

**Farmer-Led
Organizations in
Natural
Resources
Management**

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Citation

Gonsalves, JF and Queblatin, EE, Editors. 2003. Farmer-led organizations in natural resources management. World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). 62 p.

Published by

World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)
Southeast Asian Regional Research Programme

and

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

Layout by: Florisa Norina Luna-Carada

Artwork by: Donna Mallen Obusan

Printed by: Brown Madonna Press, Inc., Philippines

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Published by

World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)

and

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

October 2003

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acknowledgements

The editors are deeply indebted to the following for their contributions to this effort to bring more attention to the importance of farmer-led organizations in natural resources management: Jintana Amornsanguasin, Jacqueline Ashby, Ann Braun, Salve Borlagdan, Ma. Elena Chiong-Javier, Dennis Garrity, Teresa Gracia, Maria del Pilar Guerrero, Ernesto Guiang, Saharrudin Ir, Aloysius Fernandez, Oscar Francisco, Luis Alfredo Hernandez, Meine van Noordwijk, Juan M. Pulhin, Carlos Arturo Quiros, Jose Ignacio Roa, Eduardo Sabio, Sara Scherr, Satyawan Sunito, and Norman Uphoff.

To the International Fund for Agricultural Development for encouraging the World Agroforestry Centre's own interest in local institutions and for generously providing funding support.

Floris Norina Luna-Carada for coordinating the design and development of the material making it a more friendly publication.

Donna Obusan for sharing her creative insights as cartoonist/illustrator to enliven this production.

Glo Acaylar, Dwane Arboleda, and Jefferson Cruz of the World Agroforestry Centre who helped review the publication and provided production support.

preface

The poor in the uplands and mountains of Asia are increasingly becoming the focus of attention in efforts to address resource degradation, insecurity of tenure, cultural isolation, and the marginalization of local communities. Locally-adapted, resource-conserving technologies are prioritized over supply-driven approaches of the past. Local people are vested with the responsibility for conserving their environment. Improved systems for securing access and control by marginalized upland people are being sought in order to ensure that the benefits accrue directly to local communities. Market linkages are valued because of the recognition of the importance of a sustainable livelihoods oriented approach. Indeed, a broadening of the paradigm has characterized the past decade of work in the uplands of Asia.

Striking is the “discovery” by programs working in such diverse sectors of forestry, agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture, upland resource management, watershed management, credit and micro enterprises of the critical and pivotal role of local organizations. Farmer-led and farmer-managed local organizations can and do make a difference in how natural and human resources are managed in the tropical uplands of Asia. They influence the quality of what is done and how long outcomes are sustained. Local organizations are social assets. Local organizations allow democratic processes to emerge and they increasingly are effective in promoting culture of downward capability. With donors and governments increasingly transferring resources and powers to local governments and user groups, new windows of opportunities have become available to local organizations.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) are collaborating in order to develop and disseminate technical and institutional innovations that promote the application of sound natural resources management practices. These innovations aim to benefit poor upland communities including those covered by IFAD-assisted upland projects in Southeast Asia. One of the innovations being developed is that of farmer-led organizations and related initiatives to improve upland farm profitability and sustainability.

This booklet is meant to broaden the knowledge base of practitioners involved in facilitating the development of farmer-led local organizations among the upland poor in Asia especially in Southeast Asia. It is designed for facilitators of farmer-led organizations: project managers, extension leaders, and trainers. It is also directed towards researchers engaged in on-farm research within the more challenging R and D (research and development) paradigm. NGOs and Civil Society will find this of use too.

This publication is based on previously published material. In a world where knowledge management is emphasized, there is often a need to build upon and better utilize available resources. The highlighted experiences are drawn from a diverse range of perspectives of community organizers, researchers, academicians, policymakers, and practitioners. This makes this collection of materials unique and hopefully of wider relevance to those engaged in the design and implementation of programs.

An attempt has been made to cover a rather wide range of topics in the booklet:

Section 1: Devolving natural resources management to local people

Section 2: Nature of local organizations

Section 3: Local institutions' effectiveness in natural resources management

Section 4: Research and farmer organizations

Section 5: Building social capital and strengthening partnerships

Section 6: Building civil society at the grassroots

This diversity and range of coverage has been planned and is deliberate. The inclusion of findings from research studies is also deliberate and is aimed at enhancing the use of field-derived research outputs. Also included are experiences from allied work such as watershed management, soil and water conservation, and community-based forest management. These account for a major portion of the publication (Section 3). A special section (Section 6) draws upon the rich community organizing tradition of civil society. Although this section does not directly deal with upland resource management, it draws the attention of reader to lessons of at least two decades of community organizing by civil society.

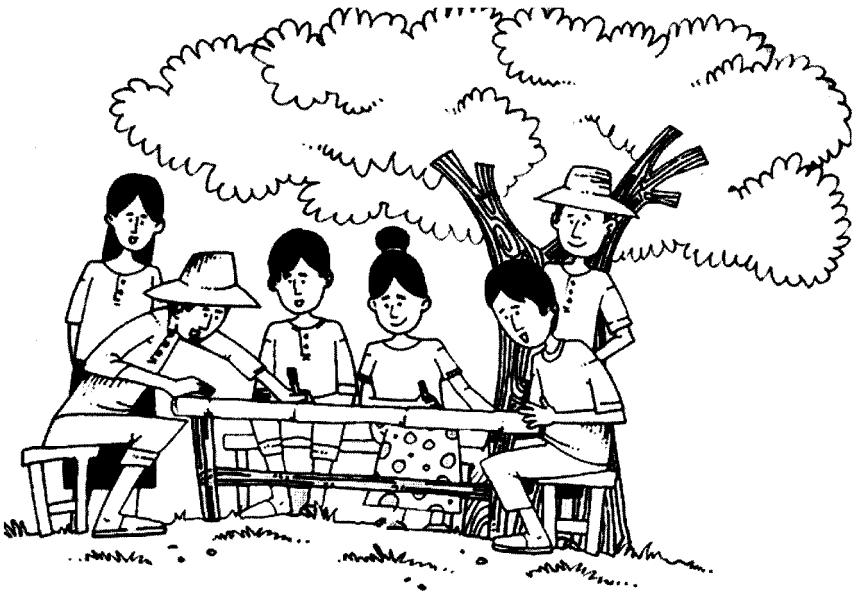
This is not an implementation manual but more of a reference from which a reader can draw principles which can serve as the basis for designing or adapting strategies within ongoing programs.

Local organizations must evolve out of a response to each specific cultural, economic, and social context. They cannot be imposed but must be nurtured. With strong, effective, and responsive local organizations in place, the returns, in terms of adoption and sustainability of resource management practices will be greatly enhanced.

Julian F. Gonsalves with Eduardo E. Queblatin

Section 1:

Devolving Natural Resources Management to Local People



LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS IN NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE UPLANDS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

Upland tropical watersheds contribute significantly to the livelihoods of many of the poorest rural populations in the world. Large and growing populations are farming and harvesting forest products in upper watersheds, even as watershed natural resources—for water supply and quality, environmental services, habitat for wild biodiversity, and carbon services—become increasingly important at regional, national and

The contents of this section are taken from Scherr, S.J., J. Amornsanguasin, M.E.C. Javier, D. Garrity, S. Sunito, S. Ir. 2001. Local organization in natural resource management in the uplands of Southeast Asia: Policy context and institutional landscape. Paper presented at the SANREM Conference on "Sustaining Upland Development in Southeast Asia: Issues, Tools and Institutions for Local Natural Resource Management", 28-30 May 2001, Makati City, Philippines.

international scales. The governance of watershed resources in many developing countries is undergoing profound change. Control and decision-making over natural resources is being transferred in many places from highly authoritarian government agencies to local people. Collective action and modification of property rights are essential to address many of the critical challenges of watershed management—

devolving natural resource management (NRM) to local communities, internalizing environmental externalities, negotiating use rights over resources, and resolving conflicts among stakeholders (Meinzen-Dick and Knox 2001).

Box 1. Active groups

Pretty and Ward (2001) estimate some 50,000 watershed and sustainable agriculture groups became active in the past decade in Australia, several African and Central American countries, India and Nepal, and the USA.



INNOVATION IN UPLAND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

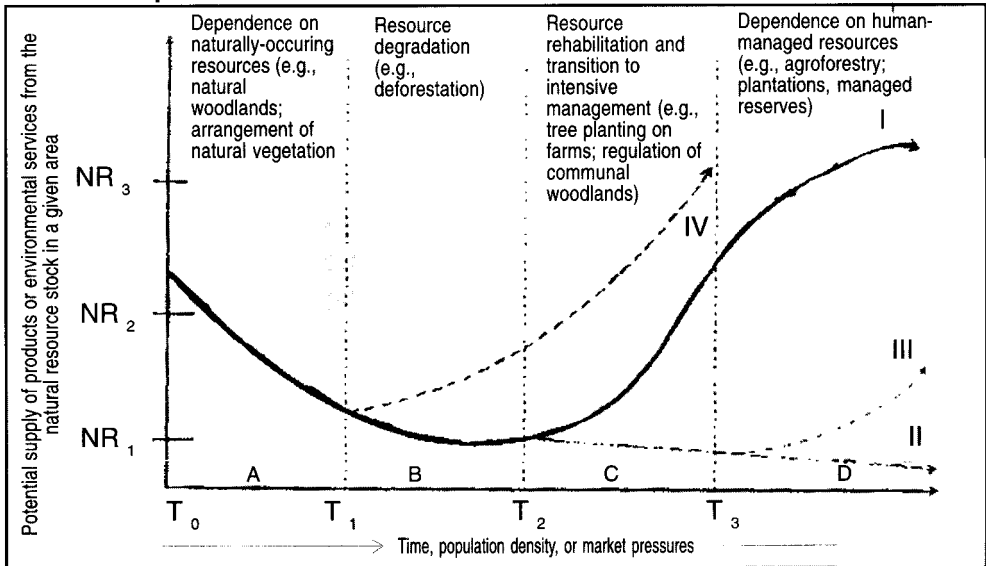
Upland populations have grown faster than overall population, and improved infrastructure has linked these regions much more closely with national economies. As settled farming populations have sought to intensify production on steeply sloping lands, often with poor soils, rural poverty has become more concentrated. Degradation of many key environmental resources—notably forests, water quality and supply, and wild biodiversity—has been associated with upland “development,” threatening local livelihoods as well as environmental values important nationally and internationally (Scherr 2000a).

However, studies of livelihood strategies have revealed that although the rural poor may have limited resources, they still have considerable capacity to adapt to environmental degradation, either by mitigating its effects on their livelihoods or by rehabilitating degraded resources. A wide variety of coping mechanisms may be used to deal with environmental stress. Some of these responses imply further impoverishment (e.g., reducing consumption, depleting household, or moving). Others may offset the welfare effects of resource degradation without improving the natural resource base (e.g., increasing off-farm employment, exploiting common property resources). Some strategies *both* improve natural resources *and* reduce household poverty by protecting and preserving the asset base, diversifying and improving on-farm production systems, or taking out

credit to invest in future production or resource protection (Davies, 1996; Scherr, 2000b).

