taking the focus of communities off the forest to alternative means of livelihood will allow the forest to recover. The assistors and gatekeepers of the funds for these alternative livelihood projects as well as the DENR are some 700 NGOs. In the eyes of community members now the association between alternative livelihood projects and CBFM is so strong that CBFM is often primarily considered as the arrival of livelihood projects such as piggeries or pineapple production initiatives. Service delivery has blinded many communities so that CBFM as a means for them to have greater rights over the forest resources has become secondary. In the majority of cases in practice with CBFM only stewardship over the forest has been delegated to the communities. Villagers are entrusted to protect but not trusted to use the natural resources, especially for financial gain, i.e. the responsibility is delegated without the rights. Legal forest utilization is banned, restricted or discouraged, and a secure commitment of allowing communities to benefit from utilization in the future is missing. The banning, restrictions and discouragement (before harvesting rattan or trees, some communities have been asked to pay 50,000[7] peso to get the necessary technical environmental impact assessment carried out) of legal utilization happens through excessive forest charges, slow processing of papers and the inappropriate technical complexity of procedures and documents. This situation seems to ensure that villagers tend to exploit 'illegally' but not invest in forest management. For management investment there needs to be security regarding the assets, and regarding the rights to use the assets.

What this situation of maintaining the regulatory environment does ensure though is that forest products travelling along the roads of the Philippines can be labelled 'illegal' thus ensuring a handsome 'kickback' salary supplement for those who guard the roads. There are all sorts of arrangements involving communication between check points and also with the transporters, to ensure kick-backs have been paid, to avoid 'honest' road guards and to ensure that the kickbacks are regulated between check points as not to extinguish the trade altogether. It seems the more valuable the cargo, the more middlemen get involved rather than poor villagers, and with valuable cargo the higher up in the regulatory hierarchy the bribes will have to go. With this 'under the table' trade there are many losers, the forests, the communities and indeed the government. How to bring the trade from under the table into the light of legal transparency, and dealing with the often powerful winning individuals in the present scenario, would seem to be the logical challenge for development organisations concerned with natural resource management to focus. The 'protect the trees from the people' policy in the Philippines, clearly, for the vast majority of the people and vast majority of the trees, does not work and is unviable.

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[7] 50,000 Philippine Peso is roughly equal to US$1,000, Jan 2003.

As the failed system works its way through the remainder of the Philippine's natural forests, among development organizations there is an almost holy grail type of search going on for site specific success stories based on technocratic 'solution' interventions. They though according to some that have written on the forest project phenomena in the Philippines, often only benefit the service providers and the elites in the communities. In 1996 the National Community Forestry Programme Office even expressed some alarm at the project phenomenon 'The enormous financial and technical assistance given to foreign-funded community-based projects make them non-replicable and thus not sustainable'.

How long will communities continue to participate in forestry projects that do not address the declining forest resources, rights issues and are not sustainable? Maybe they will as long as there is at least the expectation of receiving material benefits from outsiders. Byron (1996:412) argued, 'there was some naivety in the expectation that communities would take collective action for managing forest, retaining existing remnants, or in reforesting through plantations or assisted natural regeneration, with little prospect of benefit themselves'. To be cynical maybe instead of naivety this was a very astute move, as not only does it not address the power balance, thus ensuring the role of regulator stays with the government, but top down service delivery/technocratic interventions provide a mandate for the government/projects to step in as gatekeepers of project funds. This would go part of the way to explaining the 'trees in plastic bags phenomenon' where projects keep bringing trees in plastic bags to communities when they often repeatedly at best end up suffering from the 'bonsai effect' after no maintenance or as unsightly thickets in the village head's back garden. Maybe reforestation schemes provide a clear-cut role for gatekeepers whilst providing convenient numbers for project reports.

Is community driven community forestry a threat to some? The role of the outside regulator and gatekeeper would be lost to an extent if communities were securely enabled to use the benefits legally from their local forest to invest in their local forest. Also if procedures and papers became appropriate for communities, it would lessen the 'need' for the outsider to supply technical assistance.

In conclusion Kummer (1992:155) notes 'the process of deforestation described for the Philippines is not amenable to a technical solution. The major questions do not concern the relative merits of different silvicultural techniques...rather the fundamental issue is, who has the right to use the forest resource?' If rights issues were addressed the gatekeeper/regulator would loose grip. To successfully walk the fence and become both regular and gatekeeper it would be important that programmes and projects are wrapped up nicely in just the right amount of fashionable acronyms such as CBFM, PRA, PLA etc. to satisfy donors that the programmes are 'people first' but with enough restrictions and regulations to ensure that the existing power balance is maintained, and that people in fact come last.

According to Byron (1997) participatory approaches are paid great lip service in the Philippines today, and are maybe somehow legitimising top-down programmes, with superficial involvement of communities in at best consultative roles. He adds 'My primary conclusion on why many projects fail to deliver real and lasting benefits to the 'target group' of poor and needy, is because they are designed and driven by (and largely for) outsiders, donors, consultants and local officials...Everyone seems to benefit from the process except the very people whose existence and situation is used as a basis for the activity'.

In appreciation of the many individuals that have maintained their integrity within a bad system, Kummer (1993) writes '...the existence of widespread corruption in the forest sector should not obscure the fact that numerous individuals have consistently and heroically maintained their integrity in the face of incredible odds. What successes have occurred in Philippines forestry in the post war period is the result of the activities of these individuals. This research is dedicated to those Filipinos who have struggled over the last 45 years to make the Philippine forest serve the needs of the Filipino people rather than the privileged few'.

Often local and provincial CBFM staff seem to be trapped as implementers within the service delivery approach of the CBFMP. They are experiencing the flip side of being a gatekeeper as donor support for CBFM has waned over the last number of years. The top-down blueprint approach still demands ambitious plans for alternative livelihood projects etc. in the village but there are no longer funds coming from above for their implementation.

At the national level with DENR reformers the system is not much kinder. There were conditions attached to the World Bank and USAID loans for example which included a reform of the forest industry. The logging industry and its allies in Congress strongly opposed the reforms, which were being pushed by DENR reformers. Even the head of the DENR in 1995, V. Ramos in frustration remarked in an interview in 1996 on the comparison to his previous work with DENR as undersecretary from 1987 to 1992, 'The bureaucracy (of the DENR) is (even) more dependant on political patronage'. Many of the pro-reformers within the DENR trapped within this system are looking towards outside donors and NGOs to provide leverage for reform. The research team envisages that its work can be a part of this leverage.

3. Relevant Methodology and Theory

3.1 Participatory Action Research and reflections on participation.

PAR was adopted as the underlying methodological approach for the research. PAR is a name given to a systematic learning approach with aspects that are inherent in many rural development workers' way of doing things already. The characteristics of the approach appear to be well matched to the complex challenges with community forestry work. To simplify, the PAR approach has two key ingredients: 'Action Research' = Systematic learning that involves a mixture of planning, action and reflection and 'Participatory' = A respect for multiple perspectives and agendas. As previously mentioned, instead of as suggested in the initial project proposal, the research team build the PAR capacity of community members, because of justifications previously mentioned, the research team in Phase I focused more on using the PAR approach to guide its own learning journey.

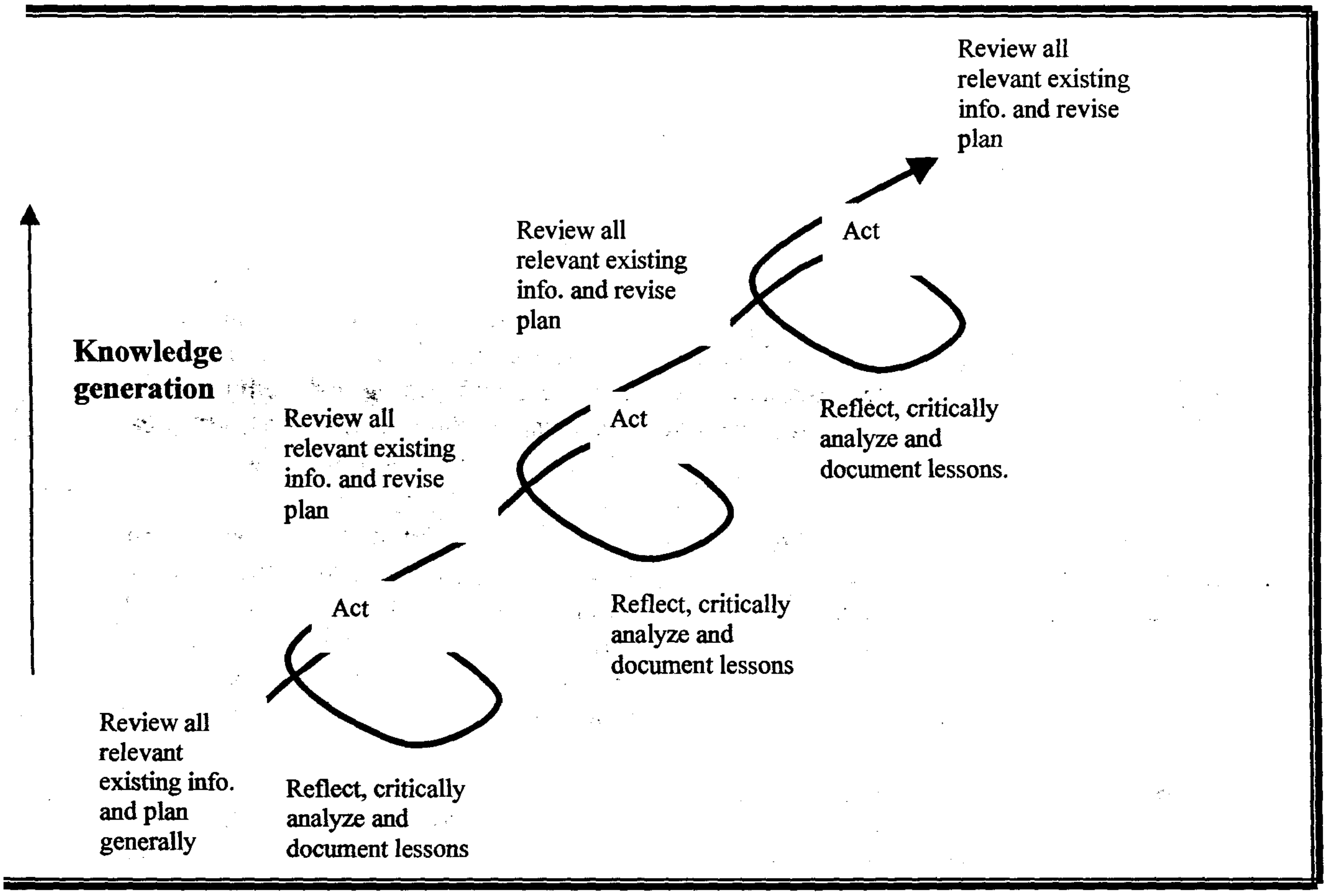

Review all relevant existing info. and revise plan
Act
Review all relevant existing info. and revise plan
Knowledge generation
Review all relevant existing info. and revise plan
Act
Reflect, critically analyze and document lessons.
Act
Reflect, critically analyze and document lessons
Review all relevant existing info. and plan generally
Reflect, critically analyze and document lessons

Figure 1. *Participatory Action Research Spiral, the research team used the spiral as a systematic learning guide whilst incorporating multiple-perspectives from other actors at every stage.*

Problems and solutions relating to community forestry seem to be very much in the eye of the beholder. Participatory approaches are an attempt to bridge gaps in the way different actors understand issues. By unravelling and illuminating different perspectives this helps pave the way to create enabling conditions in which different stakeholders can inform each other of their views and thus help build greater understanding.

Challenges to community forestry are often rooted in the fundamental difference of perceptions among and between stakeholders combined with a fundamental imbalance in control over decision-making among stakeholders. For various reasons it appears though that multiple perspectives and social and political dimensions of power relationships at the core of challenges to community forestry are rarely explored by professionals with a purposeful and systematic experiential learning approach, especially so in the Philippines. Some speculative reasons for this are discussed later in this chapter.

The assumption behind action research is that real learning, knowledge generation or gaining real experience is optimised through structured learning with fixed steps, ideally in a certain sequence. For example conceptualisation (learning from the past/others, literature reviews, studying concepts etc.) followed by general planning, experimentation (the action part) and reflection (reflecting upon the action/concepts etc.) which may lead to a revision of concepts and a revision in the plans for the next cycle of learning and so on.

The origins of action research are nested in 'epistemology', learning about learning. The review, plan, action, reflection, documentation spiral (See Figure 1.) has many advantages for development professionals/organizations (who's project based approach is often criticised for its lack of cognitive learning), among them being that an institutional memory will be created, and ideas move forward continually striving to break new ground (rather than going around in circles) and the approach above all is responsive to issues that emerge through experimentation. PAR is not hemmed in by the initial underlying assumptions of the research team.

The biggest misinterpretation of action research as a systematic learning approach may be that it is only about 'action', whereas the action part is no less or more important than the other components in the learning cycle. In the conceptualisation part of the learning journey the team found it useful to include contemporary literature reviews, explore concepts and discuss with peers nationally and internationally regarding current ideas in the community forestry discourse so that 'reinventing the wheel' was avoided.

The cycle can be entered at any point but its strength as a systematic learning approach is in going through all the components and not missing any out. Concepts for example are often the accumulation of 100s or even 1000s of person years of experience, disregarding concepts in an action research process would be as inappropriate as disregarding the need for 'action'.

The 'participatory' in participatory action research is key to the relevance of the outcome, it grounds the process in the agendum of the key actors, in the case of community forestry, particularly the communities themselves. In the research team's approach, they opted for a key role for community members, where issues were defined and analysed by the communities and the research team participated with communities and not vice versa. Table 1 provides a view of different degrees of participation. These thoughts/analysis emerged through experimentation with different participatory approaches with community members and a reflection on other professionals we encountered working with communities engaged in CBFM. If the relationship between the professionals and the communities is considered in different sections of the table, there is a noticeable difference in the power relationships between the two in each section. 'Participation' seems to be used so often nowadays as a blanket term for all development work that involves community members, that in many ways it has lost its usefulness as a definition of an approach. The analysis presented below is designed to promote discussion on the many shades of participation.

Increasing degrees of participation	**Role of professional**	**Role of community**
	1. Accepts one reality: Owns agenda. Craves information. The extractor of primary information. Observer. Describer. Problem definer. Analyser. Solution provider. Supply-driven. Teacher. The changer of 'them', the community members.	**1. The object**. The studied. The cause of the problem. Source of primary information. To be educated to achieve change within community.
	2. Accepts multiple realities: Listener. Craves knowledge. Works with people. Co-researcher. Co-learner, Co-analyser. Co-problem definer. Co-solution definer. Open to change.	**2. The Participant.** Co-researcher Co-learner. Co-analyser. Co-problem definer. Co-solution definer. To be empowered to change and to be changed.
	3. Accepts multiple agendas. Participant. Learner. Craves relevance. Works for communities. Facilitator. Networker. Advocate. Demand-driven. Willing to change 'us', the professionals.	**3. Owns agenda.** Issue definer. Analyser. Solution definer. To have potential released through change outside the community.

Table 1. *Degrees of participation and the role of the professionals and community members*

Some development professionals/organizations feel more comfortable in different sections of Table 1. Often the situation determines which section of the table would be appropriate. But when development workers genuinely adopt PAR principles in their work with a degree of self-reflection, the 'can of worms' that is a consideration of power relationships between the 'insiders' and 'outsiders' is often opened.

Often though this 'can of worms' seems to be avoided completely by conventional forestry projects in the Philippines. Some possible reasons could be...