Over time, local people develop technical and institutional innovations in natural resource management to reduce risks and adapt to or reverse degradation, even as pressures increase. These findings suggest a phenomenon of local innovation in NRM. As population or market pressures increase, farmers first experience degradation and its welfare effects, but not sufficiently to trigger a response. As effects become more pronounced farmers will seek innovations to stabilize or improve the resource base, or to compensate for their welfare effects by depending less on the degrading resource. Such a positive adaptive response is not assured; resources may eventually be destroyed or a delayed response may permanently reduce resource conditions; consumption may decline (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Innovation in soil resource management under population and market pressure.



SOURCE: Scherr, 2000b.

The phenomenon of “induced innovation” is shown in Figure 1 as trajectory I. Note that this analysis does not imply that the original resource conditions are recovered, only that the supply of products or environmental services recovers. Thus, intensive agroforestry systems may replace natural forests, with negative impacts for biodiversity services, even where other goods and services recover. Under trajectory II, degradation continues to the point that rehabilitation is infeasible. Under III, rehabilitation is delayed to the point that potential resource recovery

is limited. To conserve natural resources and enhance livelihoods over the long term, accelerated innovation and rehabilitation (IV) is often desirable.

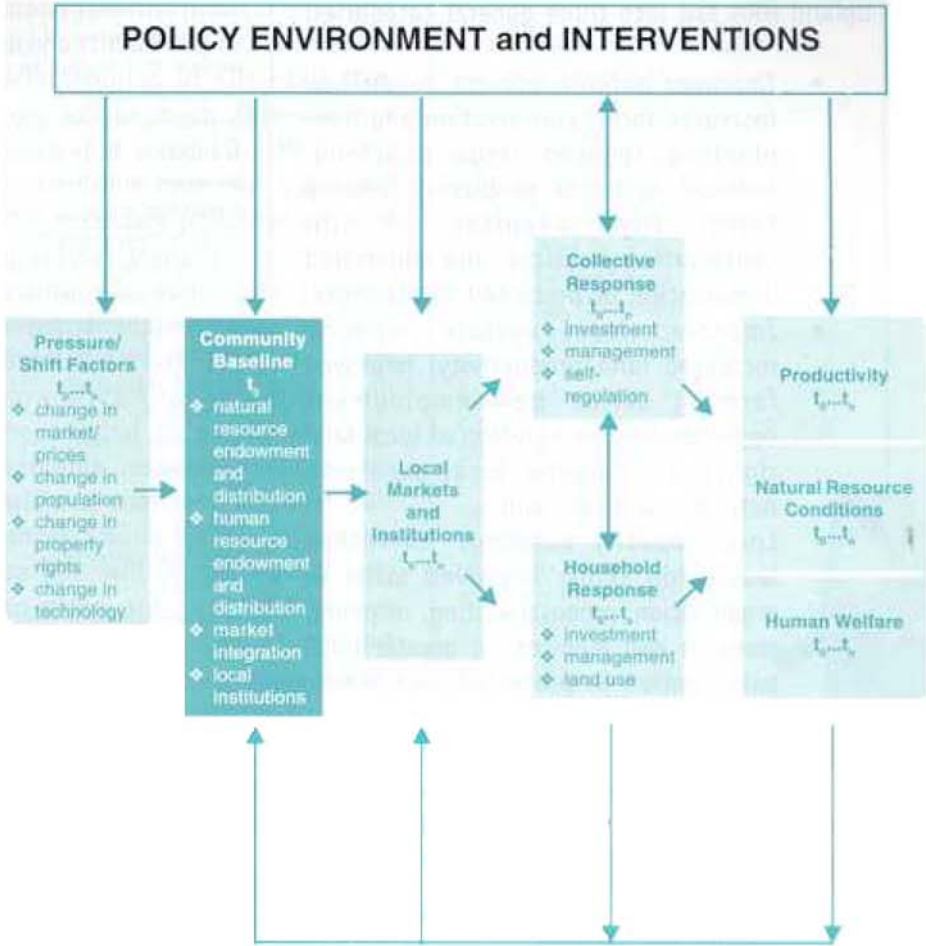
Organizational limitations appear to be a key constraint in this innovation process, especially for natural resources that are common property or public goods, and innovations that have economies of scale or require collective action. Local organizations may play critical roles in such adaptive processes: in managing common property resources, regulating private resource management to protect community interests, organizing community investments to improve natural resource conditions, sharing knowledge about NRM, cooperating to market products or environmental services from NRM, or advocating for community interests with policymakers and other influential external actors (Hinchcliffe, et al. 1999).

“Organizational limitations appear to be a key constraint in this innovation process, especially for natural resources that are common property or public goods, and innovations that have economies of scale or require collective action.”

The conceptual framework shown in Figure 2 predicts that increasing pressures on natural resources will influence community conditions in ways that modify local institutions, including local organizations (LOs) responsible for NRM. Such LOs may influence both collective and household-level NRM. Resulting changes in productivity, natural resource conditions and human welfare within the community produce further dynamic changes (Scherr 2000b).

The conceptual framework considers these questions within the broader dynamics of rural change. Pressures from population growth, markets, new technology or other external factors induce change in local markets, prices and institutions within individual communities. The local impacts of these shifts are conditioned by community characteristics, such as their human and natural resource endowments, infrastructure, asset distribution, market linkages and local knowledge base and culture. Resulting community-level changes may induce responses in agriculture and NRM strategies at both household and collective levels (e.g., changes in land use, land investment, use intensity, input mix, conservation practices and collective action). These responses are similarly conditioned by community characteristics and may thus be path-dependent. Subsequent

Figure 2. Factors Mediating Local Response to Changing Natural Resource Pressures: A Conceptual Framework.



SOURCE: Scherr, 2000b.

changes in NRM then affect environmental conditions, agricultural production and human welfare. These in return have feedback effects on local conditions, institutions and NRM decisions.

Public policies and investments can influence poverty-agriculture-environment dynamics at various points of the framework. For example, public agricultural research investments and food price policies affect shift factors, while technical assistance influences response patterns. The most effective action for reducing poverty and environmental degradation will depend on the dynamics of the local change process and the relative importance of key factors influencing poverty-environment interactions.

IMPACTS OF LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

The major impacts reported from LOs in upland NRM fall into three general categories:

- *Improved natural resource conditions:* increased forest conservation and tree-planting; reduced illegal poaching; reduced pesticide problems; reduced forest fire; adoption of soil conservation practices, and negotiated demarcation of protected forest areas;
- *Improved local welfare impacts:* increased farm productivity; improved farming skills; new employment opportunities, recognition of local land rights, and greater local access to natural resources; and
- *Local capacity building:* increased leadership skills; improved skills in organization, proposal-writing, mapping, research and monitoring; greater local participation in protected area management; greater political consciousness; and networking.

Box 2. Positive impact

There has been little documentation of such impacts, in terms of local welfare and resources or watershed-level environmental services and production. Even donor and government-funded watershed projects tend to monitor only operational indicators (e.g., number of seedlings produced in tree nurseries), rather than final impacts. Because the state of natural resources typically fluctuate from year to year, longer-term monitoring is needed to ascertain genuine changes.

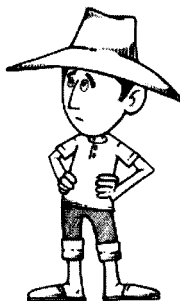


The establishment and empowerment of local organizations are not a panacea for the serious challenges of upland NRM—only a necessary first step. Local capacity for good resource husbandry, equitably managed,

is constrained by social factors, including male domination in most organizations, high social stratification in some traditional organizations and peri-urban communities, limited social capital on which to build, and social disruption due to continued immigration. Greater access and control over natural resources by local communities may not always lead to improved NRM—as defined by environmentalists or downstream resource users—in the short-run, given

Box 3. On upland communities

Established upland communities in Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand have commonly protected natural resources important to their livelihoods and identity.



resource-scarce conditions in most rural communities. Local governments and watershed management institutions will play a critical role in assuring the effectiveness of LOs—but that role will be much different in a context of active LOs. Most such institutions have not yet made the necessary philosophical and practical transitions. Environmental education, planning and research support, even environmental service payments from downstream resource users, will be needed to encourage sustainable resource management without coercion. Stronger alliances among locally led organizations will be needed not only to safeguard local control over resources, but also to support and encourage long-term investment in sustainable systems.

Box 4. A consideration in involving local organizations

It is important to consider that, despite the advances gained in involving local organizations in upland resource management, natural resource management remain a multisectoral concern that requires a multisectoral approach. While it is obvious that local resource users may directly benefit from sustained and sustainable resource management, this concern cannot be left exclusively in the care of local upland communities where the poorest of the country's poor belong. They not only cannot do the job effectively without external assistance, but it is unfair to expect only the local people to steward resources that benefit also the society at large.

Source: Chiong-Javier, 2001.



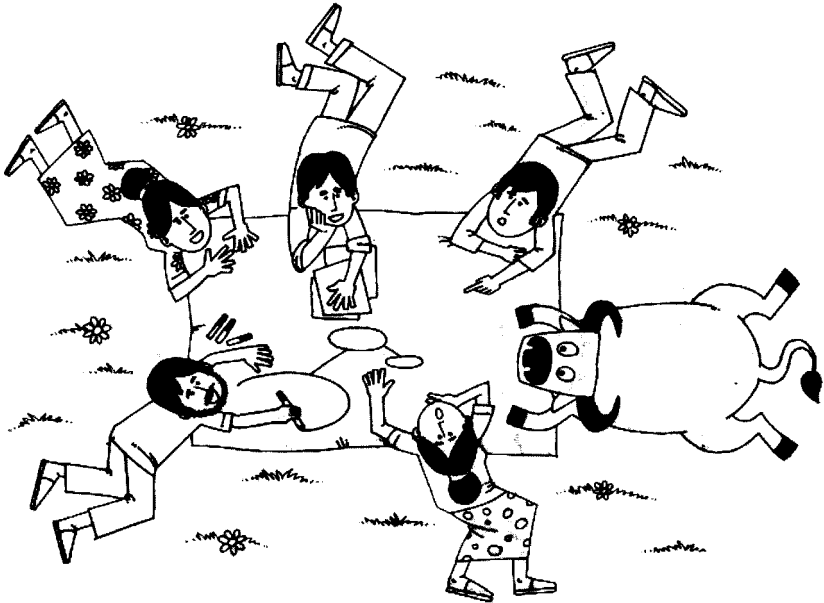
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Section 2:

Nature of Local Organizations



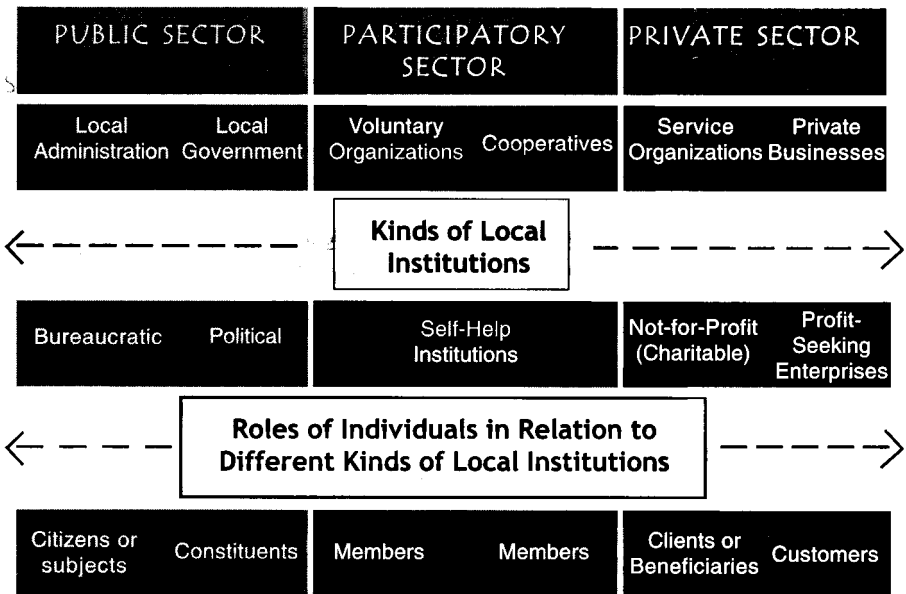
Behavior is conditioned by community norms and consensus. Preserving or instituting practices that are environmentally sound requires more than just individual incentives and persuasion. Local institutions encourage people to take a longer-term view by creating expectations and a basis for cooperation that goes beyond individual interests. To the extent institutions are regarded as legitimate, people comply without (or with fewer) inducements and sanctions. Available resources can be put to their most efficient and sustainable use with location-specific knowledge, which is best generated and interpreted locally. Monitoring changes in resources' status can be quicker and less costly where local people are involved. Making adaptive changes in resource use is speeded up where local decision-making has become institutionalized.

THE RANGE AND VARIETY OF LOCAL INSTITUTIONS*

Participatory institutions are not just another category to be added to the prior categories of public and private sector institutions. It is better to think in terms of a continuum of institutions ranging from public to private with participatory institutions in between.

While most of the private sector institutions has profit as its goal, there are also charitable or philanthropic (not-for-profit) institutions. Within the public sector there is a similar distinction to be made between local administration and local government. Local administration refers to institutions that represent central authority and are accountable to bureaucratic superiors. On the other hand, local government pertains to institutions responsible to their local constituents. The significance of these distinctions can be seen at the bottom of Figure 3 where it is shown how people have different relationships to these several kinds of local institutions.

Figure 3. Continuum of local institutions by sector (adapted from Uphoff 1986:5).



* The contents of this subsection are taken from Uphoff, N. 1992. Local institutions and participation for sustainable development. Gatekeeper Series No. 31. London: International Institute for Environment and Development.

**LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS (LOs) IN
SOUTHEAST ASIA***

Local organization is an umbrella term for diverse types of local groups. Box 5 enumerates these terminologies.

LOs currently involved in upland NRM vary considerably. There are four major categories of LOs involved in upland NRM, in terms of their genesis or overall objective. These are the following:

1. **I n d i g e n o u s** communities in their ancestral lands, located at higher altitudes, with less intensive land use systems, for whom land rights issues are primary.
2. Farmer groups organized by the government or larger-scale private sector firms to support production activities (for example, for credit or outgrower schemes).
3. Community groups organized by the government to pursue soil, water or forest conservation objectives

Box 5. Local organizations terminology

The following terms are used in the Philippines. There is considerable, but not complete, crossover in Indonesia and Thailand.

- ❖ **Community-Based Organization (CBO):** an organization based or located in a community; it may not be representative of the community.
- ❖ **Community-Led Organization (CLO):** a variant of CBO with emphasis on leadership born by representatives chosen by a cross-section of community members, working to affect the common good, often self-initiated.
- ❖ **Farmer-Led Organization (FLO):** a sectoral grouping of farmers, often self-initiated; may develop to become CLOs;
- ❖ **People's Foundation (PF):** a variant of FLO with an outward service-orientation, existing to serve not only its members but also external clients who may be CBOs or FLOs, often self-initiated.
- ❖ **Cooperative:** a formal organization registered with the government, with a well-defined socioeconomic agenda and capital, and oriented towards some form of social enterprise (e.g., credit, lending or marketing); may have a community-wide or sectoral membership;
- ❖ **People's Organization (PO):** a generic term embracing all of the above groupings—a form of civil society at the grassroots level.
- ❖ **Federation:** a formal (i.e., government-registered) or informal alliance or coalition of several or many types of organizations, associations or cooperatives. It may have a multisectoral composition when POs coalesce with NGOs and/or Local Government Organizations.

Source: Chiong-Javier, 2001.



* The contents of this subsection are taken from Scherr, S. J. et al. 2001. Local organization in natural resource management in the uplands of Southeast Asia: policy context and institutional landscape. Paper presented at the SANREM Conference on "Sustaining Upland Development in Southeast Asia: Issues, Tools and Institutions for Local Natural Resource Management", 28-30 May 2001, Makati, Philippines.

(for example, community-based forest management or CBFM on public lands).

4. Farmer or community groups, self-initiated or organized by social and environmental NGOs, that emphasize local empowerment for social development and natural resource management.

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS IN INDIA*

MYRADA, a non-government organization in India, has been involved in resource management for dry lands for nearly two decades. They focus on building and managing appropriate, innovative, local level institutions rooted in justice, equity, and mutual support.

MYRADA believes that various groups evolve with time:

1. **Self-Help Groups (SHGs).**

Individuals form groups

because of a common concern or interest. For example, people who talk about watershed issues form watershed associations; those interested in forest issues go with forest management committees. SHGs provide a stimulating venue for effective participation at the village level. Being just a small group focused on a particular issue, it is more likely that members can freely voice out their thoughts. This can easily lead to a lively interaction. More often, the poor are organized first into SHGs in order to establish a solid power base.

2. **Organization.** As small group concerns unfold, comes along increasing participation and deepening commitments. Group discussions are now elevated into rules and regulations. Moreover, each member has defined functions and responsibilities. There comes an urge to formalize the group bonding through registration procedures. In most cases, rules, regulations, and functions are imposed from the outside.

“SHGs provide a stimulating venue for effective participation at the village level. Being just a small group focused on a particular issue, it is more likely that members can freely voice out their thoughts.”

* The contents of this subsection are taken from Fernandez, A.P. 2001. The MYRADA experience. MYRADA, Bangalore.

3. **Institution.** When members have full ownership of the body and imbibe to a large extent the organizational culture and systems, then an organization has developed into an institution. In this level, members are able to develop their own vision and mission as well as confidently modify rules and regulations. Moreover, a stable pattern of behavior manifests an institution. Sanctions for deviant behavior are self-imposed and accepted by all as necessary for a growing organization.

Conflict resolution is primarily the institution's responsibility. There is no tension between a member's rights and responsibilities. Both are given respect. Although in some crisis situations, responsibilities easily take precedence over right. An institution has a culture for self-assessment and change. It does not need to be "restructured" from the outside. An institution can function only in a genuine democracy. This means it grows over a period of time. It requires at least two-three years before a group develops clear signs of an institution.

Sometimes it is also possible that a functioning institution can lose its culture and undermine its systems through external or internal causes. An institution therefore requires both time to develop and constant commitment among all its members to remain healthy. An institution must continue to develop its own learning mechanisms and confidence to protect its identity and inter-dependence.

Box 6. SHGs as the appropriate groups

If credit is the resource to be managed, therefore, the appropriate institution cannot be one where rich and poor are members; it will have to be an institution where only the poor have membership, and which they own. If they do not own these institutions and instead have to conform to rules and regulations of the official financial systems, they will continue to be exploited. The Self-Help Groups are institutions of the poor; experience has shown that they are also the appropriate institutions to manage credit.

Source: Fernandez, 2001.



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Section 3:

Local Institutions' Effectiveness in Natural Resource Management



CRITICAL ROLE OF LOCAL INSTITUTIONS IN MANAGING RESOURCES*

According to Uphoff (1992) local institutions are more likely to be successful in natural resource management where the resource is "bounded". Meaning, known and predictable rather than shifting and variable. Moreover, the users themselves are an identifiable group or community with its own authority structure. The most favorable situation for local resource management is irrigation water management by water users themselves. As shown in Figure 4, the resource is relatively ascertainable and only certain persons have access to it. One cannot encroach on channel water to the extent that one can extract forest resources or graze pasture land surreptitiously. The most abundant examples of effective local

* The contents of this subsection are taken from Uphoff, N. 1994. Local institutions and participation for sustainable development. Gatekeeper Series. IIED. 31:9-10.

management of natural resources are in the irrigation sector (Uphoff 1986a). And among irrigation systems, institutional arrangements are more successful where the users are a socially cohesive group. In larger systems, there is likely to be less solidarity among farmers than in smaller, community-based ones.

Figure 4. Resource management situations according to differences in resource and users (Uphoff 1986b).

		NATURAL RESOURCE IS:	
		Known and predictable	Little known and unpredictable
USER-MANAGERS ARE:	Identifiable and coherent group	(I) Irrigation water management, by water user themselves	(II) Coastal fishing, by local fisherman groups
	Lacking group identity	(III) Forest management by all who have access to the forest	(IV) Rangeland management by nomadic herders

The contrasting situation—rangeland management by nomadic herders—represents a resource that fluctuates according to shifting rainfall patterns and users are of various migrating clans. Such conditions make it difficult for local institutions to control access and regulate resource use. This means that use-management is another option—management by individuals who use the resource within certain cultural and social norms that are not enforced by any formal authority (Roe and Fortmann 1982). This involves institutions (based on shared values and expectations) that are not at the same time organizations, following the definition of “institution” in Box 7.

The potential of local institutions for natural resource management can be improved, other things being equal, by investing in gathering information on the resource in question and making it available to local people. Likewise, working with users to encourage the establishment of groups is likely to be a good investment for promoting local resource management. One of the “social technologies” developed over the last

Box 7. What are local institutions?

The term "local" is often misused. Three levels, not just one, should be regarded as local: (1) *localities*, sets of communities that have kinship, marketing or other connections; (2) *communities* or villages or towns, and (3) *groups*. These have in common the prevalence of face-to-face interpersonal relationships, which are naturally more frequent and intense within groups and communities than within localities.

The fact that people know each other creates opportunities for collective action and mutual assistance, for mobilizing and managing resources on a self-directed and self-sustaining basis. People feel more mutual rapport and sense of obligation at these levels than at district or subdistrict levels, which are basically *political* constructions. There, the bonds among people are defined more formally or legally. Decisions and activities are based more on authority than on consensus which grows out of discussion and mutual understanding. The latter is more likely in localities, communities, and groups because they exist as *social* entities.