- Inappropriate academic baggage of forestry/development professionals – 'we are taught to be teachers of communities, what can a teacher learn from his/her pupils?'
- The government/donor agendas and comfort zone restrict professionals from working with power issues and linked to this…society in many areas of the Philippines has the potential for violent conflict due to community frustrations over inequitable access to and distribution of resources.
- Limited, or lack of the necessary set of skills required of development professionals to facilitate or guide dialogues about power relations within CBNRM

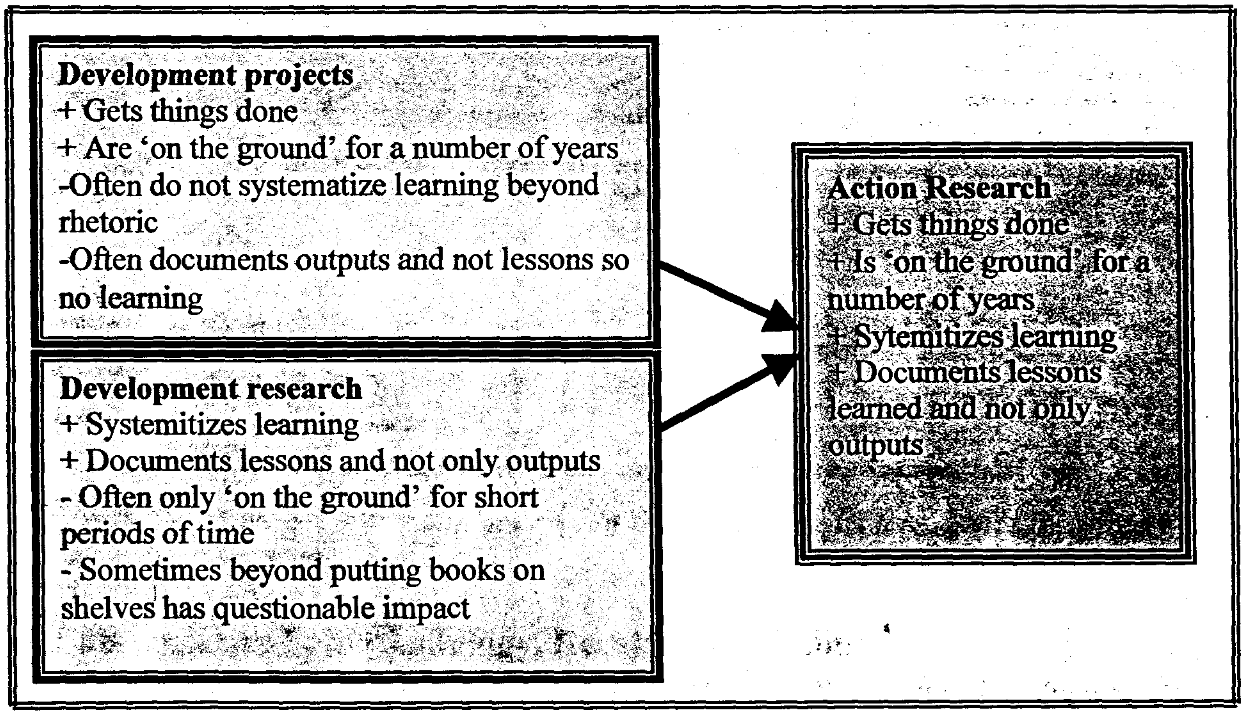
By using PAR as a systematic learning approach focused on 'people issues', it is wise to be acquainted with the larger political context as this has implications on power relationships between various actors and therefore on how to conduct such research. In the Philippines many development/government organisations working with community forestry seem to focus on technocratic service delivery with participatory approaches restricted to consultation at a field level, very much within the top section of Table 1. This is interesting to view within the larger socio-economic context where often corruption and problematic governance issues in general are stated by community members as core barriers to community forestry.

Other countries in the region such as South Korea, Japan and Taiwan undertook development strategies based on 'people issues' such as massive socio-economic-political reforms (including reforms in land tenure, enabling credit access for the poor and in developing fair marketing systems) that were developmental and pro-poor with impressive results over the last 50 years. The Philippine state for various reasons seems to have moved 1 step forward, then 1 step back when it comes to fundamental development related reforms over the last 50 years whilst many mainstream rural development strategies have focused on variations of the transfer of technology model within a project context. From the research team's experiences there is a widespread view among community members that their continued hardships and poverty (in comparison to their counterparts in the other SE Asian countries mentioned above) is primarily attributable to the exploitation of the poor by the minority elite in the Philippines whilst stating the solution being similar socio-economic and political reforms to those carried out in the other countries. To generalise they often feel these views are not being taken seriously by the government. This has resulted in substantial rural support for and empathy with the peasant communist guerrilla movement, the New People's Army (NPA). The reasons for this disconnect between what the rural people want and what the government does, according to community members and community advocates is embedded deep in the fabric of Philippine society and is often attributed to the legacy left by 400 years of colonisation and the continuing influence of one of the previous colonial powers since independence.

Reasons aside, which are debatable, there does appear to be a 'disconnect' that affects rural development strategies including community forestry related initiatives in the

Philippines. The key question for development workers using a PAR approach focused on people issues, is can the disconnect be bridged through constructive non-violent means or is it a lost cause which should be left to fester until there is a more destructive consequence? Many development organisations seem to have decided that 'people issues' are simply 'too hot' and tend to ignore them. So there is remarkably little work being done by development organisations in the field of land reform, tackling corruption, illuminating power relationships etc. whilst the 'transfer of technology' paradigm in different guises is still the predominant development strategy in the Philippines, even more than 40 years on and with the Philippines slipping further and further behind almost all of its neighbours in terms of rural development. Many development professionals in the Philippines still argue in different ways that the poor are primarily to blame for their continued poverty whereas many community members we have talked to, argue with very convincing concrete examples, that their continued poverty is attributable primarily to a lack of opportunity which has been created by exploitative governance structures. With this larger Philippine political economy in mind and this apparent disconnect, the use of PAR that focuses on 'people' issues, and attempts at 'reconnection' in the sphere of community forestry, and does not retreat into a 'safe' service delivery-technology focus, will possibly present many challenges for the research team ahead.

Moving on from power relationships, in a practical way the research team found action research to offer a middle ground between development research and development projects, where 'doing' is inextricably linked to 'learning'. Figure 2 below provides a simplification of the rationale behind this 'marriage of convenience'.



Development projects
+ Gets things done
+ Are 'on the ground' for a number of years
-Often do not systematize learning beyond rhetoric
-Often documents outputs and not lessons so no learning

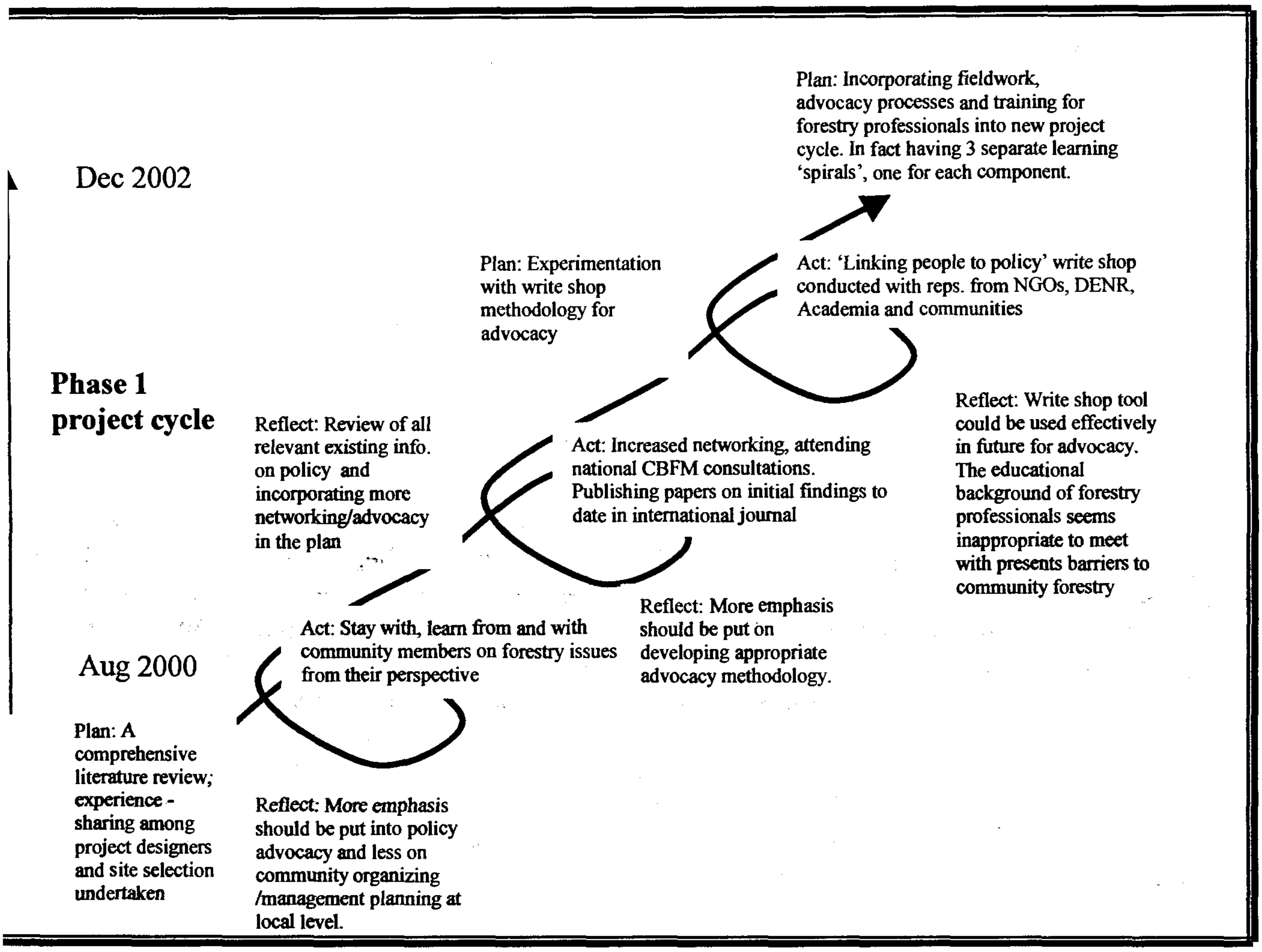
Development research
+ Systemitizes learning
+ Documents lessons and not only outputs
- Often only 'on the ground' for short periods of time
- Sometimes beyond putting books on shelves has questionable impact

Action Research
+ Gets things done
+ Is 'on the ground' for a number of years
+ Sytemitizes learning
+ Documents lessons learned and not only outputs

Figure 2. *Action Research: A marriage of convenience between development projects and development research?*

3.2 Putting Theory into practice: the action-learning journey

Figure 3 summarises the learning journey undertaken by the research team, guided by the PAR learning spiral. As can be seen where the team is now in terms of strategies is different compared to where it was in 2000. Also it can be clearly seen that the origins of the 3 component approach for phase II of the project are found within the experiences from phase I. There has been a degree of cognitive learning.



Plan: Incorporating fieldwork, advocacy processes and training for forestry professionals into new project cycle. In fact having 3 separate learning 'spirals', one for each component.

Plan: Experimentation with write shop methodology for advocacy

Act: 'Linking people to policy' write shop conducted with reps. from NGOs, DENR, Academia and communities

Reflect: Write shop tool could be used effectively in future for advocacy. The educational background of forestry professionals seems inappropriate to meet with presents barriers to community forestry

Reflect: Review of all relevant existing info. on policy and incorporating more networking/advocacy in the plan

Act: Increased networking, attending national CBFM consultations. Publishing papers on initial findings to date in international journal

Reflect: More emphasis should be put on developing appropriate advocacy methodology.

Act: Stay with, learn from and with community members on forestry issues from their perspective

Plan: A comprehensive literature review; experience - sharing among project designers and site selection undertaken

Reflect: More emphasis should be put into policy advocacy and less on community organizing /management planning at local level.

Figure 3. *Summary of the learning journey of the research team throughout the project cycle.*

4. Sub-objective 1: Methodology, Results and Findings

Assess current, broader experiences in community development planning, including management of natural resources and especially community forests, and to characterize those socio-economic and biophysical parameters that affect a community's ability to develop and implement such plans.

4.1 Methodology for accomplishing this Sub-Objective

The study site: Four hours drive away from IIRR campus are the *barangays*[8] of Rizal (population 1,685[9]), St. Catalina (population 2,054) and Villa Illaya (population 616), in the hilly coastal area of Quezon province on the Pacific coast of Luzon. A comprehensive site selection process was conducted based on several criteria.

The result of the site selection was a site with people who are representative of the majority and fastest growing number of upland rural Filipinos, they are non-indigenous people, migrant workers, opportunists, etc. Many arrived in the area since the 1960s onwards to try and make a living initially from swidden agricultural or working for concessionaires, and more recently from a variety of enterprises from copra production to the sale of vegetables. There is no indigenous tradition of forest management and social and cultural ties are less cohesive than they maybe are in indigenous communities.

The study site still has natural secondary forest (growing back after initially being cleared by concessionaires in the 1950s and 1960s) in varying degrees of health on the uplands from 400-700 meters above sea level. A few patches of thick, apparently relatively undisturbed forest are found in the inaccessible upper slopes. The secondary forest merges into coconut and fruit tree plantations on the slopes below 400 meters particularly close to the communities themselves. At Rizal the mixed woods/coconut plantations/fruit trees meet irrigated (by diversions of natural streams) rice fields on the flat valley floor. The secondary forest is divided into different administrative forest zones (in total approx 4000 ha). There is open access forest (1,125ha) under government control and an area covered by a Community Based Forest Management Agreement (CBFMA) (2,200ha), where the natural secondary forest is under the collective stewardship responsibility of Santa Catalina. Making up the remainder of the forest cover apart from a few small areas of privately owned forest (both natural regeneration and plantations) are the Certificate of Forest Stewardship agro-forest plots. These are found on hilly land and are up to 5 hectares in size and are usually planted with coconut and fruit trees where stewardship has been handed over to individual farmers for a period of 25 years. Many of these plots though are not being used. Out of 90 plots on record for community members of Rizal, only around 40 are still being actively managed. Reasons for this vary, from corruption and irregularities during the actual delineation of the plots that resulted in some disillusionment among community members, to the unstable price for coconuts, which is the main cash crop on the plots.

The research site is also adjacent to a national protected area, Quezon National Park, an impressive oasis of threatened 'virgin' forest, which is currently being encroached upon. Around Santa Catalina are a number of demonstration sites for Sloping Agricultural Land Technology (SALT 1,2 and 3 as well as hybrids of different SALT models), as well as a related training centre. Santa Catalina has had numerous NRM/alternative livelihood project interventions over the last 15 years, implemented by the likes of UNDP and FAO in partnership with the DENR. Rizal and Villa Illaya have not had any significant project interventions. Possibly as a result of this difference the perceptions of the community members towards the DENR vary considerably between the different communities. Many community members of Santa Catalina see the role of the DENR as friends, gatekeepers and service providers, whereas many community members in Rizal have expressed a strong distrust of the DENR personnel and view them as being corrupt (in their words 'crocodiles'). In one previous case a DENR officer was physically chased from the village of Rizal because of allegations of corruption. This complex mix of factors, views, different forest zones, complex relationships between actors etc. presents many challenges but because of the diversity it could also yield many relevant lessons for many other communities throughout the Philippines. It is almost a microcosm of many of the significant challenges facing communities, forests and their interaction throughout the Philippines.

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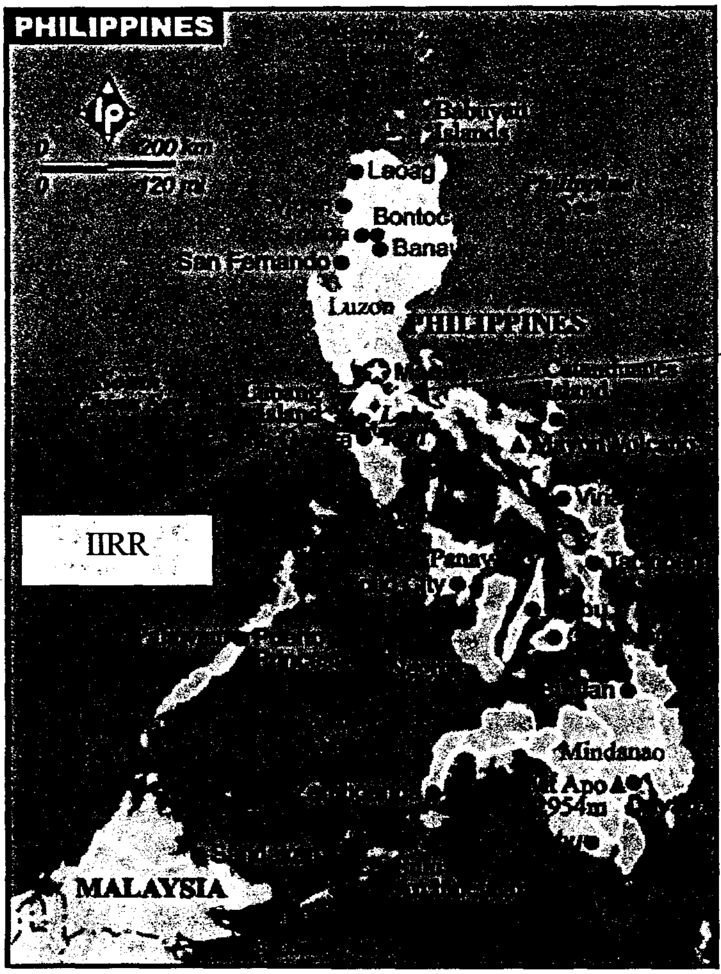
[8] Filipino term for community and the smallest administrative unit in the Philippines

[9] The figures come form the Local Government Units' records from 2002.



The location of the study sites in the upland communities of Rizal, Villa Illiya and Santa Catalina. These hills provide one of the last remaining refuges for natural forest in this part of Luzon.

Figure 4. *Map of the Philippines showing the location of IIRR and the study sites*

Some comments from community members concerning the challenges facing community forestry at the study site from community members are documented on pages 35-40. They underscore that the strategies for phase II of this project are nested firmly in the views and aspirations of the community members concerned. The views emerged from discussions and PRA/PLA exercises with a diverse cross section of community members throughout phase one of the project. These concerns and ideas have evolved into a community resolution that was presented to DENR CBFM head in November 2002 by community representatives and will form the basis for continued negotiations in Phase II of the project between community members and senior DENR staff[10]. Further negotiations have been welcomed by the DENR CBFMP head and these negotiations will form a core activity facilitated by the project team in the second half of 2003.

To even get to the community perspective as 'outsiders' with such a rich legacy of supply driven projects around the study site was difficult. Community members have become very skilled at reading project implementers, and suggesting 'needs' which fish for convenient material inputs. Often there is a degree of reciprocity of course, supply driven projects have money they have to spend to meet targets, and communities can conveniently suggest projects to spend the money on. Some areas in and around the study site are like a museum of failed projects. Getting past this project phenomenon is no small task, and there really is no substitute for time spent immersing in communities. There are of course approaches and methods that can help things along, some that were used by the research team are listed in the table below.

Purpose	Method
Historical background	Time line
Institutional mapping. Exploring relationships among stakeholders and within communities.	Venn diagram
Exploring who are the users of the forest resources.	Resource mapping carried out with all settlements neighbouring the forest and all relevant stakeholders in the forest
Finding out who benefited/benefits from the forest resources, previous development projects and the current initiative	Ranking exercises, carried out separately with different stakeholders Reflection/analysis can then be carried out on the multi-stakeholder findings, with the stakeholders later brought together
Identifying causes and effects of problems and analysis of cause/cause inter-linkages and effect/effect inter-linkages	Problem analysis
Coming up with strategies to tackle causes of problems	Solution analysis
Analysis of strategies/projects/policy/institutional set-ups	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis (SWOT analysis)
Management planning	Reflect over findings from previous tools and then use a frame based on 'Why, How and What, When, Where and Who responsible?' Maps can be added to this

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[10] The full resolution is documented in the 'Linking People to Policy' writeshop publication, published by IIRR in September 2003

	plan if necessary, with indications to show what and where activities will be carried out
Participatory monitoring and evaluation	Ranking exercises (with regard to benefits, responsibilities, performance), and Venn diagrams to de-verbalize analysis of relationships. The research team will be included as one of the entities monitored and evaluated. 3rd party facilitation will be considered for this purpose.

Table 2. *List of PRA/PLA tools used by the research team*

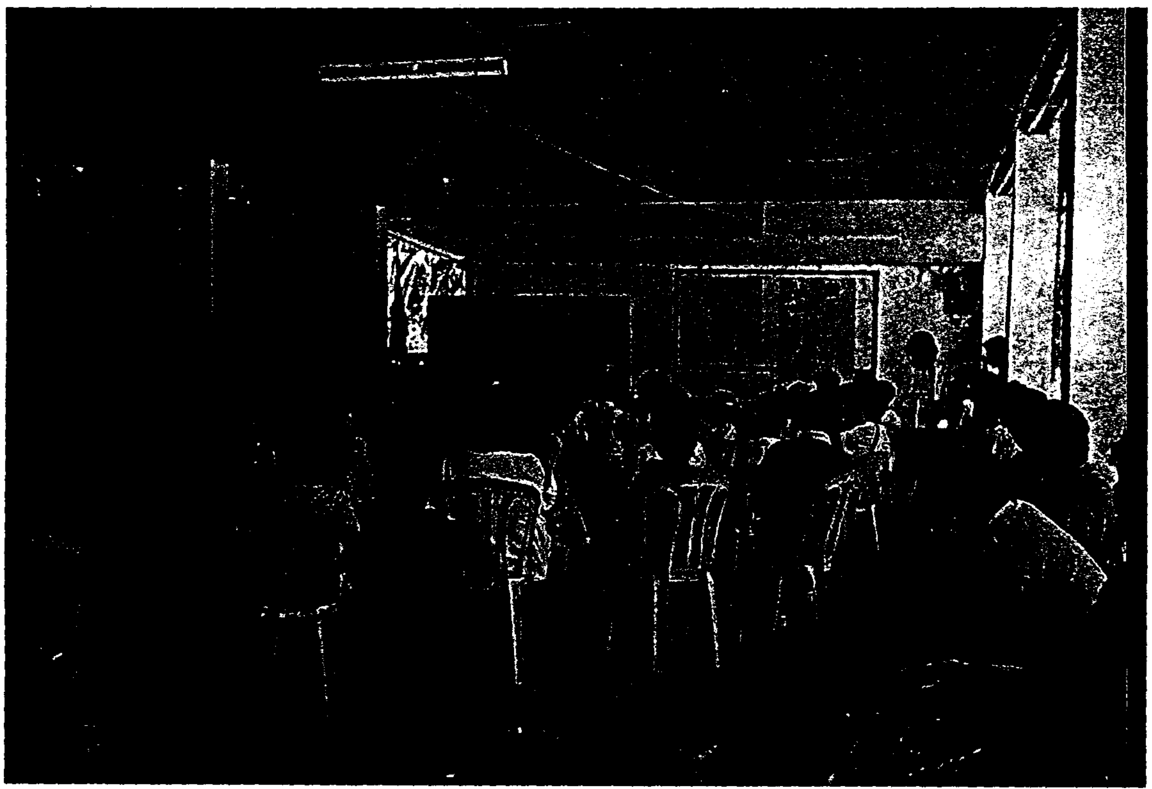


Photo 1. *Levelling off expectations. Community Stakeholders' orientation to the research process: This workshop was held in Rizal in February 2001 and the 96 participants included representation from all geographical locations of the community along with municipal and provincial government officials.*

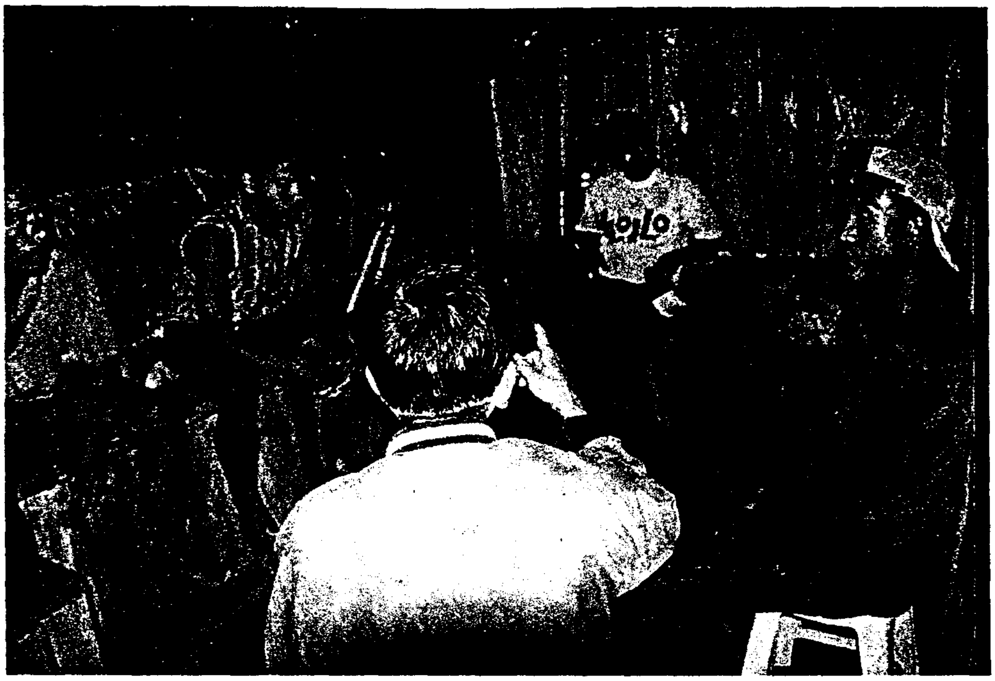


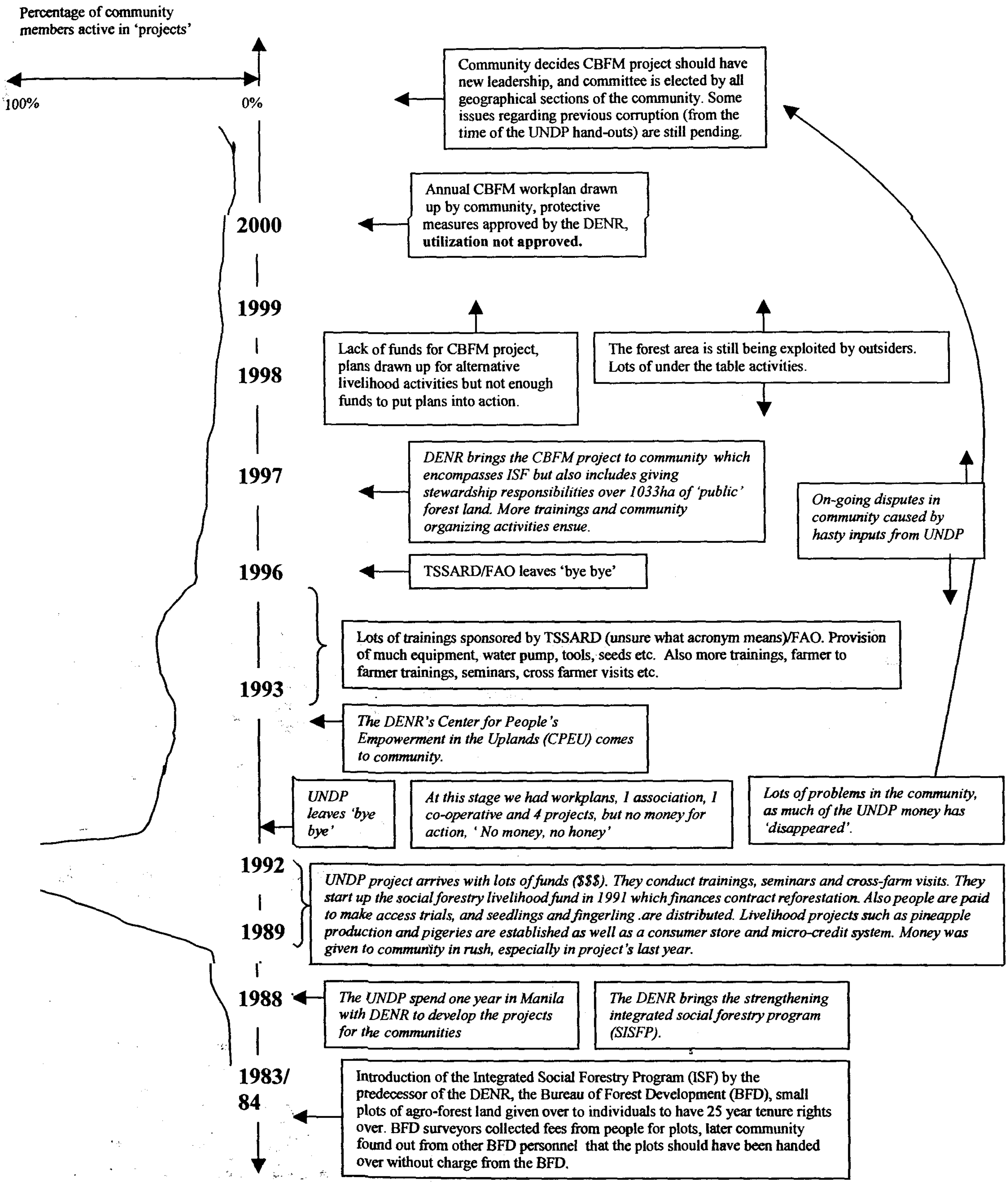
Photo 2. *Reaching all sections of the community to build trust and mutual understanding, Ed Sabio of IIRR and field coordinator Manding Yambao take a four hour horse ride to meet the hill farmers, who are part of the community of Rizal.*

Photo 3. *Developing the community perspective on the causes and effects of deforestation, Manding Yambao, the field coordinator listens to a local farmer explain the community member's analysis of the situation, while some local women get involved by adding more cards with causes. Off camera a group of community members are involved in a heated debate based around the evolving 'truth analysis' (as it was renamed by the villagers). This 'truth analysis' is presented in figure 3.*

Photo 4. *Working at times and locations convenient for the villagers, methods were used to allow the local perspectives to unfold as trust was gained. Here the 'time line' of projects and forestry issues was developed on the brown sheet by the villagers as a focal point to analyse the rich legacy of project intervention experience they have. We were informed that 'projects come with solutions but don't understand the issues, how can you have a solution if you don't understand the issues'. The research team were determined to avoid this mistake, and instead listen to these project 'experts'. The time line produced during this exercised can be viewed in figure 5.*

The research process in 2001 thus had a long period of immersing and trust building until the community perspective on forest issues (rather than on how to fish for material inputs) emerged. To help the process along in a structured fashion, purpose driven PRA tools were used, adapted or discarded in a trail by error fashion, with community members driving the process, and sometimes facilitating the PRA exercises.

The following two figures are representations of 2 actual PRA exercises carried out, the first of Santa Catalina's timeline over the last 30 years with regards to forestry events and related project interventions. The second is of a problem analysis developed by the community members of Rizal to reveal the 'truth' about the causes and effects of deforestation in their eyes.



Community decides CBFM project should have new leadership, and committee is elected by all geographical sections of the community. Some issues regarding previous corruption (from the time of the UNDP hand-outs) are still pending.

Annual CBFM workplan drawn up by community, protective measures approved by the DENR, **utilization not approved.**

Lack of funds for CBFM project, plans drawn up for alternative livelihood activities but not enough funds to put plans into action.

The forest area is still being exploited by outsiders. Lots of under the table activities.

DENR brings the CBFM project to community which encompasses ISF but also includes giving stewardship responsibilities over 1033ha of 'public' forest land. More trainings and community organizing activities ensue.

On-going disputes in community caused by hasty inputs from UNDP

TSSARD/FAO leaves 'bye bye'

Lots of trainings sponsored by TSSARD (unsure what acronym means)/FAO. Provision of much equipment, water pump, tools, seeds etc. Also more trainings, farmer to farmer trainings, seminars, cross farmer visits etc.

The DENR's Center for People's Empowerment in the Uplands (CPEU) comes to community.

UNDP leaves 'bye bye'

At this stage we had workplans, 1 association, 1 co-operative and 4 projects, but no money for action, ' No money, no honey'

Lots of problems in the community, as much of the UNDP money has 'disappeared'.

UNDP project arrives with lots of funds ($$$). They conduct trainings, seminars and cross-farm visits. They start up the social forestry livelihood fund in 1991 which finances contract reforestation. Also people are paid to make access trials, and seedlings and fingerling .are distributed. Livelihood projects such as pineapple production and pigeries are established as well as a consumer store and micro-credit system. Money was given to community in rush, especially in project's last year.

The UNDP spend one year in Manila with DENR to develop the projects for the communities

The DENR brings the strengthening integrated social forestry program (SISFP).

Introduction of the Integrated Social Forestry Program (ISF) by the predecessor of the DENR, the Bureau of Forest Development (BFD), small plots of agro-forest land given over to individuals to have 25 year tenure rights over. BFD surveyors collected fees from people for plots, later community found out from other BFD personnel that the plots should have been handed over without charge from the BFD.