Source: Uphoff, 1992.



decades is the deployment of catalysts — community organizers, social organizers, institutional organizers, or association organizers—to overcome previous barriers to resource user cooperation (Uphoff 1992).

Uphoff further stressed that getting local people to take responsibility for natural resource management will be easier where the benefits accrue more quickly, locally, visibly, and to those who bear the cost. In the opposite situation, where benefits are delayed, remote, hard to identify, and do not go to those who invested effort, money or foregone use, local management and maintenance of natural resources would be most unpromising. Institutional arrangements should seek to include those who bear the costs of as well as those who benefit from resource management schemes.

“...getting local people to take responsibility for natural resource management will be easier where the benefits accrue more quickly, locally, visibly, and to those who bear the cost.”

THE LANDCARE MOVEMENT: INSTITUTIONAL INNOVATION IN THE UPLANDS*

Among the organizational models for enhancing local initiative in attacking land degradation challenges, one of particular interest is called 'Landcare'. Through this movement local communities organize to tackle their agricultural problems in partnership with public sector institutions. The distinguishing characteristics of Landcare groups are they being voluntary, self-governing, and focus on problem-solving resources within the community. Experience in the Philippines (200 groups) and Australia (4,500 groups) suggests that such an approach may provide a means to more effectively share and generate technical information, spread the adoption of new practices, enhance research, and foster farm and watershed planning process. These groups exhibit some similar characteristics to the farmer field schools made popular in integrated pest management. Landcare groups, however, are aimed at a broader range of land degradation and sustainability issues. Some distinguishing features of Landcare groups are:

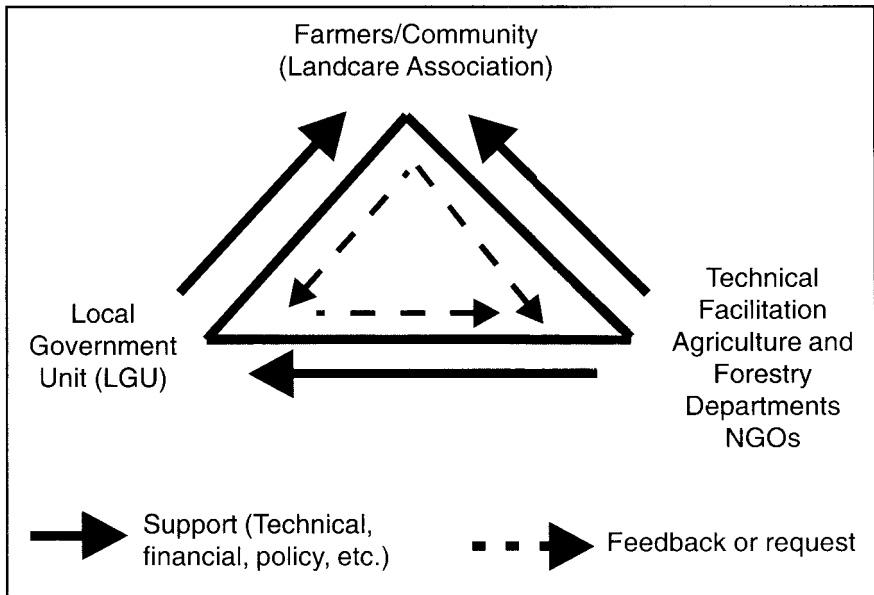
- They develop their own agenda and tackle the range of sustainability issues considered important to the group.
- They tend to be based on neighborhoods or small sub-watersheds.
- The impetus for formation comes from the community, although explicit support from outside may be obtained.
- The momentum and ownership of the group's program is with the community.

Farmer-driven approaches show promise of being more effective and less expensive than current transfer-of-technology approaches. In the southern Philippines, farmer organizations became the basis for a successful grassroots approach to finding new land care solutions, partnering with local government, pulling in outside technical and financial resources, and diffusing new information throughout the community (Garrity 1999). The experience suggests that there is major potential for enhancing this grassroots approach elsewhere in Southeast Asia.

There are signs that institutions like this could revolutionize extension systems. Extension agents are transformed from the role of teacher to one of facilitator to whole farmer groups (Campbell 1994). Conservation farming based on contour buffer strips is one practice popularized through Landcare in the Philippines. Another has been the expansion of nurseries

* The contents of this subsection are taken from Garrity, D. 1999. A paper presented at the IFAD Symposium on "The Asian Crisis and the Rural Poor", UN University, Tokyo, Japan, 8 July, 1999.

Figure 5. Collaborative structure of Landcare.



for growing new species of fruit and timber trees to diversify the farm enterprise. As a result of Landcare activities, hundreds of household nurseries have been established by the membership using their own resources. Landcare groups have also gained significant influence at the local political level. Local governments have begun to actively assist the movement with budgetary allocations and political support. The collaborative structure of Landcare is built through these mutually supported relationships among the farmers' organizations, local government, and technical support agencies (Figure 5).

Conditions are evolving to stimulate greater entrepreneurship in the rural areas of Asia. Self-governing, farmer-led knowledge-sharing organizations may play a key role in helping to foster this entrepreneurship, and channeling it into productive opportunities. They may complement local savings and credit groups, and other types of local organizations.

What needs to be done to release the power of the Landcare concept? The public sector and nongovernment sector can assist in facilitating group formation and networking among groups, enabling them to grow, developing their managerial capabilities, and enhancing their ability to capture new information from the outside world. They can also provide leadership training to farmer leaders, helping ensure the sustainability of the organizations. Cost-sharing external assistance can also be provided. The use of trust funds, where farmer groups receive small grants for local projects, should be emphasized.

Management of Micro-Watersheds

Around 1985, realizing that a major investment in dry lands was required to ensure food security of the poor, MYRADA began exploring the strategy of micro-watershed management in Gulbarga District in collaboration with the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation and the government of Karnataka. MYRADA's focus was to foster appropriate people's institutions which would take on the responsibility of planning, budgeting, and implementing treatment measures in watershed and then managing the investment for sustained impact. MYRADA has two simple slogans—"Make the water walk" and "Bring the soil back to life" (through judicious use of biomass, compost, silt, and soil cover). ISRO's satellite photographs of 1986 and

1994, prove that there has been remarkable change in the biomass cover in the project area. Several studies have shown sustained increases in productivity and ability of crops to weather prolonged dry periods. The lessons learned from this project were incorporated in others both in MYRADA and outside; a national policy and strategy on watershed management was also derived from this experiment.

Over the years, MYRADA has evolved basic principles on how micro-watersheds are managed. All these were derived from field-testing and development with the people themselves. MYRADA has emphasized the importance of small micro-watershed for the following reasons:

- The people could see their watershed.
- It should be an area that they are relating either through agriculture, grazing, forestry, etc.
- The extent of land assets and resources should not be too large for them to manage without continuing outside assistance.

Box 8: The MYRADA strategy

Poverty involves fundamental structural barriers that limit access to productive assets, markets and fair wages. MYRADA's strategy is two-fold:

- ◆ Foster alternate systems of the poor through which they mobilize and manage the resources they need. These institutions form the basis for their sustained empowerment.
- ◆ Lobby with the official system to recognize these alternate systems in their own right and to relate with and support them.



* The contents of this subsection are taken from www.myrada.org/profile.htm and People's participation in the management of mini watersheds. Rural Management Series: Paper 6. 19 August 1989.

Box 9: MYRADA and the micro-watershed project

MYRADA is a non-governmental organization managing rural development programmes in three States of South India and providing on-going support including deputations of staff to programmes in six other States. It also promotes the Self Help Affinity strategy in Cambodia, Myanmar, and Bangladesh.

At any point of time, MYRADA, through its various initiatives, works with one million poor people.

In a micro-watershed project, MYRADA aims to:

- ❖ foster people participation and develop appropriate people's institutions to mobilize, regenerate and manage resources sustainably; and
- ❖ influence the government to focus efforts in an integrated manner regarding watershed development and recognize people's participation integral to policy and programme formulation and implementation.



- The number of families involved should be small enough to enable them to function together. If the number of families was large (above 30) they would have to break-up into smaller socially functional and homogenous groups managing various particular operations like credit, with an apex group supervising the overall functions of a watershed.

Size of Watersheds

- The watershed cannot be too large. Its size must depend on the "capacity" of the people and their institutions to manage the operations required.
- The watershed cannot be too small either. If it is, then the programme will hardly be symbolic in nature. The functional institutions are too small to achieve economic viability. On the social aspect, like health and education, its political organization may be too weak to exert pressure. Hence, a watershed covering 600-800 acres with 80 to 100 families would be a possible start.

Structural Features of People's Institutions in Watershed Development

- **Small size** – An ideal 15-20 members and a maximum of 30 members. Larger than this may be difficult in function. Large groups which are homogeneous may be aware of each one's responsibilities but participation of each member is restricted. Some members are shy and different. They can only talk and function in small groups. Group dynamics should ensure that everyone is encouraged to talk and participate in decision-making without inhibitions or fears. In a large group, this is impossible to do. Size is therefore a structural feature which has to be given importance.

- **Homogeneous in composition** - They should be sharing a common interest. Similarity in economic status may be essential in groups involved in management of scarce inputs (i.e., credit).
- **Fully participative** – Decisions are not delegated to representatives. Members gather, discuss, and arrive at one decision harmoniously.
- **Voluntary** – The emergence of values, rules, and regulations which are appropriate to the activities of the group help establish better living systems for its members and enables them to cope with the continuously changing demands of the environment.

The Role of the Watershed Management Association

1. Create awareness among the subgroups on the importance of ecological balance of the watershed as an ecological unit which needs to be properly managed.
2. Coordinate and integrate the efforts of all the subgroups; so that all the subgroups work towards the same goal. Namely, the integrated development and management of the resources of the mini watersheds.
3. Work out systems to ensure that common resources and assets like *nala-bunds*, gully checks, grazing lands, drinking water resources etc., are managed by the subgroups in a manner where rights and responsibilities are shared appropriately.
4. Provide the necessary support to the weaker members of each group to develop and participate effectively.
5. Coordinate, lobby, and bargain with the government, contractors, financial institutions, Mandal Panchayats, MYRADA, and other

Box 10: The case of the watershed associations

In the case of watershed management, a single institution is not adequate or appropriate. MYRADA's experience indicates that in a micro watershed of about 70-100 families, the initial intervention required is to form Self-Help Groups (SHGs) of the poor. Representatives from these SHGs as well as from other groups, come together to form Watershed Associations. These associations form ad hoc committees which take the initiative to involve all concerned in every stage of the programme. The SHGs are in a position to lobby for the poorer sectors and to ensure that they have a share in the benefits of the investment.

By 2002, MYRADA listed 3,547 self-help groups and 129 watershed development associations as its strategic partners.