Figure 5. *A diagrammatic representation of the 'project' timeline by community members from Santa Catalina, June 2001*

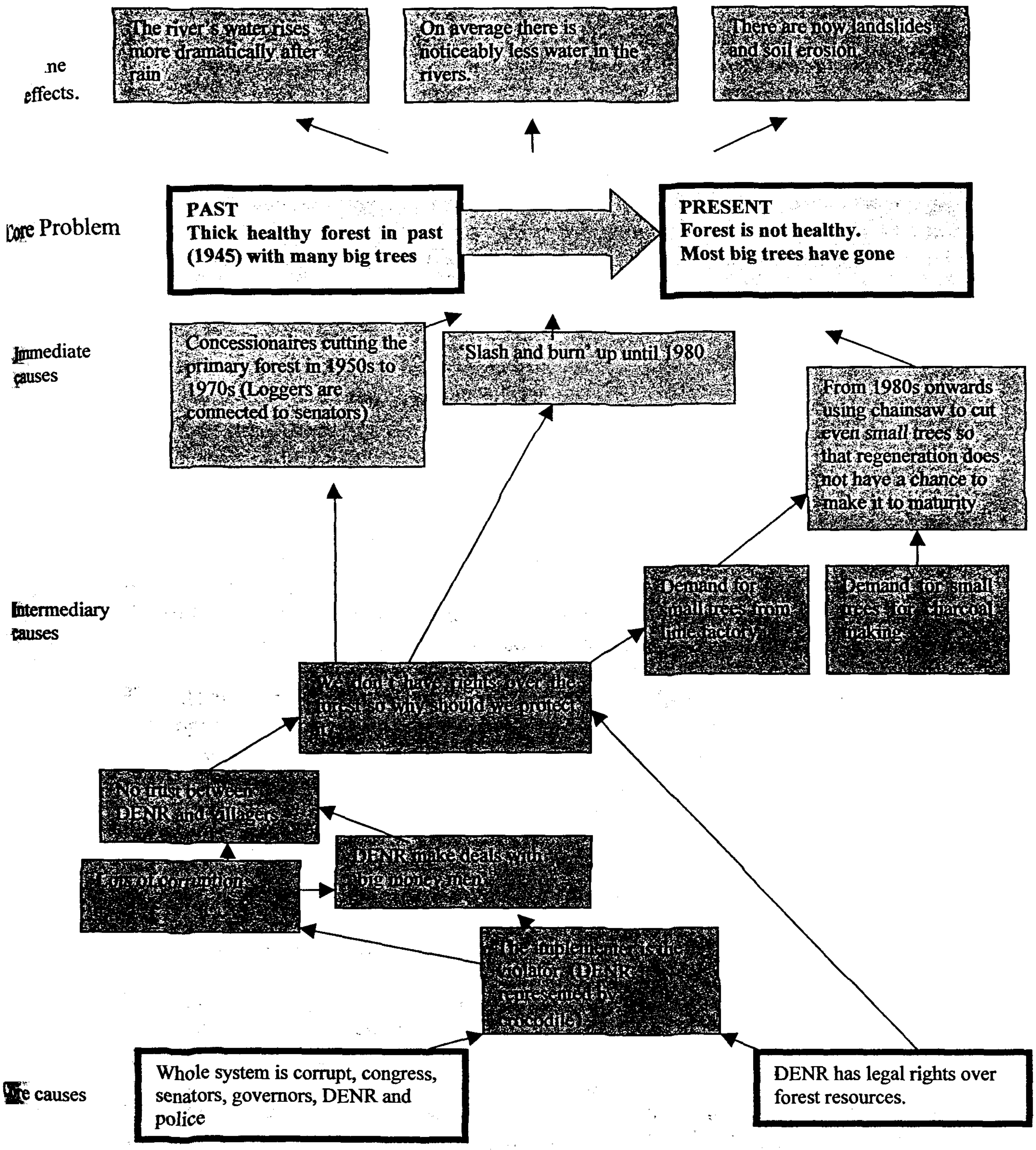

ne
effects.
The river's water rises more dramatically after rain
On average there is noticeably less water in the rivers.
There are now landslides and soil erosion.
Core Problem
PAST
Thick healthy forest in past (1945) with many big trees
PRESENT
Forest is not healthy.
Most big trees have gone
Immediate causes
Concessionaires cutting the primary forest in 1950s to 1970s (Loggers are connected to senators)
'Slash and burn' up until 1980
From 1980s onwards using chainsaw to cut even small trees so that regeneration does not have a chance to make it to maturity
Intermediary causes
Demand for small trees from lime factory
Demand for small trees for charcoal making
We don't have rights over the forest so why should we protect it
No trust between DENR and villagers
Lots of corruption
DENR make deals with big money men
The implementer is the violator (DENR represented by crocodile)
e causes
Whole system is corrupt, congress, senators, governors, DENR and police
DENR has legal rights over forest resources.

Figure 6. *Problem analysis developed by community members in Rizal. (It was renamed as the 'truth analysis' by the community members present)*

4.2 Perspectives on forest issues, the story in peoples' own words.

From the DENR CBFM provincial strategic plan produced at DENR headquarters from 1998 for the province of Quezon (where the villages of St.Catalina, Rizal and Villa Illaya are located) it is stated that the vision of CBFM is 'improved and empowered forest dependent communities working as partners of the government and other sectors in protecting, managing, developing and utilizing the forest resources in a sustainable manner, thereby uplifting their socio-economic condition'. Within the same plan, one of the policy reform strategies is stated as ' simplification of resource use-related policies to the level of understanding of Peoples Organizations (POs) and concerned indigenous people'. Santa Catalina's CBFM project, which is referred to extensively by community members later, is referred to in this plan as a 'model site' of CBFM in the province.

Views from provincial level DENR staff.

' We have nice plans but no financial help'
'This year there have been no new CBFM areas'
'Communities have the responsibility to protect, maintain the natural forest, utilization is not encouraged'
' The village work plan is formulated, but it requires inputs, where are the inputs needed to implement these work plans?'
'A few people's organizations involved in CBFM through personal contacts are very good at networking and getting assistance from local government. But it all depends on whether they have a good (personal) relationship with the local government'
'Local level DENR's role is only to implement the national regulations'
'DENR at the national level are not in touch with reality'

The information that follows came from 6 months of PRA sessions at the study sites and is compiled in this way for easy reading, with the statements included here capturing the essence of what was recorded. With the PRA exercises comments could be validated and discussed transparently among the group as the exercises were conducted on large brown sheets for all to see. Afterwards leaflets were produced in Tagalog and dispersed throughout the communities, verifications and additions were then made by community members. Some of the comments were accompanied by visualizations from villagers showing inter-linkages etc. These are lost in the translation into words.

Views from community members on community forestry related issues.

' There are people [within the community] who are involved in the project [CBFM] that do not even know what the project is for'
'[CBFM] Guidelines are very nice and high tech, but not easily understandable, fancy words are used, it is very nice on paper, not on the ground'
'To get approval to harvest wood [concerning natural forest for commercial purposes in CBFM] we have to get an environmental report drawn up [by the DENR on the possible

impact of the extraction], this report costs 50,000Peso[11]. Where are we going to get this money from?'

'What happens is that there was a consultation with villagers after it [CBFM] has been formulated, but it [CBFM] came with inputs so we said it was ' *Maganda*' [Filipino for beautiful]'

'We submitted an annual work plan but were not given a permit [To harvest wood products], the parts of the work plan to protect the forest were approved [by DENR], the utilisation parts are not yet approved'

'[In CBFM] we are only stewards but the benefit is zero [from the natural forest]'

'The DENR paid us to plant trees, but there has been no follow up, no maintenance',

'We have had lots and lots of trainings about pigs, pineapples, credit etc...we are very grateful the DENR has helped us to get many things [for example the farmer to farmer training centre in the village, which is run by the villagers and when farmers are sponsored to attend trainings there, it brings an income to the village]

'Some people are not interested in CBFM policy [concerning the natural forest], some are not aware'

'Because of the difficulties we have, we see any new initiative as the last chance for CBFM here'

'They should learn from mistakes and [our] experience'

'As new acronyms are introduced there was no learning from the previous one... in the neighbouring community they only had ISF for one week then CBFM was brought to them'

'It is important to deal with the truth, to avoid duplication of mistakes'

'Projects come with solutions but don't understand the issues, how can you have a solution if you don't understand the issues?'

'When UNDP came here, they first stayed in Manila [with DENR] for one year planning, then came here for two years'

'Money from outside projects [e.g. UNDP] gets 'slashed and burned' before it reaches the villagers'

'In the last year [of field implementation of the UNDP project], they didn't have enough time so they gave out their money very quickly, we weren't well prepared for it'

'There has been little success with forestry, because forestry takes time, projects [in this case referring to a UNDP project] come for two years, then after the project leaves there is no implementation by the villagers...no money no honey [no more inputs means no more work in the project activities by villagers]'

'They [project people/government staff] should learn from mistakes and our experience'

'As new acronyms are introduced there was no learning from the previous one... in the neighbouring community they only had ISF for one week then CBFM was brought to them'

'It is important to deal with the truth, to avoid duplication of mistakes'

'Projects come with solutions but don't understand the issues, how can you have a solution if you don't understand the issues?'

'When UNDP came here, they first stayed in Manila [with DENR] for one year planning, then came here for two years'

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[11] 50,000 Peso = 960 US$ in August 2003

'Money from outside projects [e.g. UNDP] gets 'slashed and burned' before it reaches the villagers'
'In the last year [of field implementation of the UNDP project], they didn't have enough time so they gave out their money very quickly, we weren't well prepared for it'
'There has been little success with forestry, because forestry takes time, projects [in this case referring to a UNDP project] come for two years, then after the project leaves there is no implementation by the villagers...no money no honey [no more inputs means no more work in the project activities by villagers]'
' When there is much restrictions [in forest policy], there is much corruption'
'DENR likes the log ban, as there is more corruption then'
'Restriction on felling trees is not clear, there is still a cutting of trees with permits provided by DENR'
'We would also like to know our rights now, it is very confusing, what is the policy'
'The changing of leadership at national level has a big impact [on policy]'
' A small poor farmer wants to cut a couple of trees so that he can sell them to feed his family, and that is illegal, whereas a rich man is given 100s of hectares to cut and that is legal, it doesn't make sense'
' We applied for a permit to cut some trees we planted [the permit is only valid for the calendar year in which it was applied for]. It took almost one year for the permit to be processed and by the time it was, it was only valid for a couple of weeks'
'By the time we go through all the procedures it isn't worth doing it [harvesting] legally'
'There is a continuation of illegal cutting of trees, no apprehension whatsoever'
'We are being asked by them (DENR) to improve the forest...but we should be sitting down with them the same way we are sitting with you to discuss and find the right direction...it is important to deal with truth, the reality on the ground.'
' We will plant and maintain trees as long as when there is a harvest DENR shares benefits with us'
' How can we be assured in the future that the DENR will not molest us?'
The implementer [government] is the violator'
'The crocodiles [government] have a close relationship with money men, not the villagers...where does the law come in to fight this corruption?'
'Because of the past, how can we trust [the government], we are asked to plant trees but we do not know the future'
'Forest guards do not guard the forest, they guard the road [because they get payments from people who try to move wood products classified as 'illegal' along the road] '
' The community will work hard now but maybe in the future the rich will come and take the forest again. The forest was only given to communities after it was raped'
'The rapists will again strike in the forest in the future, then will the next generation again be asked to plant?'
'We agree with the DENR that hardwoods should be protected but there is no security for the future'
'After 50 years what will happen with policy?'

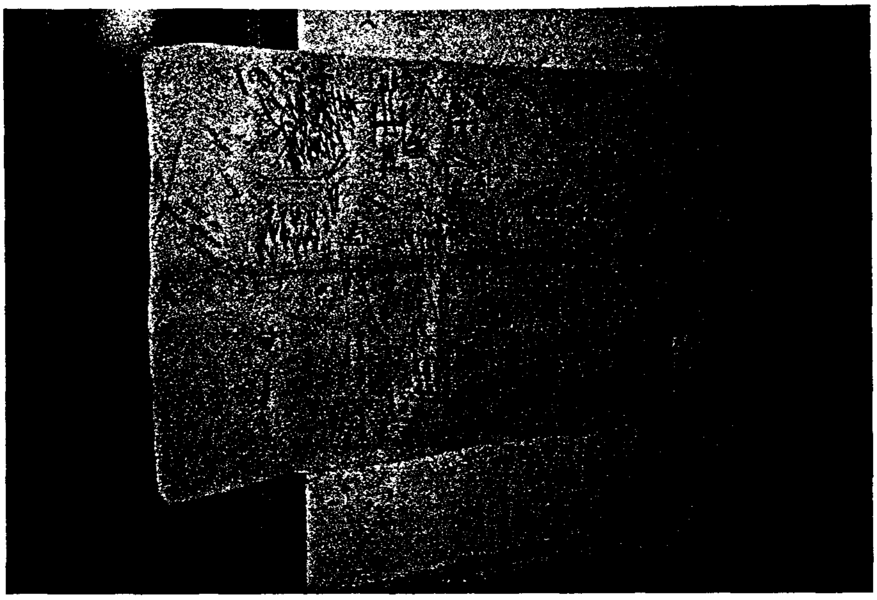


Photo 5. *The methodology used to let these community perspectives emerge used focal points where the community members could discuss, verify and analyze.*

As a validation of the findings and a synthesis of community perspectives on forest issues the 3 key questions were asked in the communities. 'Why Forest Policy should be changed?', 'How it could be changed?' and 'What recommendations do you to change it?'. This was done during village meetings and in addition these findings were documented on a leaflet in English and *Tagalog* and dispersed throughout both St.Catalina and Rizal for verification and additions. Although there are many perspectives within the community, the information contained within these 3 sections captures the core views of the majority of community members.

1. WHY CHANGE FOREST POLICY?

'We are very concerned with the future of forests in our area'
'Cutting of trees is still happening.'
'Why can we plant a vegetable and harvest without problems from the government but have lots of problems when we try to harvest trees we plant.'
'Policy is so complicated there is no consultation with the community in the development of it.'
'Policy has so many holes it is easy to slip through. Part of the log ban policy for example is...'Above a certain diameter of 16cm and 2 meters long is illegal, but if you cut the pieces to a volume just below this, it is not considered as a log anymore, so people always cut just below this'.
'In coconut plantations it is OK to cut natural growing trees when they are still small [natural trees on Integrated Social Forestry plots officially belong to the DENR] and leave them to rot for compost, but to let them grow and try and sell them/transport them is illegal. The current policy encourages the wood to rot!'

'Easy to abuse policy: E.g. people use permit issued for some specified trees to actually cut other trees. All you do is send a photograph of some trees on your privately owned land and you get a permit.'
'Policy that is being brought in is not applicable to communities, as policy makers have no idea of the realities at the community level.'
'Policy is made by the top DENR along with the congress, no input from community concerns whatsoever'
'Policy makers think people at the *Barangay* level are ignorant.'
'Restrictive policy only benefits government officials, forest (road) guards and policemen on an unofficial individual basis.'
'If a *Barangay* captain doesn't play the 'corruption game' then he will be isolated from above.'
'Cost of permits/tax is more than the value of the trees, it is better just to bribe and cut. I wanted to cut a tree legally so I went to the DENR office and when they showed me the permit/tax requirements, I thought forget it! and cut the tree anyway'.
'Policy makers are linked to big concessionaires and other violators.'
'Some existing policy is only executive orders without consultation.'
'The law bans cutting hardwoods=Lots of hardwood logs being transported on the road. What happened?'
'Current forest policy is not liked by communities.'
'The reason there are rampant illegal activities is because they are forced into illegal activities because the forest policy is just so complicated

2.HOW TO CHANGE FOREST POLICY?

'Interaction with policy makers'
'A review of the realities of the current policy, highlighting contradictions.'
'Policy makers have to listen to the community level...we are not against them we just want them to understand us'
'Some rules of engagement would be to avoid confrontation, de-personalize issues and be systematic'
'Our issues should be presented in an acceptable way with good gesture to the people directly involved in policy matters'
' Must present specific reasons with justifications how present policy is affecting the forest and the people'
'Must show respect for honourable guests, and choose words very carefully'
'Must present recommendations along with criticism'
'Have to test policy process at community level first'
'We would recommend a trial in our area'

3.WHAT SHOULD THE NEW POLICY BE?

'Policy should be made in favour of both communities and the government-rights handed over to the communities but taxes paid to the government by the organization responsible for the forest, all done 'above the table', officially.'

'*Barangays* and regions are different, so forest policy making should be devolved, so that it can be suitable/different for each place.'
'There has to be sustainable harvesting/management under the supervision of the responsible organization in the community.'
'Illegal' loggers within the community have to be brought into the responsible organization, and shown they can benefit from this. They can even be paid as skilled workers in the forest by the organization.'
'A community-based organization has to take control of the full cycle, from planting to processing to marketing.'
'It is important not to give the authority to the *Barangay* head, as even if he is 'clean', this may lead to temptations for corruption. Authority must be with the community organization which must be representative of the entire community.'[Advice from the *Barangay* head]
'By-laws on forestry for the community should be developed by the community'
'A cooperative can take care of the marketing to ensure community and not individuals benefit'
'Need to get smugglers and illegal cutters on board with the cooperative'

Note: Many other 'results' are contained within the publication of the write shop 'Linking People to Policy? Community forestry in the Philippines '- A multi perspective analysis that will be published by IIRR in September 2003. For example, included is the community resolutions advocating for policy change, case studies developed by 3 communities on the practical barriers to community forestry and their experiences with CBFM and a documentation of the debate between community members and other key community forestry actors in the Philippines from academia, the DENR and NGOs.