Source: *Fernandez, 2001.*



interest groups so as to mobilize, plan, and manage programmes offered by these institutions for watershed development and for the development of weaker sections.

6. Network with other Watershed Management Associations and institutions involved in similar programmes so as to help the subgroups develop appropriate skills, etc.

COMMUNITY-BASED FOREST MANAGEMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES*

Community-based forest management (CBFM) constitutes a powerful paradigm that evolved out of the failure of state forest governance to ensure the sustainability of forest resources and the equitable distribution of access to and benefits from them. Acknowledging the role of commercial timber extraction, corruption, and ineffectual governance in creating the twin problems of forest degradation and upland poverty (Porter and Ganapin 1988; Repetto 1988; Kummer 1992), CBFM advocates the urgent need to empower and involve communities in forest management (Poffenberger 1990; PWG 1999). Espousing a participatory development paradigm, they maintain that forest protection and sustainable use can be more effectively achieved when local communities plan and implement these themselves instead of having the state, which has shown dismal performance, thus far, continue to do so on its own. It is believed that “responsiveness, effectiveness, and efficiency are optimally obtained when decisions, programs, and projects are done by those who should know them best—the people themselves” (PBSP 1994).

This movement toward local forest governance reflects national and international tendencies toward decentralization and devolution,

Box 11: Credit-support via local organizations

Since 1984-1985 MYRADA has fostered self-help groups (SHGs) of the rural poor. These groups not only manage credit, they also provide space for the poor to grow in skills and in confidence to make decisions regarding their lives. They are credit-plus institutions. In March 1999, there were 3,547 SHGs in MYRADA's projects with 70,457 members, managing a total fund of Rs. 228,956,704, of which Rs. 76,770,926 is savings and Rs. 24,255,494 is interest earned on lending. They have disbursed over 379,278 loans.



* The contents of this subsection are taken from Borlagdan, S.B., E.S. Guiang, and J.M. Pulhin. 2001. Community-based forest management in the Philippines: A preliminary assessment. Quezon City: Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University.

Forest-dependent communities have as large, or even a larger stake in sustainable forest management as the government bureaucracy for the simple reason that they depend on this resource base for their survival (Poffenberger 1990; Ascher 1995). In addition, living near or within forestlands, local communities are presumed to have greater knowledge and understanding of the terrain, the resources, and their constraints and opportunities (Korten 1986; Ascher 1995), and are presumably in a better position to respond quickly to such emergencies as fire outbreaks, encroachment, or timber poaching.

particularly in the field of natural resource management (Poffenberger 1990; Hobley 1996). It is a central feature of the international discourse on common pool resources, which encompasses concerns on property rights, collective action, and local institutions that sustain self-regulation (Bromley and Cernea 1989; Ostrom 1991; Agrawal and Ostrom 1999).

The success of CBFM efforts is hinged on how well communities have exercised their right not only to participate in forest governance but also to employ their internal cultural resources—such as

indigenous knowledge system and social organizations—toward attaining resource sustainability, as well as on how much space they are given for exercising this right.

This section is based on a more detailed report that looks into the phenomenon of community participation in forest management and governance in the Philippines, both within and outside the context of the government's CBFM program.

Underlying Assumptions

Taking into account the ecological, social, and policy imperatives mentioned above, the Philippines has pursued the following key strategies through its CBFM program:

1. Provision of tenure security over forestlands to forest communities through stewardship contracts and Community Based Forestry Management Agreements (CBFMAs), and to

“...CBFM efforts is hinged on how well communities have exercised their right not only to participate in forest governance but also to employ their internal cultural resources—such as indigenous knowledge...”

- indigenous peoples through Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claims (CADCs) now convertible under the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) into the Certificate of Ancestral Land Claim (CALC) or Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT);
2. Promotion of sustainable forestry and upland farming practices in a manner that offers both immediate and long-term benefits;
 3. Creation of POs, or strengthening of existing ones, in forest-dependent communities, which will serve as recipients of communal tenure, perform the role of overall resource managers, and support the sustainable resource use practices of their individual members;
 4. Forging of partnerships between and among POs, the national government through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), local government units (LGUs), NGOs, and other private and public groups in order to negotiate resource allocation, coordinate resource use activities, and facilitate the sharing of responsibilities, benefits, and costs of sustainable forest management; and
 5. Invitation for NGOs to participate in building the POs' capacity to plan and manage the use of their resources, and to mobilize and monitor their human and financial capital (DENR MC 97-13).

Under the CBFM Strategic Action Plan, community forest management plays a vital role in sustaining the supply of goods and services from natural resources to both on-site and off-site users owing to upstream-downstream interfaces (from upland to coastal areas, including the upper, middle, and lowland portions of the watersheds). Management of the uplands will benefit not only on-site communities but also downstream users of natural resources through sustained water supply; improved water quality; and reduced siltation in coastal areas. The plan upholds a holistic and systems approach to managing natural resources with careful consideration of externalities, interdependencies, interconnectedness, and complementarities. It is expected that strong and equitable economic activities in the lowlands will discourage migration to the uplands and conversion of fragile areas into cultivated farms.

The increase in the state allocation of forests and forestlands to upland communities and the recognition of indigenous people's ancestral domains happened only in the early 1990s to 1998. In the Philippines, the total area of forests and forestlands now under the "control" and responsibility of communities (because of their long-term tenure) is 3.8 times larger than that given to the private sector under various instruments. This is a total reversal of the situation in

the 1960s and 1970s with one big difference: the forests then were still intact and had high economic value. The area of 5.3 million hectares under communities is also larger than the total area of about 4.6 million hectares of forests and forestlands that have been set aside for “public good,” including protected areas, national parks, sanctuaries, wilderness, and watershed reservations (DENR 2000; Wallace 1993).

Increased Capacity for Self-organizing Toward Forest Management

The capacity of community organizations to protect, develop, and manage their forests and forestlands in the Philippines has reportedly improved and increased over time. This can be seen in the increased membership of POs, more organized and collective efforts toward enforcement and forest protection activities, emergence of community enterprises, increased individual farm development, greater environmental awareness, higher level of trust among members, development of training capabilities among farm-leaders, and creation and maintenance of community revolving funds. All this can be attributed to the project-related training and community organizing activities implemented in the sites. Further noted is the increased capacity of the community to negotiate with market players, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the LGUs.

“In the Philippines, the total area of forests and forestlands under the “control” and responsibility of communities (because of their long-term tenure) is 3.8 times larger than that given to the private sector under various instruments. This is a total reversal of the situation in the 1960s and 1970s with one big difference: the forests then were still intact and had high economic value. The area of 5.3 million hectares under communities is also larger than the total area of about 4.6 million hectares of forests and forestlands that have been set aside for “public good,” including protected areas, national parks, sanctuaries, wilderness, and watershed reservations.”

The capacity to be responsive of communities to protect, develop, and manage natural resource assets appear to hinge on several factors:

(1) effectiveness, sustainability, and commitment of support and service providers; (2) sound environmental governance that is anchored on consensus building, trust, complementation, and convergence of efforts, collaboration, and partnership at the local level; (3) enabling policies on tenure and resource use rights; (4) assistance in strengthening organizational capacities for supporting individual members' sustainable resource management efforts; (5) support for enhancing organizational capacity for financial and organizational management; and (6) tangible and sufficient economic returns of community forestry activities (Table 1).

Table 1. Major factors affecting sustainability.

Factor	Observations/Remarks
Community's capital build-up and saving mechanism.	The promotion and establishment of savings and credit systems to accumulate financial assets has not been a major focus in many nationally assisted projects.
Proper and transparent financial management system of the community organization.	This reflects the disappointment of many community organizations that have been deeply hurt by cooperative leaders suspected of squandering the POs' financial resources.
Stable tenure and resource use rights.	This is among the most dominant factors affecting sustainability in all sites.
Sound management of viable income-generating/livelihood projects.	This is another dominant factor affecting sustainability in all sites which can be addressed by the establishment of transparent financial management systems.
LGU support and continued assistance to communities.	This is another dominant factor affecting sustainability in all sites.
Opportunities and support for training and cross-farm visits.	Most of the earlier "technology-focused" sites find this approach very effective (Seymour 1985; DENR-RRDP 1990; DENR-UDP 1996).
High economic returns of sustainable resource management practices.	Considering the high incident of poverty in the uplands, the need for increased household income is a "higher-level" concern of participating community members (Balisacan 2000; World Bank 1991).

Community-building Needs of CBFM

Limited information exists on how community is actually defined on the ground in relation to the practice of CBFM. From the process

of defining “community” emerge the notion of organic and incipient community. Organic communities are a social group with commonalities in terms of history, interests, sense of identity, and locale or geographic setting. Examples of these are the *Ifugao* of Banaue, the *Ikalahan* of Sta. Fe, and the *Higaonon* of Minalwang, or upland communities of long standing (e.g., *Bulolacao* of Cebu). In contrast, incipient communities may have different ethnic backgrounds, may actually identify themselves only with their own (smaller) social group, and may actually be new to the place (e.g., migrants), but such characterization does not preclude the evolution of a community with a shared interest in managing a resource such as the forest. The development of “community-ness” remains a potential for these aggrupations.

Peoples Organizations (POs), which are the *de facto* “community” managers in most CBFM sites, are incipient communities. Thus, especially those in large CBFM areas spanning several barangays or municipalities, they are faced with daunting community organizing challenges, which include great heterogeneity of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, multiple and oftentimes conflicting social structures and political-economic interests, and varied indigenous resource management practices, not to mention large population sizes. More often than not, they lack the necessary organizational skills to steer different interests and voices toward one direction. Debilitating organizational problems and inadequate organizational capacities in many sites reflect the need for prior community building as contrasted with community mobilization.

“Peoples Organizations (POs), which are the *de facto* “community” managers in most CBFM sites, are incipient communities.

...faced with daunting community organizing challenges, which include great heterogeneity of ethnic and cultural backgrounds...”

CBFM Projects as Impetus to Community Building

For the POs, the total CBFM project package and the economic benefits it promises serve as the “binder” that holds the members

together. This contrasts sharply with organic communities, in which shared ethnicity, culture, history, identity, and locality act as the binder. This weak basis for “community-ness” makes PO-based communities extremely vulnerable to internal threats, whether in the form of initial indifference or skepticism toward the project, or conflicting views with regard to the way funds are to be used or accounted for.

A very serious drawback of this project-based definition of community is that, upon the termination of CBFM projects and the alternative sources of livelihood they provide, immature “communities” tend to become unglued. When this happens, the gains made from mobilizing collective action for resource management get compromised. It is not surprising, therefore, that group-based protection activities involving patrols have been known to decline, and illegal logging and forest destruction have reportedly resumed in vulnerable CBFM sites. Such vulnerability reflects the need for community organizers to attend to community cohesion, just as much as they need to focus on organizational capacity building in incipient communities.

“...POs representing communities of long standing or organic communities—that is, with historical and cultural ties among the members and self-regulating institutions which together make up the “social capital”—tend to exhibit greater resilience.”

In turn, POs representing communities of long standing or organic communities—that is, with historical and cultural ties among the members and self-regulating institutions which together make up the “social capital”—tend to exhibit greater resilience.

The CBFM experience provides opportunities for capacity building, especially through planning, implementation and evaluation, mobilization of internal resources, policymaking or rule setting and enforcement, financial management, and linking for resource access.

Interest and Incentives

In a workshop organized with a wide range of groups in the Philippines on Community-Based Strategies for Natural Resource Management, the participants representing POs, NGOs, and national

government agencies (NGAs) identified community and environmental issues and concerns related to natural resource management, as follows:

1. resource depletion and habitat destruction;
2. competition for resources;
3. land tenure and landownership;
4. support services and LGU support;
5. economic opportunities and alternatives;
6. institutional and management capability concerns; and
7. population growth and concomitant pressure on resources (VSO-P, FPE, and NIPA 1999).

The above concerns explain many of the key incentives that different stakeholder groups, except donor agencies and coastal residents, have for engaging in the community-based management of their natural resources, including forest resources (Guiang et al. 2001), see Table 2.

Table 2. Stakeholders and key incentives in community-based forestry management.

Stakeholder groups	Key incentives
Indigenous peoples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognition (tenure) of customary rights to their lands and natural resources • capacity building for community enterprises • access to infrastructure (roads and bridges) • provision of social infrastructure (education, health, welfare)
Upland farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tenure (communal or defined individual property rights) over their occupied/cultivated lands • use rights over natural resources, particularly forest products • access to infrastructure (roads and bridges) • capacity building for community organizations and enterprises • technical assistance in the application of appropriate upland production technologies
LGUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased and expanded constituency base • increased revenues, financial capacity, and improved efficiency • reclassification of LGUs to a higher category
NGA field offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • capacity building to improve existing skills and knowledge • opportunity to focus on the provision of technical support to communities rather than impose and implement centrally designed programs and projects
NGOs/civil society groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opportunities to participate in local governance structures; advocacy, and capacity building of communities
Academic/research and training institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opportunities to participate (and be strengthened) in capacity building exercises
Private sector (firms/individuals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduced transaction costs in doing business • predictable and stable supply of natural resource products and services • reduced cost of marketing and processing these products and services

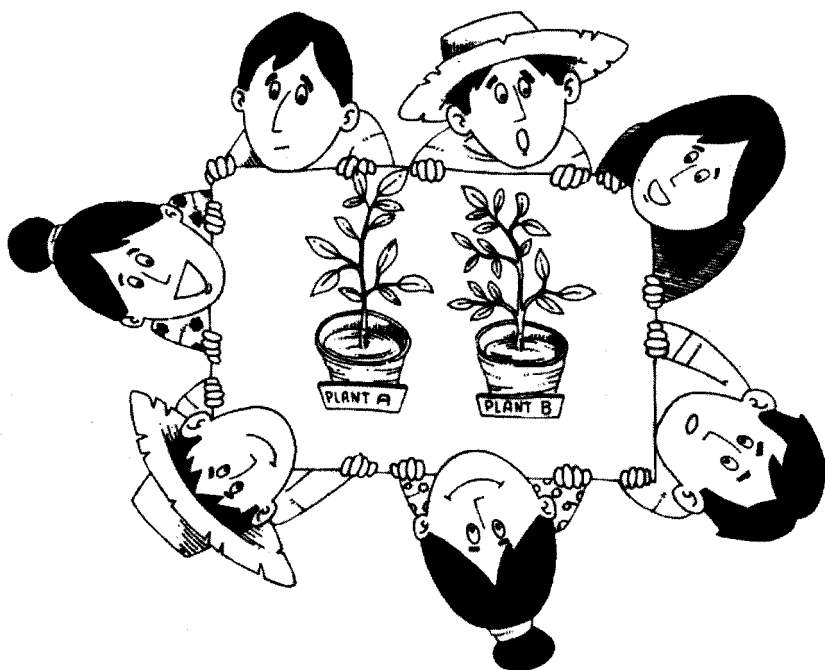
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Section 4:

Research and Farmer Organizations



Public sector research and extension in developing countries should be responsive to the technological needs of small-scale farmers. Farmers need to be involved in identifying potential technologies and in its transfer. Research institutions should prioritize farmer's agendas and priorities.

FARMER PARTICIPATION IN TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFER*

In spite of advocacy and efforts to reorient institutional research to farmer-oriented research, nothing significant has taken place. Researchers are still accountable to their institutes rather than to farmers. Here, the scientific objectives of researchers often outweigh the production or livelihood objectives of farmers. In such cases, bringing farmers'

* The contents of this subsection are taken from the International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR). 1994. Briefing paper no. 15, Report to a workshop: Strengthening the role of farmers' organizations in technology development and transfer.

organizations into research, as active partners, entails institutional changes in the research institutions themselves. Similarly, farmers' organizations must critically review how they organize, conduct, and assess their work.

Experience indicates that small-scale, poor farmers cannot continue to rely solely on the goodwill of public sector organizations. Rather, organizations representing these farmers must be strengthened so that they can exert an effective demand for agriculture-related services and become active partners in the process of technological change. Below is an experience of the *Comite de Investigacion Agricola* or CIAL (Local Agricultural Research Committee) on when farmers are scientists. It offers insights into how the goals of farmers can be brought center-stage with the use of farmer-centered institutional options.

Box 12: Types of research

Research is an endeavor to increase knowledge and understanding. We may distinguish different types of knowledge, such as:

- ❖ explanatory knowledge - why do certain systems or interventions work under specific circumstances
- ❖ technology - what to do to achieve specified outcome
- ❖ management knowledge - how to decide on appropriateness of possible interventions

The CIAL method presented here has been geared to "technology testing".

Source: Van-Noordwijk, 2003 (personal communication).



THE CIAL EXPERIENCE*

Recognition that local knowledge systems, backed by formal science, can be a powerful tool for socio-economic progress is at the root of a bold experiment in participatory research that the *Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical* (CIAT) or International Centre for Tropical Agriculture launched 11 years ago in Colombia. Their

“...250 farmer-research committees are currently operating in Latin America...”

* The contents of this subsection are taken from (1) Ashby, J.A., A.R. Braun, T. Gracia, M. del Pilar Guerrero, L.A. Hernandez, C.A. Quiros, and J.I. Roa. 2000. Investing in farmers as researchers: experience with local agricultural research committees in Latin America. Cali, Colombia: Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical; (2) CIAT in perspective 2001-2002: from risk to resilience. Cali, Colombia: CIAT. September 2002.

system of local agricultural research committees, or CIALs, has since spread to seven other Latin American countries. As a vehicle for rural empowerment, it has been embraced by hundreds of farming communities, who helped CIAT refine the system. But, it is also being adopted as an organizational model by Research and Development organizations that support farmers.

CIAL is an agricultural research service owned by and accountable to the community, usually at the village level. Local citizens elect a small group of farmers known for their ability and interest in experimentation and their community spirit. Through public meetings, the community diagnoses the priority problem or issue to be tackled. The CIAL then carries out the experiments to establish the best technical options for farmers. Technicians from a public agency or NGO advise the farmers on experiment design and results analysis. In some cases, farmers trained as paraprofessional researchers serve this function. Research results are systematically reported back to the community by CIAL members.

Box 13: Benefits from CIAL

- ❖ increased local capacity in formal research methods;
- ❖ improved local planning, management, and organizational skills;
- ❖ higher crop yields;
- ❖ more local experimentation with soil conservation practices;
- ❖ higher biodiversity in cropping systems;
- ❖ improved access to credit; greater availability of improved seed;
- ❖ improved food security establishment of small enterprises;
- ❖ increased social status of women and other marginalized groups; and
- ❖ improved access to formal research services and products.



The Research Focus

CIAL experiments with locally unknown and unproven farming methods comparing them with established practices. They begin in situations where neither scientists nor the farmers can confidently say whether an innovation will be appropriate for a specific location. So, CIAL dwells on alternatives coming from the farming community or from the formal research or may be a hybrid of the two. Results and findings are reported by the committee through information formats useful to the community of farmers.

The Community and the Process

- **Motivation** – The facilitator invites the entire community for a meeting. A venue for laying out CIAL ground rules. This involves initial information exchange on the community's research needs on farming technologies. More importantly, the interest of the community to start a CIAL is confirmed and established.
- **Election** – This involves the selection of the four-member team of the committee. Selection criteria include community-mindedness and an interest in experimentation. Committee members have a one-year service tenure. Volunteers also assist the committee.
- **Diagnosis** – At this point, the facilitator and the committee focus on the research topic. The discussion is geared on identifying and examining the research topic based on chances of success, benefits, and cost.
- **Planning** – This involves preparing on how to undergo the research on the chosen topic. This identifies the following:
 - objectives of the experiment
 - treatments and control
 - materials and methods to be used
 - data to be collected
 - criteria for evaluating results
- **Experimentation** – The CIAL members implement the experiment using the CIAL funds.
- **Evaluation** – With the facilitator, the CIAL committee evaluates the data collected. Conclusions are drawn and preparations are made to present results to the community.
- **Analysis** – At this stage, the CIAL members process among themselves what they learned from the research. This is important especially when new crops fail or the experiment produces unexpected results.
- **Feedback** – Through community meetings, CIAL activities, results, and expenditures are presented. If

Box 14: CIAL fund

Partner organizations share the risks of research with communities by providing seed money to establish the CIAL fund. Launching a CIAL program also requires investment in training staff to facilitate the CIAL process effectively.

The cost of establishing and facilitating a CIAL are highest during the first year, when most of the investment in training is made and the CIAL fund is launched.



the CIAL feels confident of the results, they make recommendations based on these results. The community also decides whether the CIAL should continue with the experiment, switch to a new topic, or cease its activities altogether.

The Members

- Leader – a recognized dynamic member of the local community;
- Treasurer – manages the CIAL finances;
- Secretary – takes minutes of meetings, records data, and writes CIAL's reports; and
- Communicator – disseminates the results of the CIAL's research and advises those who wish to test or adopt them.

Each CIAL is supported by an external facilitator. He or she can be an agronomist, a paraprofessional from formal research organizations or nongovernment organization. He or she periodically visits the community. The facilitator is tasked with the following:

- introduces the CIAL idea and advises on its implementation;
- provides training techniques on participatory and adaptive research; and
- establishes and maintains links with the formal research and development (R&D) system.