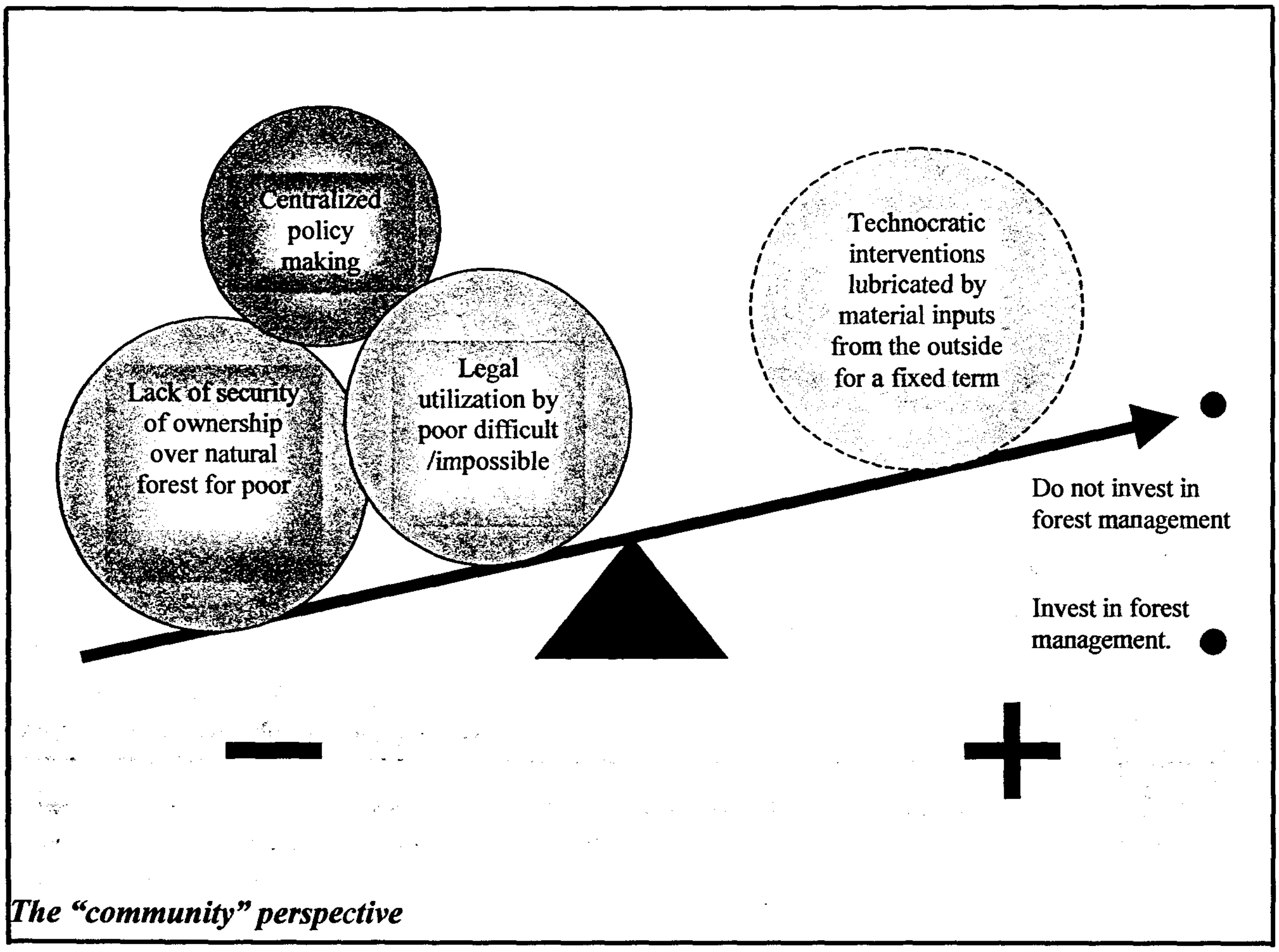
4.3 Analysis and Conclusions

With reference to the initial sub-objective '*Assess current, broader experiences in community development planning, including management of natural resources and especially community forests, and to characterize those socio-economic and biophysical parameters that affect a community's ability to develop and implement such plans'* it appears that the greatest barriers to community forest management are in a lack of incentives rather than a lack of capacity. It seems that sequencing is an issue with CBFM in the Philippines, often the emphasis has been on pushing for capacity development first of community members when it appears what may have been a greater priority is developing a governance system and forest policy that provides a rationale communities to invest in forest management.

Why this apparent resultant improper sequencing of the emphasis of CBFM strategies has come about should be considered. The research team believes that when considering the reasons for this it is important to contemplate the previous stated fundamental question: Is forest policy and forest governance that is bad for the vast majority of the people and trees more a result of informed intentionality among decision makers or aloof ignorance?

The following analysis is the research team's contribution to add another angle to this discussion. Community members tend to view the reasons behind the decisions made by corrupt government decision makers regarding forest policy and governance as more to do with intentionality i.e. they make decisions to serve their agenda. They also tend to view development organizations staffs' reasons behind the decisions they make also partly as intentionality, i.e. they make decisions to legitimise their role and thus funding. What complicates things in the Philippines is that the community members until trust is built with an outside researcher, will not openly criticise either of these groups of actors. A case of not biting the hand that feeds them? Even if the 'feeding' is only concerning scraps. Luckily the research team had the luxury to spend enough time to build trust.

The analysis that follows in the See-saw diagrams is designed to provide some food for thought, and are based on the assumption that intentionality may have more to do with present forest policy, governance and CBFM strategies in the Philippines, rather than aloof ignorance of some key actors. In other words, that there is not only multiple perspectives but also multiple agendas at play, which may explain why it is so difficult to change the scenario in figure 7 to that presented in figure 10.


Centralized policy making
Lack of security of ownership over natural forest for poor
Legal utilization by poor difficult /impossible
Technocratic interventions lubricated by material inputs from the outside for a fixed term
Do not invest in forest management
Invest in forest management.
−
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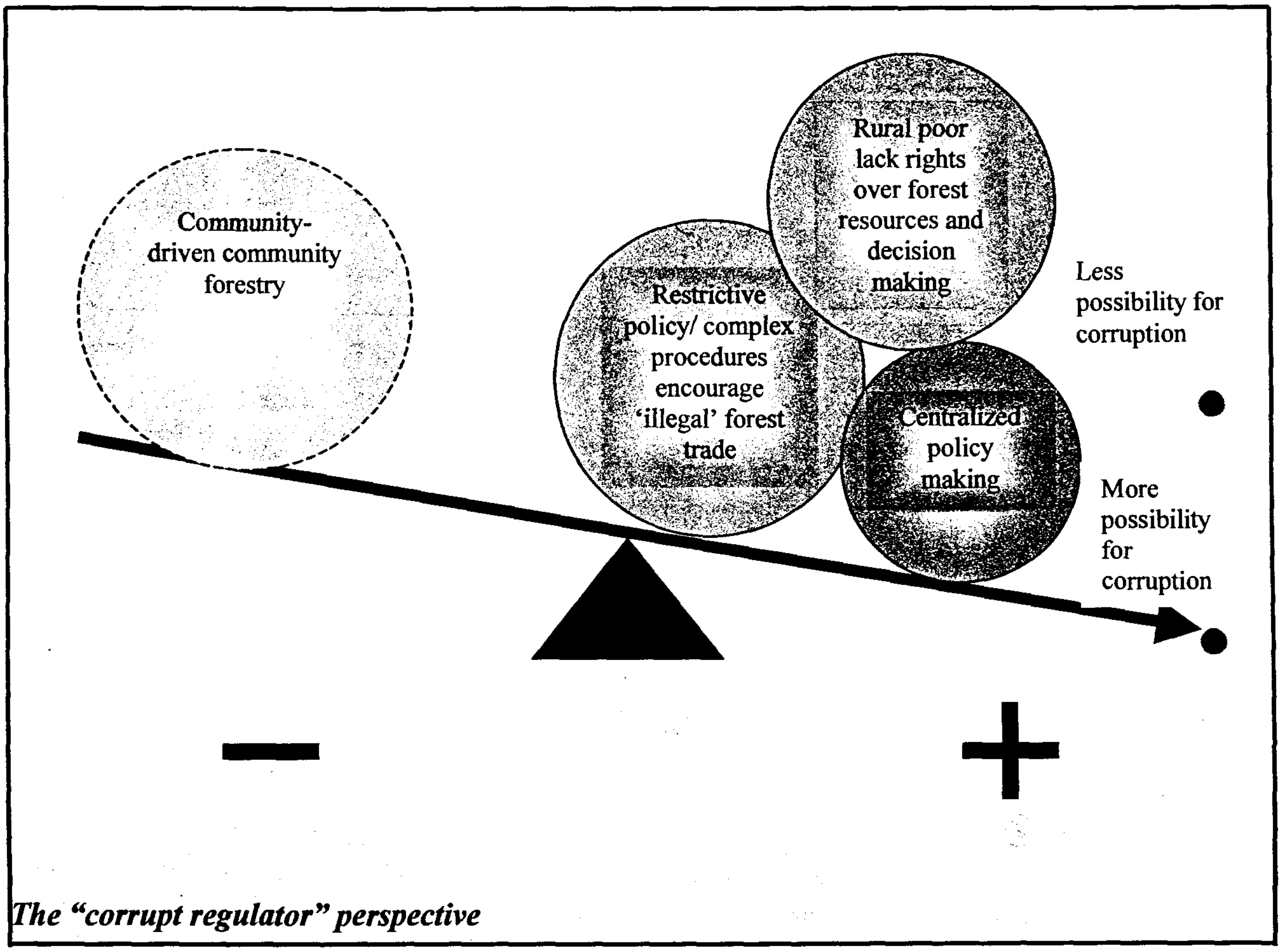
The "community" perspective

Figure 7. *The "community" perspective points out that for them there are many failures inherent in the present paradigm that outweigh the incentives provided by sporadic development project interventions.*


Rural poor lack rights over forest resources and decision making
Community-driven community forestry
Restrictive policy/ complex procedures encourage 'illegal' forest trade
Less possibility for corruption
Centralized policy making
More possibility for corruption
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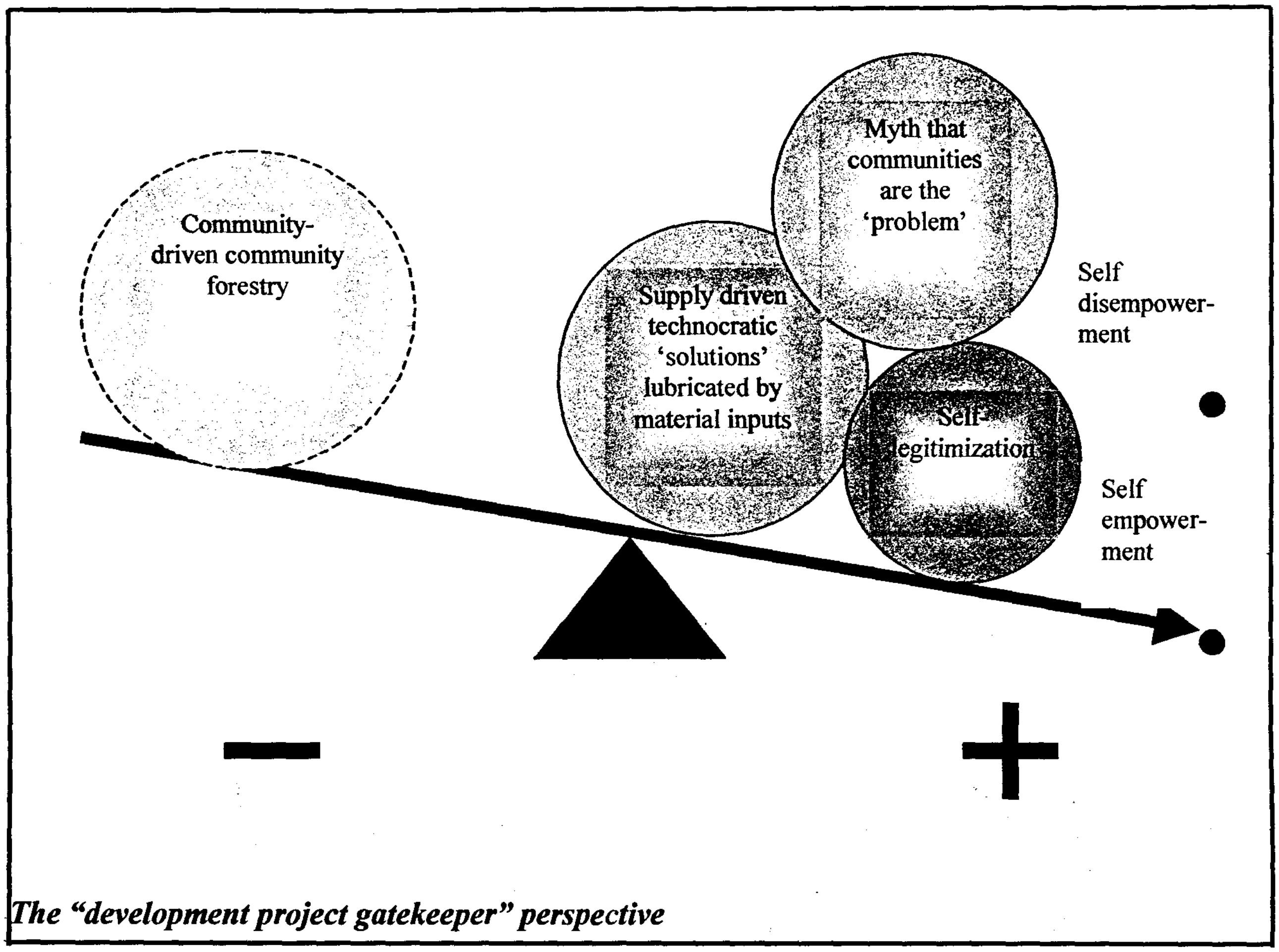
The "corrupt regulator" perspective

Figure 8. *The "corrupt regulator" perspective shows that the present paradigm is favourable to them. It presents good opportunities for corruption. Community driven community forestry is a threat.*


Community-driven community forestry
Myth that communities are the 'problem'
Supply driven technocratic 'solutions' lubricated by material inputs
Self-legitimization
Self disempowerment
Self empowerment
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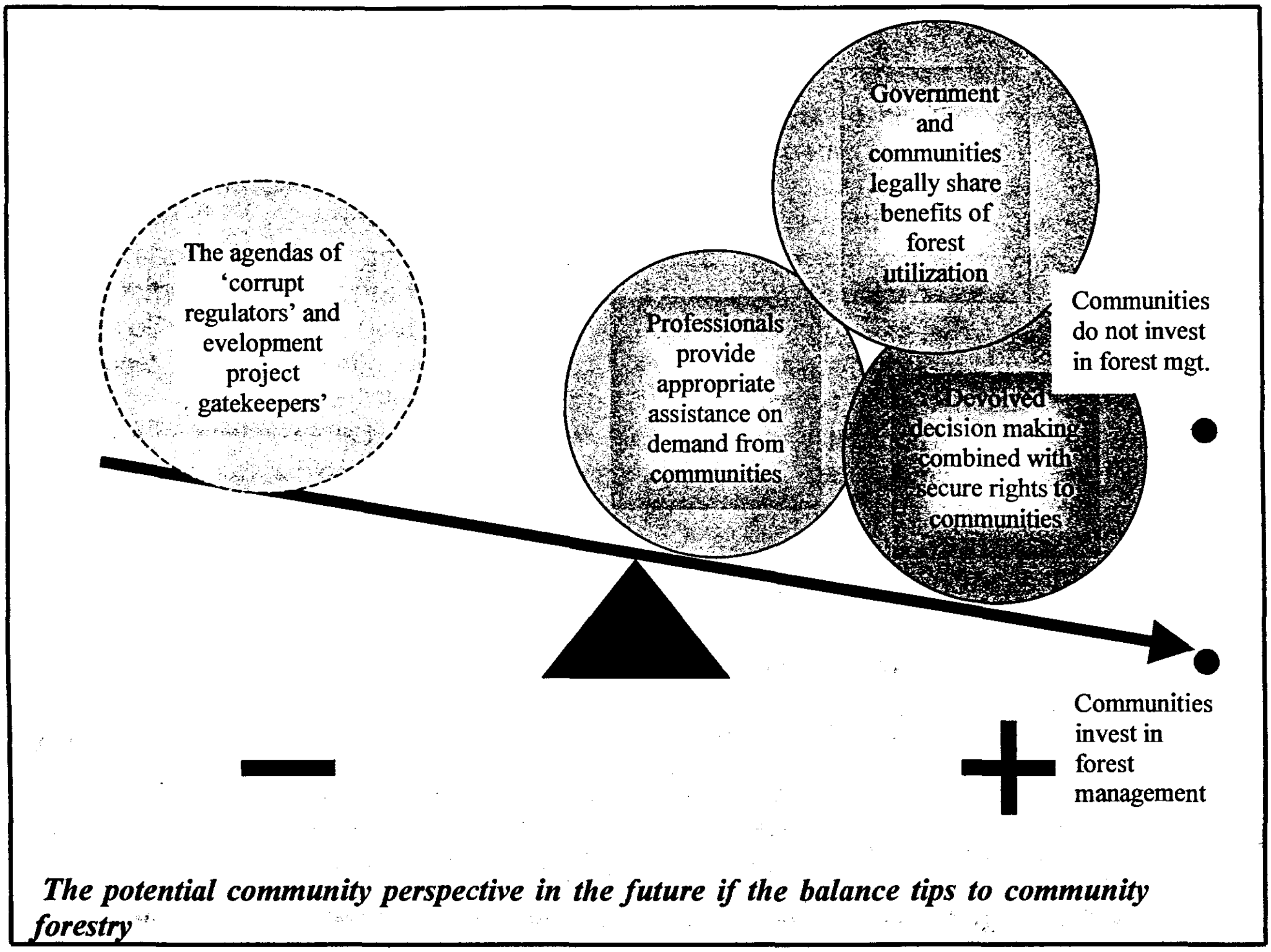
The "development project gatekeeper" perspective

Figure 9. *The "development project gatekeeper" perspective shows that the present paradigm is also favourable to them. Community driven community forestry is also a threat.*


The agendas of 'corrupt regulators' and evelopment project gatekeepers'
Government and communities legally share benefits of forest utilization
Professionals provide appropriate assistance on demand from communities
Devolved decision making combined with secure rights to communities
Communities do not invest in forest mgt.
Communities invest in forest management
−
+

The potential community perspective in the future if the balance tips to community forestry

Figure 10. *This diagram suggests that if there is a paradigm shift the unlikely bedfellows of some development project gatekeepers and the corrupt regulators could be a threat to community driven-community forestry. Empowerment of community members through disempowerment of these professionals may be a more appropriate strategy rather than only focusing on 'empowerment' of community members. For professionals willing to serve community members on demand within a new power relationship, it is speculated there will still be a role.*

5. Sub-objective 2: Methodology, Results and Findings.

Design and test, through implementation, on-farm and natural resources (inc. community forest) planning strategies and processes based on site-specific parameters and specific community priorities and needs.

5.1 Methodology for accomplishing this Sub-Objective

This was one of the objectives that proved to be less appropriate when the research team tested some assumptions with community members. After substantial PRA work, the community participants made it clear that on farm trials and planning processes at the site may not be the most pressing priority for them. In fact based on 'specific community priorities and needs' the most appropriate action for the research team identified by community members was to focus on enabling community members to have a voice in forest policy development and to help build coalitions with those who influence policy at a national level. Community members were of the opinion that what made sense for them was more rights first and then local level organization second, they demonstrated that previous forestry projects had failed because they were too focused on 'the site' and not enough on policy advocacy. When the intervention ended, the communities were still faced with the implications of the current failing governance structure.

6. Sub-objective 3 and 4. Methodology, Results and Findings

Identify and develop strategies for strengthening the skills and capacities required within the site community, and by those 'outsiders' working with the community, to plan and implement community development, natural resource and forest management plans.

and

To evaluate, for sharing and advocacy, practical tools and methods for communities in developing, implementing and evaluating community-based planning, especially community forestry planning

6.1 Methodology for accomplishing this Sub-Objective

After testing the assumption that the most pressing barrier for community forestry in the Philippines was a lack of skills and capacity at a community level, there was not sufficient evidence to support this. The community members of Santa Catalina have been 'organized', 'capacity built' and 'trained' with regards to sustainable forest management time and time again over the last decade and a half, yet post project forest management activities have not significantly improved nor has there been any apparent shift towards the communities viewing a sufficient rationale to invest in forest management with the absence of project inputs. In fact according to some of the community members who attended the 'Linking people to policy?' writeshop the impact of projects in the long run was negative for the communities because it created a 'dole out' mentality and conflict within the community when project benefits were perceived not to have been shared equitably. After exploring community perspectives from 3 other communities in the Philippines who had undergone 'input lubricated' capacity building of one sort or another as a result of project interventions, the conclusions were similar. Sequencing seems to be very important, and the communities feel that policy change, or at least a community voice in policy formulation, is a more pressing priority rather than community organizing etc. Saying that, numerous community members said they had increased confidence to deal with outsiders because of their experiences with project interventions. The project team experimented in the second half of 2002 with IIRR's writeshop methodology to explore whether it can be used successfully as a policy advocacy tool which provides an appropriate venue for community members to talk on their own behalf. The structure of the writeshop follows.

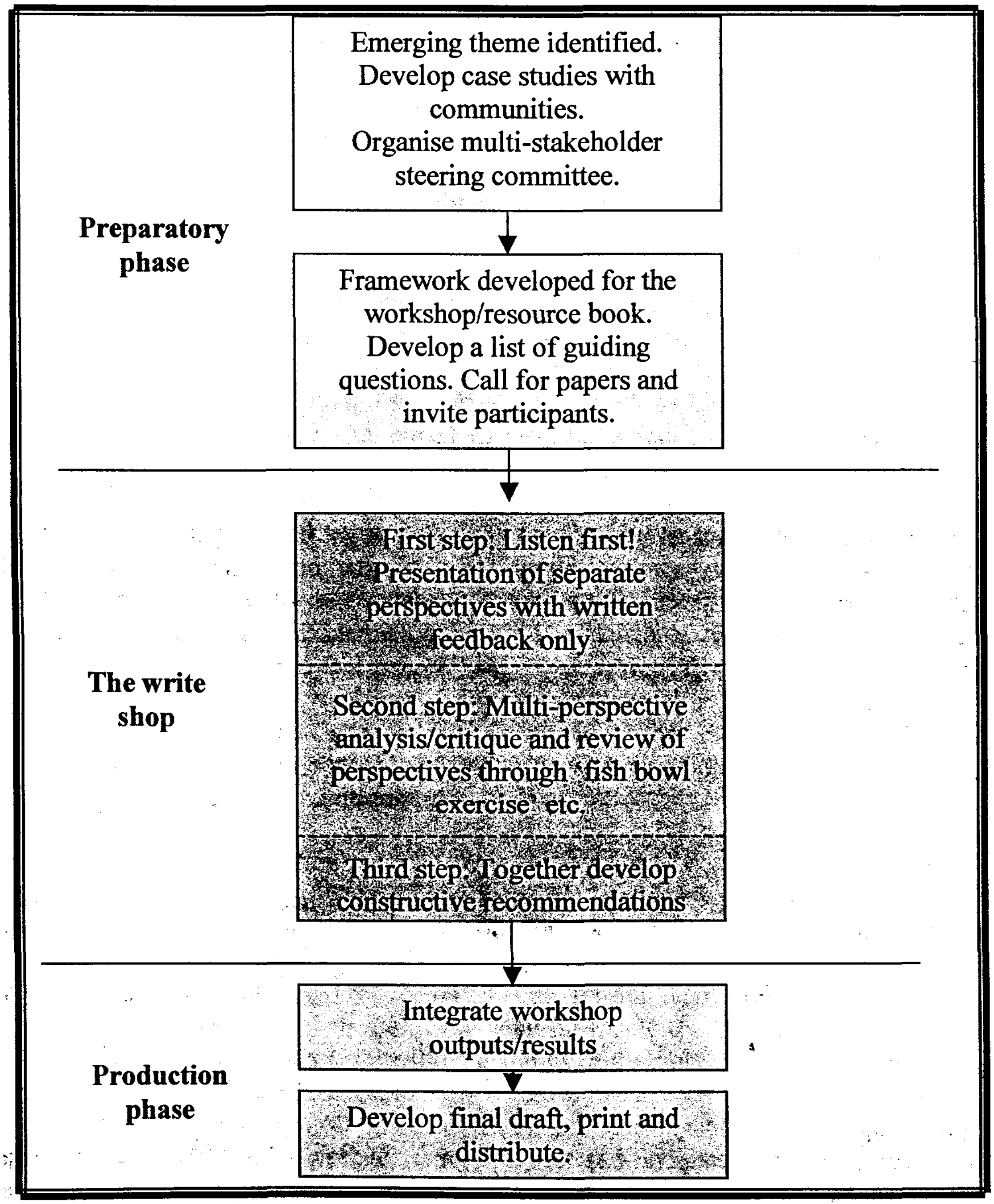

Preparatory phase
Emerging theme identified. Develop case studies with communities. Organise multi-stakeholder steering committee.
Framework developed for the workshop/resource book. Develop a list of guiding questions. Call for papers and invite participants.
The write shop
First step: Listen first! Presentation of separate perspectives with written feedback only
Second step: Multi-perspective analysis/critique and review of perspectives through 'fish bowl' exercise' etc.
Third step: Together develop constructive recommendations
Production phase
Integrate workshop outputs/results
Develop final draft, print and distribute.

Figure 11. *The adapted 'IIRR' writeshop process used for the community forestry write shop.*

What is a writeshop process?

The suggested write shop process outlined in figure 11 is an adaptation of the previous 'tried and tested' IIRR write shops. Previous write shops often dealt more specifically with technical issues, best practices etc. but they have often touched on social and political issues. The adaptation of the write shop is in response to the rather more sensitive subject matter in community forestry which includes power relationships, rights issues, etc. To harness different perspectives in a sensitive and constructive way, more emphasis was given on providing space for different perspectives, multi-perspective analysis and on providing an enabling environment for joint decision-making among stakeholders. Especially with community members in mind, less emphasis was placed on editorial discussions on papers.

The three basic steps in the write shop process were...

1) **Enabling all to first listen to each other:** All stakeholders had an equal opportunity to present their perspectives through the presentation of their papers with only written feedback allowed.
2) **Facilitating multi-perspective analysis:** A debate was organised in a way that provided space for all stakeholders to justify their standpoints, receive critique and which enabled the issues of divergence to emerge. The 'fish bowl' methodology was used.
3) **Encouraging joint recommendation development:** The final step was when small multi-stakeholder groups were challenged to develop practical joint recommendations together to tackle in some constructive way, issues of divergence.

The experience from the 'Linking People to Policy?' write shop provided many lessons (both from what worked and what did not work) to help guide future write shop methodologies. The face to face interaction between community representatives and senior DENR officials and academics worked extremely well within this process and created a whole new dynamic that from experience is absent from workshops that have inappropriate formats for community members. The 'fish bowl' methodology with people sitting face to face in a circle and restrictions placed so that the debate would not be dominated by a few and that people could not interrupt each other, proved to be a very effective method to handle contentious issues.

In the 'Linking People to Policy' write shop there was not always consensus, or generic answers emerging, but among stakeholders there was an increase in understanding and respect for different viewpoints and the justifications behind them. This kind of meeting, where academics and senior DENR officials were lectured to by community members, for example, and where all could debate on an equal footing respectfully was very new to many people that attended. It was sometimes painful (some tears were shed by some as they were confronted directly with the short-comings of their organisation's perspectives) but the research team believes it genuinely created a level of understanding and respect that was not there before. Social interaction between participants was also given high priority with much of the barriers to mutual respect and understanding being eroded in informal settings in the evening social events.

The resultant resource books from the write shop are geared at carrying on the function of engendering a greater understanding and respect for multiple perspectives and agendas. The hope is that by respecting diversity in the production of the publication, an equal respect for diversity and multiple perspectives will be engendered in the reader. The books are geared to influence policy makers, donors, academics and practitioners.

Linking People to Policy?

Photo 6. *Some of the 'Linking People to Policy' write shop participants, a 5 month selection period led up to the gathering of a carefully balanced group of representatives from communities, NGOs, academics and DENR officials. Papers prepared according to editorial guidelines were the basis for acceptance to the write shop. Community members received extra assistance in preparing their papers.*

Why a write shop process?

Firstly, the more public agenda was to produce relevant, user friendly-practical publications. The write shop process steers away from abstract academic analysis and harnesses experiences (in total often running into the hundreds of years) from some people who rarely if ever have the opportunity to share their experiences in academic or other journals. Through peer review from and debate with people with different perspectives, recommendations for the future tend to be more rounded and achievable as they are often the result of hard fought compromise.

Secondly, the more private agenda was to use the write shop process itself as a communication platform that tries to help people to learn about the world-views of others and appreciate the justifications behind these different world-views. The write shop also acts like a node (or a carrot?) for which a network can be created, bringing key actors face to face from stakeholder groups that may not necessarily otherwise come together. It was also used as an appropriate platform to launch the idea to have a policy trial at the study sites in Phase II of the project.

Why participatory case studies in the write shop process?

The purpose of the participatory case studies developed with communities was to keep in check with what was going on in diverse settings throughout the Philippines, from a community perspective. Diverse in this instance includes ecological diversity, social/cultural diversity, institutional diversity, policy diversity (ancestral domain, protected areas etc.) as well as areas where development projects are involved and those where they are not.

The research team worked with community members from 5 months before the write shop assisting them where necessary in building their confidence and abilities in presenting coherent experiences and analytical arguments themselves. The community representatives then came to the workshop centre a few days before the write shop started to rehearse and become comfortable with the write shop setting and methodology.

Reflections from the 'Linking People to Policy' write shop

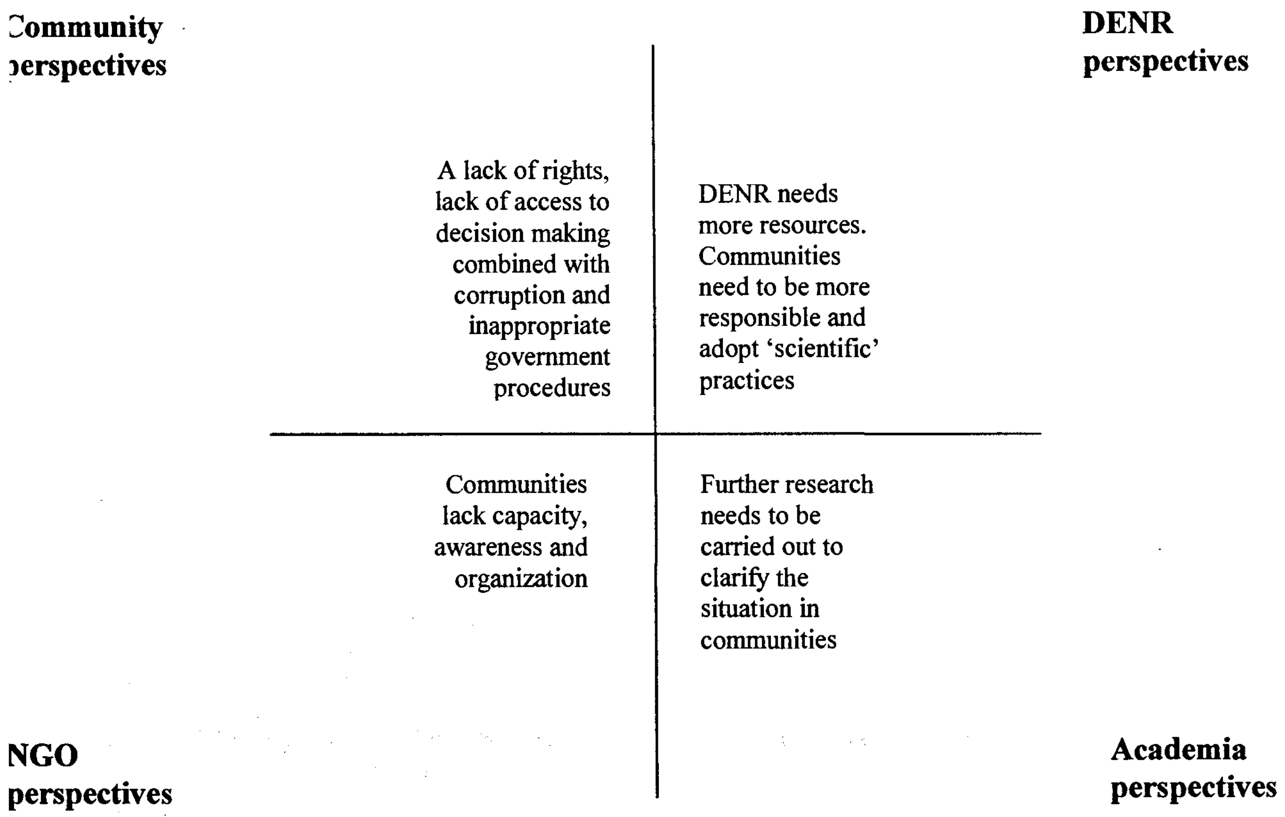
By Karen Edwards, RECOFTC

Communities came and prepared a few days before the actual write shop and this gave them the confidence to present their stories and the design of the process allowed them to communicate on an equal level. This was particularly obvious during the debate process.