Delivering a Research Service

What constitutes an effective research service, and how can this be assessed? A process in which the human being as the chief variable does not lend itself to empirical analysis and the easy certainties of laboratory research. The CIAT team has met this challenge by devising a special survey. It measures three sets of indicators, marking different stages or milestones along the CIAL's road to success:

- **Capacity to conduct experiments systematically.** This is measured through assessing CIAL members' understanding of the research process. Members should be able to explain objectives of the research, grasped the experimental design, know why there are controls and replications. Moreover, they should appreciate the need to manage risk when testing new ideas.
- **Capacity for self-management.** The indicators are designed to assess the ability of the CIAL to run its own affairs independent of external support. The members should have the confidence

Box 15. Adoption, adaptation, and impact

For a technology such as the use of a new rice cultivar, adoption can be easily measured and quantified (e.g., by the number of farmers involved, the area planted, the average yield obtained, and the change in yield relative to the “baseline”).

In natural resource management we cannot easily replicate this type of impact assessment, much to the regret of donor organizations. A key element in NRM is that activities have to be adjusted and adapted to the local circumstances—so it is not so much an issue of recording what farmers do as it is of how appropriate that specific action is. NRM practices need to be modified to suit local needs—and this may defy the definitions and classifications needed to monitor how much adaptation and innovation is “allowed” while the technology keeps the same name. Should we therefore assess the understanding the farmer has and the way he or she adjusts to local circumstances, rather than recording activities per se?

Castañó et al. (2002) proposed to walk the middle ground between using a narrow definition of adoption of soil conservation technologies (which allows for counting procedures to take place) and a fully flexible approach that focuses on farmers’ ideas and learning. In their experience, a typology of broad categories of how farmers are likely to (be able to) invest in soil and land conservation can help to understand the type of outside support and ideas that can really contribute to change on the ground.

Source: van Noordwijk, 2003 (personal communication).



and accountability to administer their own funds, ability to resolve conflicts, achieve group cohesiveness, ability to seek external support directly.

- **Strong ties between the CIAL and the community and with formal research and development institutions.** These relationships, which become important as the CIAL approaches maturity, enable the CIAL to disseminate its results and to express demand for products and services of formal research and extension. The indicators of this milestone is the adoption of CIAL technologies by the community, the amount of experimentation carried out in the community by non-CIAL members, changes in the attitude of R&D professionals interacting with CIAL, and use of CIAL’s research results by R&D organizations.

Institutional Sustainability

Sustaining the CIAL process is a different challenge from replicating it, though the two overlap. How can CIAL wean themselves from dependency on external support?

Newly formed CIALs can be highly dependent on their facilitator. This may incur high start-up costs. As they mature, the committees become more self-sustaining but not wholly self-sufficient. While depending less on external support for mere survival, they may have even greater need of external inputs and services in order to prosper, especially as they become more market-oriented. This is a critical distinction, since the role of a healthy CIAL in actively demanding such inputs and services is quite different from the passive dependence on handouts that characterizes conventional projects and moribund CIALs.

Box 16: Moving to the next level

With the effectiveness of the CIAL method now well established, CIAT has turned attention in recent years to second-generation issues. These institutionalization aspects include the financial and social sustainability of existing CIALs, mechanisms for scaling up the method to achieve wider impact in Latin America and beyond.



Of the various institutional options for accessing and channeling support, one of the most attractive is a well-endowed second-order organization with strong links to the national research and extension system. The challenge is how to create such organizations.

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Section 5:

Building Social Capital and Strengthening Partnerships



A recent study focused on social capital and learning among institutions engaged in upland resource management in Claveria, Misamis Oriental, Philippines. Specifically, it explored social capital, dynamics and processes of transformational learning among actors involved in a partnership of a nongovernmental organization, local government units, and a people's organization (NGO-LGUs-PO).

The contents of this section are from taken Sabio, Eduardo A. 2002. *Social capital and transformative learning: linkages and dynamics in inter-organizational relations within the landcare approach in the Philippines*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University.

Box 17: What is social capital?

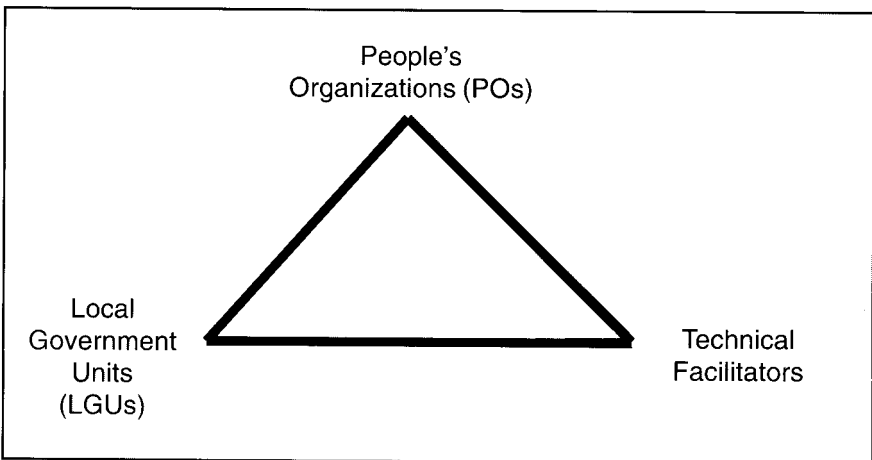
Social capital refers to those stocks of social trust, norms, and networks that people can draw upon to solve common problems. It is a resource with multiple functions. It improves the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action and a key to making democracy work (Putnam 1993, 1995). In the family and community level, social capital aids in the formation of human capital (Coleman 1988, 1998), and in maintaining or changing one's position in a hierarchical social structure (Bourdieu 1986, 1990, 1993). Also, in inter-organizational relationships, social capital could facilitate transformative learning among the actors (Sabio 2002).



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The landcare approach undertaken in Claveria involved three groups of actors: the local government units (municipal council and *barangay* councils), the people's organization (Claveria Landcare Association or CLCA—federation, chapters, and sub-chapters), and the technology facilitators (ICRAF with Municipal Agriculture Office). Depicted in a triangle, the partnership centered on addressing soil erosion and environmental degradation.

Figure 6. Landcare approach triangle.



Ten elements (Figure 7) of social capital emerged from the examination of the collaborative process, using the grounded theory methodology. These are:

- communication and coordination;
- convergence of intentions/common goals;
- rewards and recognition;
- sanctions;
- leadership and authority;
- participation;
- collective action;
- network;
- interdependence; and
- reciprocity.

Figure 7. A social capital concept-map in the Landcare approach in the Philippines (Sabio 2002).



Communication and coordination, largely through group meetings, connected the actors and served as the “glue”. Leadership and authority roles assumed by the *barangay* council and CLCA officers contributed significantly to the levels of collaboration, though this varied from *barangay* to *barangay*. Those with strong collaboration used more collective activities and actions to achieve the desired objectives.

The CLCA federation, its chapters, and sub-chapters constituted a three-tiered people's organization forming a network wherein the flow of communication proceeded in vertical and horizontal directions among the officers and members. The different tasks, such as needs assessment, planning, mobilization, resource provision, and technical support, were performed with partners according to their comparative advantages. The three major actors and stakeholders were interdependent in performing tasks yielding mutual benefits. There was the element of 'give and take' (reciprocity) among the stakeholders rendering the relationship cohesive and collaborative. The concept map in Figure 7 illustrates how the different elements of social capital contributed to the collaborative behavior among landcare stakeholders.

PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATIVE LEARNING, AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

The information and data generated in the study showed that the influence of social capital was not confined to the inter-agency collaboration alone.

“Partnership was a key ingredient in landcare since the approach involved different stakeholders and actors working together toward a common goal in a mutually reinforcing manner.

The relationship was characterized by 'give and take' (reciprocity) with benefits accruing to the three groups of stakeholders.”

Partnership was a key ingredient in landcare since the approach involved different stakeholders and actors working together toward a common goal in a mutually reinforcing manner. This collaborative set-up improved relationships among actors and enabled mutual learning to happen. Learning did not happen if tasks were done separately or individually.

Partnership in the landcare approach is best featured as a triadic collaboration between farmers, local government officials, and technologists. Each one assumed a (non-duplicating) role creating space for

complementation of resources and capacities. The relationship was characterized by 'give and take' (reciprocity) with benefits accruing to the three groups of stakeholders.

These 10 elements found in Figure 7 of social capital contributed to the formation of collaborative behavior among the landcare implementers. Communication and coordination provided the glue that bound the three actors together. While the other elements of social capital were equally important, farmers, technologists, and local government officials regarded communication and coordination as vital to triggering the creation of and strengthening of the other elements. The *degree of collaboration* indicated the level of social capital situated in the relationships of partners. Social capital resides in relationships. The degree of collaboration is a promising measurement of social capital.

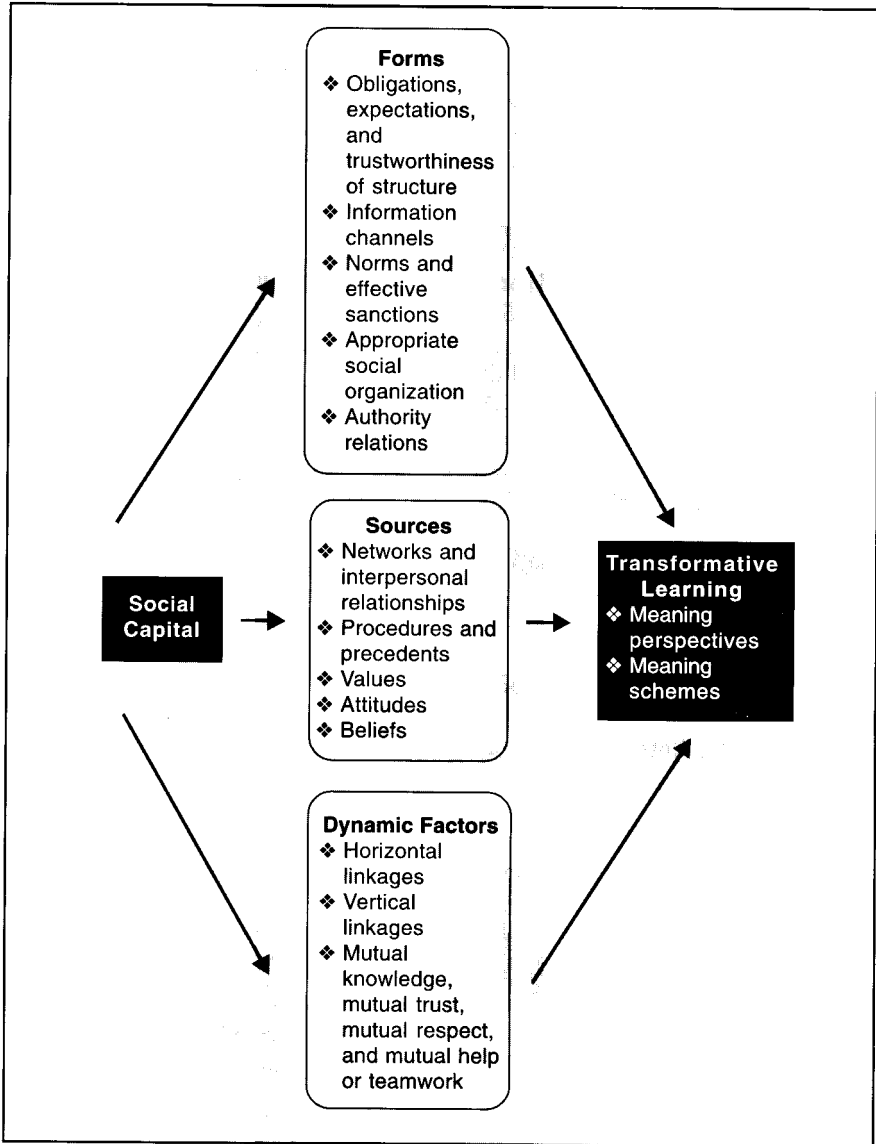
The cooperative atmosphere within the landcare partnership fostered an open mind and taught professionals the value of humility. Listening became a trait, leading to discovery of information and knowledge that sometimes challenged deeply held beliefs and assumptions. The pressures created by the obligation to produce results and justify use of resources brought about changes among the partners.