When taking an overview of the papers presented in the first half of the write shop the agendas of the different groups became very clear. The communities focused on the needs for rights, access and control and clearly illustrated how they are not benefiting at the moment but the DENR and other NGO groups were. DENR focused on biodiversity and forest management techniques with mention of community organizing and project planning. NGOs spent a lot of time talking about the need to build capacities of communities and the need for better organization and academics spoke about a broad range of issues and defining those issues (e.g. what is a community?). The process allowed each group to give feedback to each other and it was interesting to see how the groups responded to each other.

It became very evident through the response to the community presentations that many of the communities 'misunderstood' the policy. In many cases DENR officials suggested that it was communities who were misinformed about policy but many NGOs and community members also suggested that communities were deliberately misinformed so that benefits from existing policy implementation go to local officials and the potential for bribery is greater.

6.2 Findings and Conclusions



Community perspectives

A lack of rights, lack of access to decision making combined with corruption and inappropriate government procedures

DENR perspectives

DENR needs more resources. Communities need to be more responsible and adopt 'scientific' practices

NGO perspectives

Communities lack capacity, awareness and organization

Academia perspectives

Further research needs to be carried out to clarify the situation in communities

Figure 12. *Different perspectives on the barriers to community forestry in the Philippines according to write shop participant groups*

Can these widely varying expressed viewpoints in figure 12 be only a result of a lack of understanding among stakeholders? Or is it something more? If it is something more this may a possible addition to the evidence for the 'intentionality argument'. For example NGOs in the Philippines seem to find a lot of the justifications for their role (and funding) in the assumption that communities lack capacity, the DENR that the community members lack responsibility etc. If agendas are at the core of views expressed by different stakeholder groups this will have implications on the kind of strategies that would be appropriate to advance community forestry in the Philippines, as it goes beyond 'raising the level of understanding' kind of initiatives. This is particularly important to bear in mind with donor supported strategies intended to influence forest policy and governance.

In this light also, it may be important to consider the 'Good' in Good Forest Governance for example. Good for whom?

Community members talked very little during the write shop about the role of NGOs and academics in community forestry, instead they seemed to view advancing community forestry as being a matter for community members and government officials to work out together-directly. They did however seem to appreciate the role of IIRR in bringing them face to face with government officials on a level playing field.

What was very clear from the write shop was that communities seen corruption as being a major barrier to community forestry and as a root cause of their poverty in general. It appears that the Philippines from the community perspectives at least is seen as a 'tax poor-bribe rich' country where many individuals working for the government have an exploitative relationship with the rural poor. This is important to bear in mind for those who come to the Philippines from 'tax rich-bribe poor' countries where government employees have a very different relationship with the rural poor. Many NGOs in the Philippines seem to work on the premise that strengthening local government authorities through training/decentralization or whatever will lead to better services and that better services are the key to rural development, whereas many community members express that decentralization simply leads to decentralized corruption whereas services still remain sporadic and grossly inadequate because the Philippines is a tax poor country. Decentralization in a ‘tax rich-bribe poor’ country such as a Western European country seems to have very different implications on rural development, than it does in a ‘bribe rich-tax poor’ country such as the Philippines.

7. Summary, Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

7.1 Summary.

Multiple perspectives but also multiple agendas: Stakeholders in forest resources in the Philippines have different perspectives on both ‘problems’, ‘solutions’ and on who is responsible for the problems and who has the potential to provide solutions. These differing perspectives in combination with a fundamental imbalance of power among stakeholders in the forest resources leads to an undemocratic and failing system regarding management of the forest resources. Those that often first feel the negative consequences of decisions concerning the forest are often the last to have a say in those decisions.

As a result, a challenging issue is that with forest policy for example, it is not only a matter of changing bad forest policy to good forest policy. There is no such thing as bad forest policy in the Philippines. There is forest policy that is good for some and bad for others. Often policy that is bad for many communities and the majority of the forest resources has in fact greatly benefited a few people as well as occasionally isolated ‘showcase’ forests. For those few, the (bad) forest policy has been very good forest policy indeed. The challenge for researchers working with community forestry is not only in enlightening stakeholders to the realities of other stakeholders but to go beyond this and explore ways to create enabling environments where there are incentives for some stakeholders to relinquish some of their power. This then provides space for the release of the potential of communities to manage their forests. The justifications behind forest policy that seems to be inappropriate for both communities and forests may be more to do with informed intentionality, rather than is often suggested, a lack of understanding. This idea is something some community members have believed for a long time *'The implementer is the violator*[4]*'*. To illuminate these complex issues, embedded within the political economy is a stepping-stone towards more appropriate community forestry related interventions.

Rights over use and decision-making: *'We don't have rights over the forest, so why should we protect it?* With regards to utilization rights, this does not only include the rights to use, but also changing what equates to a lack of rights, the outsider dictated procedures and permits, required for utilization that are often inappropriate, cumbersome and costly for communities. Often as forest policy becomes more outwardly 'community friendly' the 'devil' really is to be found in the details. These details range from inappropriate inventory requirements to excessive forest charges, which have been formulated without community involvement.

'Projectization' of community forestry in the Philippines may be its kiss of death: *'Projects come with solutions but don't understand the issues, how can you have a solution if you don't understand the issues?'* An important lesson from the first phase of the project is that one of the major potential pitfalls of a process towards community driven community forestry in the Philippines is if professionals through their projects hijack the process. The nature of the development project industry means that it requires 'success' stories that validate the solution - providing role of the professionals, so that they can legitimise their role. In the search for continued relevance, for niches that do not challenge their role of providing solutions for 'them', the community members, the professionals' own intentionality may very well be a significant barrier to the emergence of viable community forestry in the Philippines. *'(Regarding CBFM projects) what happens is that there is a consultation with us after they have been formulated, but they come with inputs so we say they are beautiful'.* There is a line between facilitating a process driven by community members for long-term positive change and in 'facipulating' a community to provide a short-term tangible 'success story' for donor consumption. In the Philippines this line is all too often over-stepped. This has implications on both the viability of community forestry but also on learning. Not embracing project failures whilst there is a trumpeting about the 'successes' of projects does not provide an conducive environment for balanced analysis and learning. In general, projects cause numerous distortions, smokescreens and biases. Professionals' livelihoods are often linked with projects, so it is understandably difficult for professionals to step back and take a critical look at the implications of 'projectization'. Maybe it is too close for comfort.

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[4] All quotations in italics throughout this document are from community members and were verified and re-verified in group-settings to avoid misrepresentation.

Training provision is out of step with the challenges to further community forestry: There is a distinct lack of learning among professionals from and with the poor, beyond the extractive and descriptive. New concepts, even 'participatory' ones are introduced in a top-down way. With community forestry in the Philippines at the moment there is a greater need for professionals to be facilitators, net-workers, listeners and learners rather than pedagogic technocrats. In a sense there needs to be a shift from the science of forestry to the art of communication. The training culture though is out of step to help nurture this 'art'. Often where 'participation' is on the training agenda, professionals are being taught in a 'transfer of information' way about participation, which is not addressing the key fundamental attitudinal and behavioural underpinnings.

Too much focus on the 'site': There seems to be an imbalance in emphasis in donor supported community forestry initiatives focusing more on the 'safe bet', site specific field projects which can have limited but tangible impacts. There is less emphasis on trying to tackle complex and difficult issues such as trying to institutionalise multi-stakeholder dialogue, which can, especially with regard to policy have massive but often less tangible impacts.

There is a need to focus on the forest, to use it legally or lose it 'illegally': The fundamental premise of the current popular CBFM strategy in the Philippines, that handing over stewardship of a forest to communities combined with alternative livelihood strategies will somehow lead to forest improvement and sustainable community development seems to be flawed. Instead it seems to mainly lead to a sustainable development project industry in combination with the continued destruction of the forest and the promotion of the 'dole out' mentality among the few community members that do benefit from sporadic forestry development projects. The key to advancing community forestry in the Philippines seems to be making the transition in the forestry sector from its regulatory-'tax poor-bribe rich' scenario and into a 'tax rich-bribe poor' scenario. This transition would involve encouraging the legal use of the forest, through secure long term ownership rights combined with appropriate procedures and reasonable forest charges and taxes paid to the government. This will promote an environment that is conducive for widespread community investment in forest management. It may seem an obvious strategy for community foresters reading this report, but few forestry projects in the Philippines focus on trying to help the forest sector make this transition.

Community forestry versus CBFM: Community forestry is not CBFM. This is a very important point of distinction, which is often not made in the Philippines. CBFM is a government programme that at a community level manifests itself as project based activities. Community forestry in the Philippines does not need projects to exist. It has existed for 100s if not 1000s of years with complex management systems of forests by communities evolving all the time. Community forestry has been placed under greatest threat first by policies of the colonial governments in the Philippines, and then by those of the post-colonial governments. Some release of the potential for community forestry is now beginning to happen and the CBFM programme is playing some positive parts in this, but also some negative. I suspect the best examples of community forestry in the Philippines are still to be found where there has been relatively little interference – or maybe because there has been little outsider interference.

7.2 General Findings and Conclusions

With reflection to the initial assumptions of the project proposal in 1999...

1. Overly complex and bureaucratic procedures;
2. Input orientation as opposed to focus on outputs and impacts;
3. Poor local capacity of stakeholders to engage in the process; and a
4. Narrow focus on forest and timber management.

These 4 assumptions have been tested throughout Phase 1. Number 1 has been confirmed and will be carried through into phase II of the project as an underlying assumption for many of the research team's strategies. From the national level where executive orders, guidelines and strategies seem to overlap and sometimes even contradict each other (these will be explored in national write shops) to the local level where requirements for approval of community plans to harvest timber under CBFM in terms of inventory requirements and environmental impact assessments are unfeasibly costly and inappropriate for community members (these will be explored in the community level work). Number 2 has also been confirmed and the whole 'projectization' affect on community forestry advancement in the Philippines will be further explored in phase II in all 3 components of the project. Number 3 was found to be questionable. When an opportunity was presented to community members in the writeshop to engage in policy dialogue they very competently and articulately took part in the process. The key was that the process was designed to be appropriate for community members. Some community members that took part did acknowledge though that their confidence and ability to express their views had been built by previous project interventions by the DENR. Also they added that it was a little ironic that the DENR may not now like what they had to say.

This assumption going into phase II has now become two fold; that national level institutions lack the capacity to institutionalize the engagement of local level stakeholders (the write shop methodology will be used to provide examples of how to institutionalise the engagement of local level stakeholders in forest policy formulation) as well as assuming that some stakeholders could benefit in terms of confidence etc. with some outside intervention. With number 4, this assumption was proved to be invalid as it appears that especially in the CBFM programme in the Philippines, the emphasis is excessively on service delivery/alternative livelihoods and not sufficiently on forest management and utilization (this will be explored in all 3 components of the project in phase II). In fact at the present time, August 2003, regarding the few communities working with CBFM that have been granted the Resource Utilization Permit (RUP) the rights to utilize timber for commercial purposes has now been suspended, with the result in one community (personal com. August 2003) that the community has been forced to harvest 'illegally' and pay bribes to individual government officials instead of forest charges to the DENR to get their timber to market. In phase II of the project the assumption is now that the lack of focus on forest management and utilization is a fundamental barrier to reaching community driven community forestry.

7.3 Overall Policy Implications and Recommendations

Macro: There should be a shift in development organisation strategies to advance community forestry more towards the provision of successful examples of 'pro-community' forest policy advocacy strategies as opposed to site-specific forestry project 'success stories', including policy dimensions at local levels (i.e., provincial and municipal levels) as well swell as at the national level.

Micro: There should be an emphasis on systematic learning on the practical constraints according to the community perspectives that limit the emergence of a rationale for communities to invest in forest management, in a non 'input lubricated' research process with community members.

Both of these recommendations, in the research team's opinion, if adopted by other organisations, could help maximise the chances of impact of development assistance on forest policy and forest governance. The general shift is from the input lubricated project site 'success story' to understanding rationales from the community perspective whilst experimenting with policy advocacy strategies.

If intentionality is at the core of decisions that create policy and governance structures that are barriers to community forestry in the Philippines, 'carrot' and 'stick' strategies could be explored as ways of providing rationales for decision makers to change policy and governance structures. For example 'carrot' methods may include exploring ways of enhancing the prestige of policy makers who are involved in promoting community driven community forestry, whereas 'stick' methods may include ensuring policy makers adhere to relevant international agreements that their governments are signatories to and/or in making development assistance conditional. Conditions could include for example, the compulsory inclusion of substantial community input into any forest policy revisions. Pressure from outside the country may be necessary to democratise forest policy development. A donor such as IDRC could help 'educate' and subsequently partner with large donors such as the World Bank, The Asian Development Bank and JICA[12] in developing strategies that promote the democratisation of forest policy development in the Philippines.

To provide concrete arguments for forest policy 'democratisation' further research could be conducted on illuminating the balance between incentives to invest in forest management and those factors that discourage investment at the community level as well as research that highlights the multiple agendas at play in the political economy as it relates to forestry issues in the Philippines. For example highlighting that forest policy that is bad for communities and forests is often very good forest policy for a minority of people, is a point rarely discussed and very rarely documented. If it was documented more frequently it may bring to mind the notion more often among CBNRM professionals that disempowerment of this minority is just as important if not more so than the common rural development mantra of 'empowering community members'.

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[12] JICA will be a major supporter of CBFM in the Philippines in a project focusing on the advancement of CBFM beginning in 2004. The IIRR research team met with the project leader in August 2003 and shared their community forestry insights and project documents with him in the hope of influencing their project strategies. Links with the JICA team will be maintained.

9.4 Recommendations for further research

Figure 13 captures the thought process that went into the proposed research focus for phase II of the community forestry project. The overlap in the centre of the diagram is the area of focus for the research team in Phase II. It is the intersection between community issues, IDRC priorities and IIRR strengths. IDRC priorities seem to be focused on critical thinking about critical issues and linking research to change in policy and governance. Barriers to community forestry identified by community members were generally the failures in the current centralized state control over forest resources that is compounded by there not being sufficient and appropriate communication platforms to enable their input into developing forest policy and forest governance structures. IIRR has a strong track record in learning with and from community members, providing multi-stakeholder communication platforms and in running training courses for senior professionals that incorporate community perspectives. The three activity components for phase II that the research will be built around thus emerged.

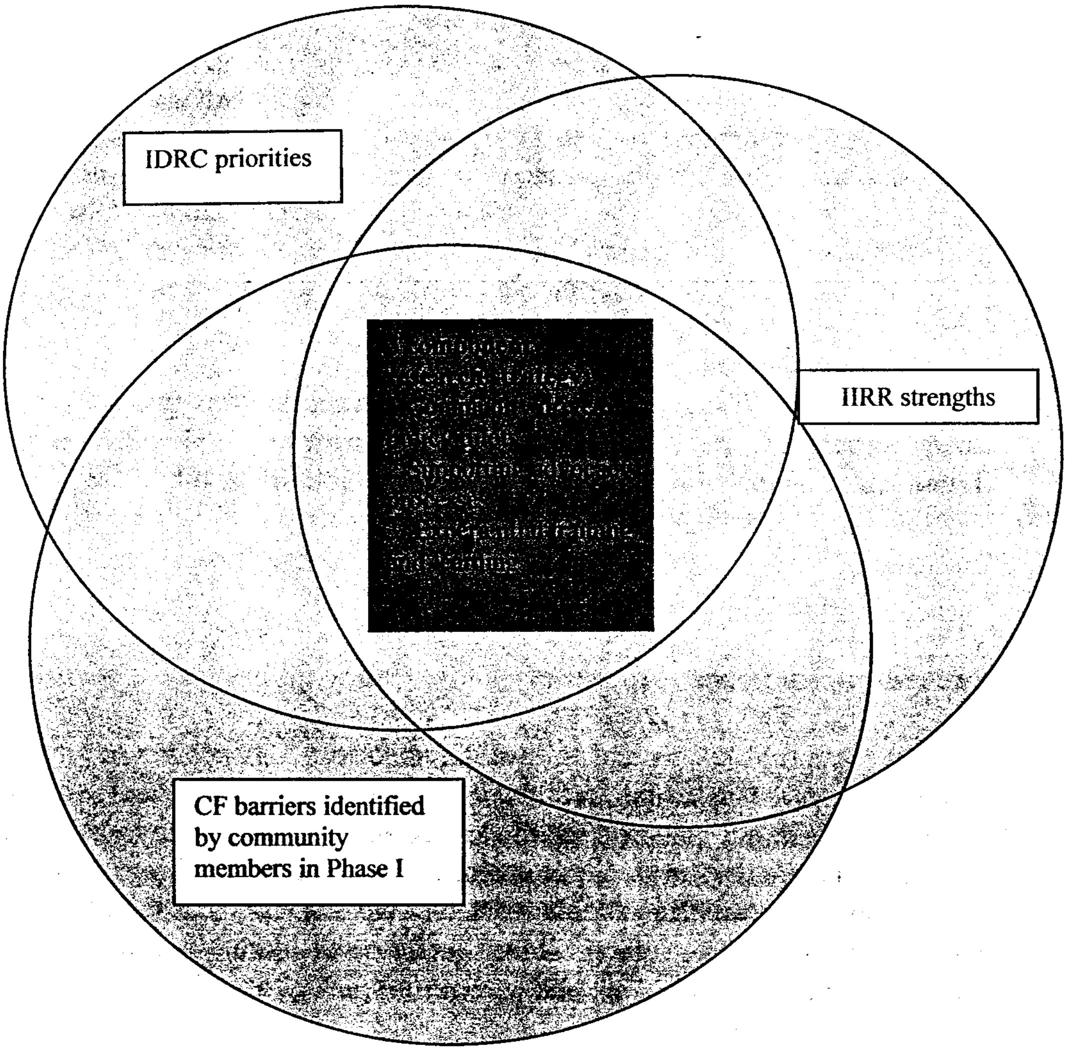

IDRC priorities
IIRR strengths
CF barriers identified by community members in Phase I

Figure 13. *Finding the middle ground, the 3 key factors that helped determine the focus of the research team in phase II of the project.*

An elaboration of the research areas identified in phase II of the project are listed below...

Overall goal: To contribute to the release of the potential of communities in the Philippines to manage their forests whilst adding to the community forestry discourse within Southeast Asia and beyond...through the following objectives:

Objective I) ***Community driven policy pilots*****: To learn from and with community members as local level forest policies are directed towards increased rights over use and decision making by community members regarding the local forest resources.**

Sub objectives:

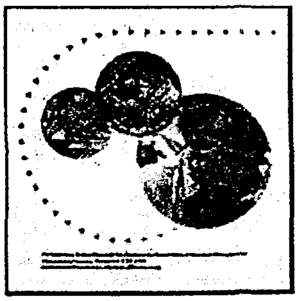
- To broaden the understanding of the local forest resources governance structures, both formal and informal.
- To broaden the understanding of trade and benefit sharing regarding forest resources, both legal and illegal.
- To broaden the understanding of the dynamics of how communities and groups within communities (including gender considerations) react to changing incentives with regards to the forest resources.
- To broaden the understanding of communication processes among and between community members and with other stakeholder groups.

Objective II) *Supporting advocacy processes*: Through the facilitation of multi-stakeholder communication platforms and publications help accelerate pro-community changes in forest policy and in institutional and inter-institutional reform.

Sub objectives:

- To broaden the understanding of the multiple perspectives and agenda within and between different stakeholder groups in the forest resources of the Philippines.
- To broaden the understanding of communication platforms with regards to their potential to increase understanding, accountability, respect and trust within and between stakeholders in the forest resources of the Philippines.
- To broaden the understanding of communication platforms with regards to their potential for policy advocacy and institutional and inter-institutional change.
- Through producing multi-perspective publications around contemporary community forestry issues in the Philippines, adding to the community forestry discourse.

Objective III) *Experiential training and learning*: To enhance the learning capabilities of professionals to match the contemporary challenges that community forestry presents.



Brochure for the international course on PAR for CBNRM to be run by the project team in 2003, also a customized international course is on offer. Lessons from the community and policy advocacy work will feed into the course.

Sub objectives:

- To develop and evaluate training approaches/methodology that aim towards building the systematic learning capabilities of CBNRM professionals.
- To explore the possibility of using professional training as an'entry point' to accelerate organisational change.
- To explore the possibility of using an international professional training course as a means to promote change within other training institutions and to revise educational curricula.

Overarching Objective

Testing the interlocking activity approach: To evaluate the assumed complementary nature of the three components of this project. See figure 14.

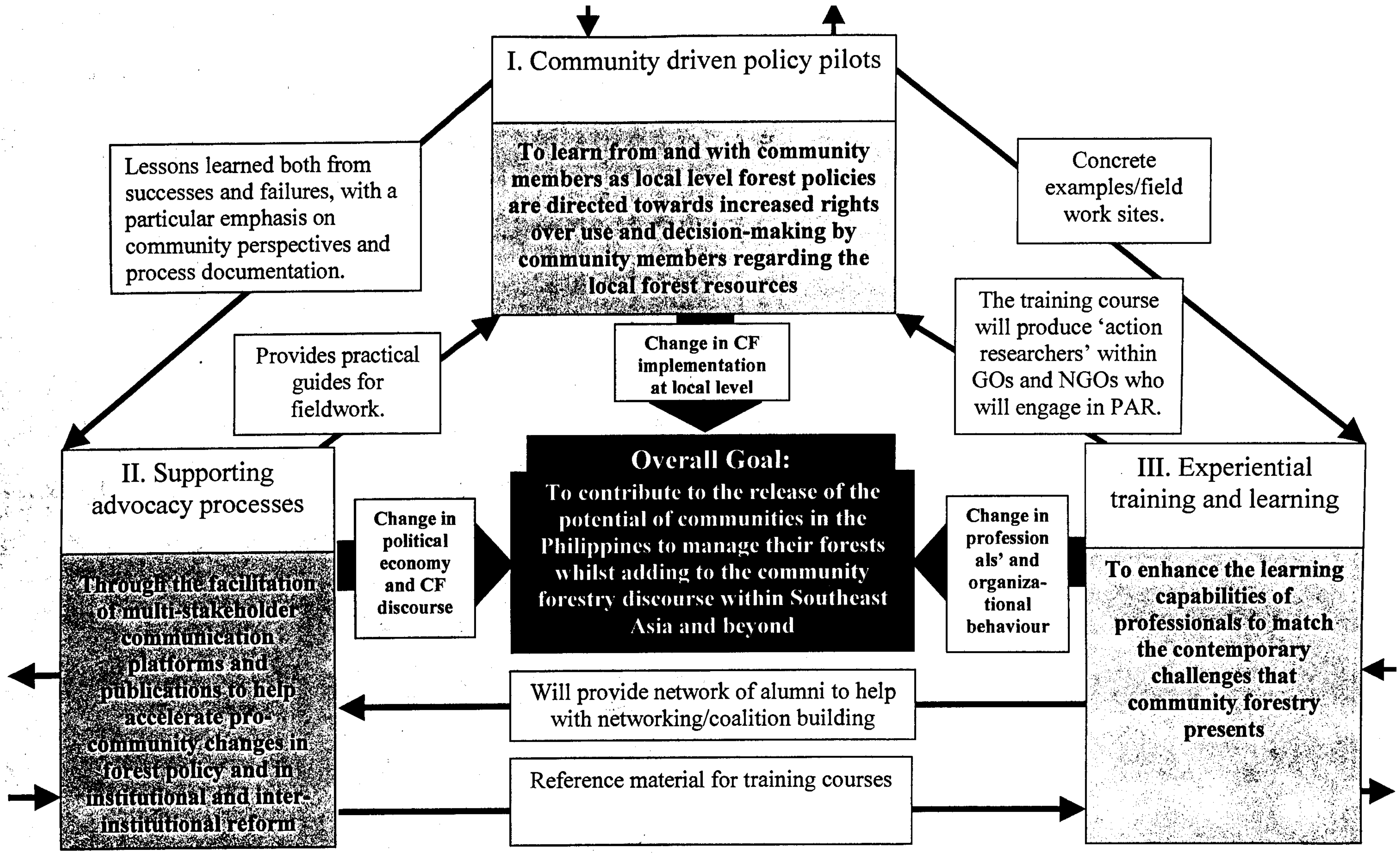

I. Community driven policy pilots
To learn from and with community members as local level forest policies are directed towards increased rights over use and decision-making by community members regarding the local forest resources
Lessons learned both from successes and failures, with a particular emphasis on community perspectives and process documentation.
Concrete examples/field work sites.
Provides practical guides for fieldwork.
Change in CF implementation at local level
The training course will produce 'action researchers' within GOs and NGOs who will engage in PAR.
II. Supporting advocacy processes
Through the facilitation of multi-stakeholder communication platforms and publications to help accelerate pro-community changes in forest policy and in institutional and inter-institutional reform
Change in political economy and CF discourse
Overall Goal:
To contribute to the release of the potential of communities in the Philippines to manage their forests whilst adding to the community forestry discourse within Southeast Asia and beyond
Change in professionals' and organiza-tional behaviour
III. Experiential training and learning
To enhance the learning capabilities of professionals to match the contemporary challenges that community forestry presents
Will provide network of alumni to help with networking/coalition building
Reference material for training courses

Figure 14. *Interlocking operational framework to guide project implementation in phase II.*

Additional miscellaneous research ideas

Over the course of phase I numerous other CBNRM research related ideas emerged. Some of these overlap with the Phase II objectives but nonetheless we thought these ideas worth noting.

- Using the 'lens' of 'release of potential' rather than 'capacity building' when it comes to communities in CBNRM research as this implies a more pressing need for change among 'outsiders', which we believe is the case in CBNRM.
- Moving away from technologies and focusing firmly on aspects of the political economy that are of relevance to CBNRM: multiple agendas, power relationships, governance, corruption, access to decision-making etc. but always trying to view the consequences from community perspectives.
- Exploring carrot and stick methods to dis-empower those who benefit most from the current failing forest governance structures.
- Focusing on 'scaling down the failures' rather than 'scaling up successes' – finding new ways to learn to advance CBNRM: E.g. critically embracing the mistakes of past and present strategies-policies-institutions-projects to help point the way to the future.
- De-legitimizing/downplaying the development project industry role in successful CBNRM by highlighting project failures through post-project case studies whilst highlighting CBNRM that happens outside project contexts through case studies, e.g. customary community management that has still managed to survive even without – or maybe rather because of limited development project influence.
- Linking people to policy: Exploring communication mechanisms that maximize the chances of policy makers and those who influence policy makers responding to the views and experiences of community members.
- Linking northern consumers to CBNRM producers: In a world where free trade is detrimentally affecting more and more communities it is time to focus CBNRM research on trading issues. Exploring the possibility of linking northern consumers with CBNRM communities in the south (through fair trading etc.)? It could provide positive examples of where international trade can support CBNRM, and also 'get into' problems in the North that dramatically affect rural development in the south - such as consumer ignorance and disorganization. The democratization of trade will be a major challenge in the future.
- Exploring new approaches to policy advocacy, e.g. quality documentary films, re-orientation study programmes-trainings-workshops for policy makers etc.
- The publication of a regular global hard copy IDRC- CBNRM publication something similar to FAO's now defunct Forest Trees and People Newsletter, with accessible critical insights into CBNRM, could provide more of a feeling of focus among CBNRM people (not only among IDRC project people). It could act as a global focal point to share ideas. This could be used to influence the general CBNRM discourse, donors and project implementers.

8. Important References and Background Documents

8.1 Project related research outputs, available through source mentioned or on request from IIRR

Articles/papers

September 2003 (Publishing date). *Linking People to Policy? Community Forestry in the Philippines, a multi perspective analysis*:

Description: Publication by IDRC, IIRR and RECOFTC documenting the write shop that took place in November 2002 at IIRR. Contained within the publication is a presentation on different perspectives on the state of community forestry in the Philippines, a multi-perspective analysis and the development of joint community forestry policy recommendations. Community members, academics, government and NGO actors all involved in community forestry in the Philippines were brought together in a structured communication process. The process/methodologies itself is also documented in the publication.

Sept 2002, *Community forestry, liberation through scaling-down our failures*. Article in the Forest Trees and People Newsletter (FAO/SIDA), Issue 46, Uppsala, Sweden.

Description: Drawing heavily on the findings from phase 1 of the project, the article fitted into the theme of this final Forest Trees and People Newsletter publication, which was a general critical reflection on community forestry from a community perspective. 10,000 copies of the newsletter are distributed in hard copy in English, Spanish and French to community forestry actors globally. The article is also available in PDF format at the website **http://www-trees.slu.se/newsl/46/Kap46.pdf**

August 2002, *Community Forestry in the Philippines; release through scaling down our failures.*

Description: Paper prepared to be Philippine specific from an adaptation of the article for the Forest, Trees and People Newsletter, Issue 46 for the DENR-Forest Management Bureau in collaboration with the Center for International Forestry Research: Forum cum Workshop on Building Partnerships, Strengthening Capacities and Developing Forest Resources thru Community Based Forest Management on August 6 and 7, 2002 at Oasis Hotel, Clarkfield, Angeles City. This article is available electronically at http://www.iirr.org/cstudy01.htm and **http://www.recoftc.org/01country/philippines/Phi_notes.html**

May 2002, *Community Based Forestry in the Philippines Its Theory and a Reality Check in Santa Catalina by Master's students from the Department of Rural Development Studies, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.*

Description: Paper prepared by a 4 person Master's student research team who conducted intensive 2 week PRA in Santa Catalina in partnership with the IIRR research team. The paper contains detailed analysis by community members of their perspectives on community forestry matched to the national CBFM guidelines. Paper available on request from IIRR.

Video documentation

May 2003, *Linking People to Policy, IDRC, IIRR and RECOFTC*
Linking People to Policy documents a unique learning process bringing communities and policy makers together in the Philippinnes to discuss policy and its impacts during the community forestry write shop in 2002 at IIRR.

The VCD shown below has a photo from a the write shop of the head of the DENR's Community Based Forest Management Division (right) listening to a community member's (left) experiences with the implications of forest policy at the community level. The video can be ordered from IIRR or from RECOFTC at **http://www.recoftc.org/03region/materials/new_materials/video/intro.html**

Seminars attended by members of research team

2002, *Bali, Indonesia, Preparatory Seminar for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.*

Pattaya, Thailand, Regional Collaborative Country Support Program workshop.

Angeles City, Philippines, Forum cum Workshop on Building Partnerships, Strengthening Capacities and Developing Forest Resources thru Gommunity Based Forest Management organized by the Forest Management Bureau of the Department of the DENR and the CIFOR

Quezon City, Philippines: Series of consultative workshops to review new revised CBFM guidelines, organized by the Forest Management Bureau of the DENR.

Quezon City, Philippines: Series of consultative workshops to review new revised CBFM guidelines organized by a forum of Philippine NGOs.

2001, *Chang Mai, Thailand, International Community forestry seminar organized by RECOFTC*

Chang Mai, Thailand, Linking Research to Policy workshop organized by IDRC

2000, Batangas, Philippines Upland NGO assistance committee, national conference

8.2 Bibliography

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DENR, *(2002). Proposed revision to CBFM guidelines (a) Strengthening the Development and Management of CBFM Areas b) Guidelines for the Establishment of Production Sharing System in CBFM Projects c) Guidelines on the Implementation of Joint Venture and Similar Forest Management Agreement.* DENR headquarters, Quezon City, Philippines.

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King, C.A (2000, *Systemic Processes for Facilitating Social Learning-challenging the legacy.* Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala, Sweden.

Kummer, D.M. (1992). *Deforestation in the Postwar Philippines.* Ateneo de Manila University Press, Manila.

Ministry of the Environment –Department of Nature, Conservation and Protect et al. (2002) *Community Forestry Research Project (CFRP/Phase 2)*, Cambodia.

In addition numerous relevant papers/information was accessed through the following websites and links contained therein.

The Regional Community Forestry Training Center, Thailand
http://www.recoftc.org/

The Forest Trees and People Programme Newsletter
http://www-trees.slu.se/newsl/front.htm

The Center for International Forestry Research
http://www.cifor.cgiar.org

IDRC / CRDI
313596

The Institute of Development Studies in Sussex University
http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids

The Overseas Development Institute
http://www.odifpeg.org.uk

The International Center for Research in Agroforestry
http://www.cgiar.org/icraf/sea/index.asp

The Community-Based Natural Resource Management Asia Virtual Resource Centre
http://www.cbnrmasia.org

The International Development Research Centre
http://www.idrc.ca

8.3 Appendixes. I. Financial report of project (including report on the LATIN component)