Moreover, Figure 8 illustrates the process of transformative learning as related to social capital. Hence, transformative learning is defined as a process by which we call into question our taken for granted frames of reference (habits of mind or mindsets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action (International Conference on Transformative Learning, 2000).

Transformative learning deals with two elements:

- Meaning perspectives - the structure of cultural and psychological assumptions within which new experience assimilated to, and transformed by one's past experiences (Mezirow 1991).
- Meaning schemes - the constellation of concept, belief, judgment, and feeling which shape a particular interpretation (Mezirow 1991). Meaning schemes are the specific manifestations of our meaning perspectives.

Figure 8. Forms, sources, and dynamic factors of social capital.



Social capital is always to be considered an asset. It is a critically important factor in decentralized natural resources management. The existence of social capital should not be taken for granted as it may not always be present. More often than not it might have to be nurtured.

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Section 6:

Building Civil Society at the Grassroots



Community organizing work of NGOs has spanned 20 years. This long period of time incurred discoveries, continuing process, and now reorientation. The learning process has been marked by changes in NGOs understanding of CO work in their relationships with partner organizations and with their communities. The reviews and refinements remained unfinished and the maturation process is still ongoing. The key point is that in the processes of community organizing and intervention work, people come out stronger and less vulnerable. Eventually, less dependent than those who presume to help them.

The contents of this section are taken from Francisco, Oscar D. 1997. *Building civil society at the grassroots: The Philippine organizing experience*, pp. 83-103. In Ferrer, M. (ed). 1997. *Philippine democracy agenda: civil society making civil society* (Volume 3). Quezon City: UP Third World Studies Center.

GOALS OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

Community organizing (CO) is a collective activity essentially concerned with empowering society's marginalized sectors. Relatively, it is building permanent structures of people's power. People can accumulate power through their own concerted action. This process links the major goals of community organizing—ameliorative, emancipatory, and creative.

- **Ameliorative goals** address what is immediate, direct, and recuperative. These provide for "felt needs" or life's essentials. But merely doing so is inadequate.
- **Emancipatory goals** promote procedures, mechanics, structures and values of democracy, and critical thought and practices that bring out the autonomy and creativity in people.
- **Creative goals** refer to building alternative social formations to stabilize the gains and benefits of the people's work together. Something relevant and responsive to their own needs and aspirations.

TRENDS IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

For the last 10 years, social movement frontliners such as nongovernmental organizations or NGOs have been dominated by political parties and formations. As events evolved, these NGOs have undergone a process of being independent from political movements. They emerge to build their own capabilities and chart their orientation and strategy.

At present, there is a level of unity and clarity among a large section of the progressive movement of NGOs, POs, and non-party political movements in the strategy and tactics of debate/dialogue-negotiate/coordinate with government while maintaining their independent work and critical stance towards the latter's growth-oriented development strategy. This conclusion is being made without denying the assertions of the movement that there are NGOs, POs, and coalitions which have adopted the political strategy of outright collaboration or total opposition vis-à-vis government.

CO APPROACHES

- **Socioeconomic project approach.** The CO process begins by developing projects such as appropriate technology, health, savings mobilization, etc. It aims to make the participants aware

of the value of collective action as well as for the participants to immediately benefit from the project.

- **Issue-based approach.** The CO process begins by addressing the most widely felt problems in the community which could range from poor water supply and lack of access to health services to low prices of farm produce and unjust tenancy relations and land monopoly.

Over the years, these approaches have evolved. It is not anymore a question of which approach is desirable or viable but how to best combine these two as well as the other approaches so as to hasten community organizing and community development as a whole.

CO PRINCIPLES, PROCESSES, AND METHODS

1. Promote the process of people's empowerment in all spheres—political, economic, cultural, etc. Without this, especially at the grassroots level, any commitment to democratization and development is formalistic and hollow.
2. Start with local issues and felt needs.
3. Employs the progressive cycle of action-reflection-action and consciousness-raising through experiential learning.

PO-NGO RELATIONSHIPS

Genuine partnership is the desired relationship between POs and NGOs as well as between COs and the community leaders. During the early stages of community organizing, the COs do most of the work. However, as progress is made, the community must increasingly assume the bulk of work and responsibility of community organizing and development. Therefore, the challenge is how to prepare leaders and members of POs to be leaders in the community from the very start of the CO processes.

COs are trained to be aware of the changing dynamics in their relationship with PO leaders and members as well as to the bigger community. This helps the COs guard themselves into tendencies of monopolizing the CO processes and making PO leaders and members dependent on them.

In some cases, POs and NGOs tend to compete with funds. As POs learn to be independent, they become stronger and able to source their own funds.

THE SEARCH FOR A VIABLE SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT

NGOs are in a better position given their close links with the grassroots to evaluate development strategies and link up with national and global trends. The challenge is in “scaling-up” development activities by NGOs-POs and in enhancing popular participation and influencing governance. The question is how to do this especially on a scale that is sustainable.

There are two arising issues here:

1. Locating the level and scale of economic and political interventions which could broaden initial successes to the point of being able to impact microlevel structures.
2. The types of intervention which must be undertaken to promote a positive environment for development work as a whole.

CO IN INTEGRATED AREA DEVELOPMENT

Many NGOs and POs have started to pursue work with government through tripartite arrangements. Integrated area development as a strategy goes by many names: (1) sustainable integrated area development; (2) community organizing-community development; (3) community organizing-area development. This strategy is about effecting sustainable ground-level changes with potential impact on national structures and processes. These changes are not dependent on macro-level changes. What matters is the accumulation of qualitative changes in the relations and structures in small contiguous communities. Community organizing that facilitates the formation of people’s organizations and leaders is a crucial component of the integrated area development strategy.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The following are the four major issues:

- how to achieve balance handling of local and national issues;
- the soundness of using economic projects as CO entry points;
- sustaining people’s organizations; and
- how community organizers (COs) are to phase out/pull out from an organizing area.

WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT

Since many COs and trainers are used to dealing with government as adversary, working with government as partner does not come easily.

Community organizers guard their autonomy jealously. It is not surprising to find COs grappling with “primordial” fear of being co-opted by the government on one hand, and on the other, a rational assessment of the doability of certain reforms when worked out with government people. The challenge lies on the COs and development workers to be better prepared to deal with government and to employ the appropriate tactics to achieve their goals.

LINKING LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND GLOBAL MOVEMENTS

Community organizers continue to emphasize work in local communities. A greater need is in assisting these local communities in building capacities to understand and respond to issues of globalization. Particular effort is needed in building national and regional networks of exchange among community organizers along with a unified platform of action.

COs should think and act locally, nationally, and globally. Issues of justice are interconnected. To be effective in our organizing work, actions and struggles for justice have to be pursued on the local, national, and global levels. Actions must be responsive of the changing contexts in Asia and the world. COs must be informed of the impact of these changes on the people’s movement.

SUSTAINABILITY OF CO PROGRAMS

Sustaining CO programs means the following:

1. securing funds on a long-term basis;
2. building competency in a particular area of concern; and
3. taking care of COs and PO leaders.

As more and more NGOs and POs emerge, securing funds increasingly becomes a question of packaging project proposals and becoming competent in at least one important line of work. Some NGOs even started engaging in income-generating enterprises to help build long-term financial security. Taking care of COs means allowing for growth and nourishment of the spirit and soul in the form of training programs, retreats, camaraderie, solidarity, etc. As to PO leaders, it is finding themselves with less time to devote to earning a living and being with their families. The financial and psychical needs of “full time leaders” must be met.

What are the important tasks to push forward rural organizing?

1. **Continuing training in community organizing.** This concerns how to develop and nurture POs and COs in the long-term. This can be both built-in or integral to the program of NGOs and POs, and a joint effort of organizations working for rural development.
2. **Continuing grassroots leadership formation.** Parallel to COs formation program should be PO leadership formation program. This aims to improve the quality of individual and collective leadership in the grassroots. It is all about new skills and knowledge. More importantly, being conscious of the dynamics of community organizing and the changing relations in the community.
3. **Popular education for rural communities.** Learning is facilitated by reading, travel, interaction, training program, and other methods not necessarily part of the CO cycle. This aims to provide leaders, organizers, and PO members access to information and new knowledge and skills. This information can better themselves as individuals and as a community.
4. **Defined and monitored stages of CO intervention.** A monitoring and evaluation system needs to be installed. The information herewith can help describe the various stages in community organizing, the quantitative and qualitative targets per stage, the type of intervention demanded, and timeframe involved. The system is open for validation of community partners.
5. **Development of organizing teams.** This concept helps put together organizers who, individually, might not have all-around qualities and skills, but as a team would complement and sustain each other.
6. **Developing minimum performance standards and indicators.** It is desired that development work be considered a full-fledged profession. Hence, developing minimum performance standards and indicators will enable development programs to systematically and rationally evaluate their trainees, organizers, and trainers. This will also help development practitioners to gauge their own growth as professionals in the business of facilitating social change.
7. **Ensuring long-term funding support for CO work.** NGOs and POs need access to funds committed to more long-term grassroots work. Three years project time is not enough to build and test people's attitudes, skills, and knowledge needed to sustain and build on their earlier gains.

8. **Rigorous theory work.** There is a need to address more theoretical aspects on development work. Similarly, additional effort is needed to clarify perspectives. Undertaking serious theory work will help ensure that organizing will not become a routine as organizers accumulate experiences.

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conclusion

Governments as well as donors increasingly realize the importance and benefits of transferring control over natural resources to local bodies and resource users. Institutional innovations are considered as important as the technological innovations especially those that are farmer-led and managed can serve as effective mechanisms to address equity issues. Local institutions are assets. Effective local institutions take better advantage of existing programs and resources. Local institutions can consist of thousands of small informal self-help groups or mutual help groups. They can be more structured and formal at higher levels in the local institution hierarchy. But cooperation and networking is critical if not essential and should be across social, political, and natural resource boundaries. Only then will a truly effective and sustainable force be unleashed to address decades of neglect of the poor in the upland of Asia.

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