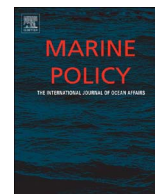




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An analysis of livelihood projects and programs for fishing communities in the Philippines



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ABSTRACT

Over the last 30 years, a range of different livelihoods have been provided and implemented in fishing and coastal communities in the Philippine with mixed success and sustainability by the fisher and household. This paper reports on an analysis of livelihood projects for fishing communities and households implemented in the Philippines and the identification of lessons learned and factors which can lead to an improved success and sustainability rate for livelihood projects and programs. The analysis identified primary factors that are critical to improving the success and sustainability rate of livelihood interventions.

1. Introduction

Moving toward improved fisheries management, such as an ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM), may require a reduction or redirection of fishing effort, making it necessary for fishers and their households to find alternative, supplemental or enhanced livelihood activities [1]. Impacts may occur to fishing operations and changes may be expected in, for example, existing livelihoods and income levels of fishery participants and their families and other resource users, the skills base of employees, and the degree of dependence on the fishery or ecosystem [2,3]. Impacts may affect those in the supply chain such as the boat and gear makers and post-harvest operators. There can also be major and secondary and gender-related impacts on community employment. For example, fisheries management decisions may affect postharvest processing of fish and fishery products and marketing, in which women often play predominant roles. The implications will differ from location to location within a country depending upon the level of economic dependence of people on fisheries and the availability of supplemental and alternative livelihoods. Having alternatives to fishing that locally generate income and food can reduce the pressure to exploit local resources. When fishers and communities have few if any economic alternatives, it will be difficult to institute effective fishery management involving constraints on fishing, since the impacts of such decisions may be unacceptably severe.

Despite calls for a more holistic and integrated approach [4],

conventional fisheries management practices have been largely unable – with some notable exceptions – to incorporate the development of livelihood alternatives into fishery policy and management practices. To some extent, this can be blamed on the overemphasis within fisheries on the narrow “fish and fleet” perspective. However, there are often also significant jurisdictional obstacles in place [5]. For example, the agency charged with fishery management may completely lack the mandate or capacity to consider livelihood-focused measures, such as the support for employment alternatives outside the fisheries sector. Furthermore, the structures needed to coordinate among sectoral agencies could be weak, hindering the creation of, for example, community livelihood and economic development plans or regional economic policies and implementation.

However, it should be noted that although the existence of livelihood/employment alternatives beyond the fishery could be a crucial factor in maintaining the health of a fishery and its ecosystem, the creation of such alternatives is difficult to accomplish in practice [6–8]. The introduction of new activities into a local economy could involve a difficult economic restructuring process, requiring major investments, and leading to changes of traditional practices. Furthermore, the sustainability over time of such alternatives is by no means assured. Thus, efforts to develop livelihood opportunities must not be seen as a panacea to solving fishery problems. Nevertheless, the broadened perspective inherent in improved fisheries management, such as EAFM, requires a holistic approach to addressing the needs of individuals, households and communities and should support their development of

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sustainable portfolios of livelihood sources [6].

Over the last 30 years, a range of different livelihoods have been provided and implemented in fishing and coastal communities in the Philippines with mixed success and sustainability by the fisher and household [9]. It is estimated by the authors that no higher than 15–20% of livelihood interventions are successful and sustainable; that is, that the interventions are still maintained by the recipients one year after the project ends. For example, seaweed farming has found success in many locations when different variables for success and sustainability have been present, such as ideal growing conditions, access to markets, and proper training. Agricultural practices, such as animal husbandry, have also been tried with mixed success. However, these few alternative livelihood options may not be an appropriate alternative for every household. It is critical that the success and sustainability rate of livelihood projects and programs be improved to support both fisher households and improved fisheries management.

The purpose of this paper is to report on the results of an analysis of livelihood projects for fishing communities and households implemented in the Philippines and the identification of lessons learned and factors which can lead to an improved success and sustainability rate for livelihood projects and programs. While the literature has discussed approaches to sustainable livelihoods [7,8] much less has been written about actual lessons learned from implementation of livelihood programs and projects.

2. Methodology

A number of livelihood interventions were implemented in coastal communities in the Philippines over the last 30 years under a variety of programs and projects. They were implemented not just through fisheries programs and projects, but under a number of others ranging from gender to microenterprise. From over 100 programs and projects identified, a small sample of 15 projects and programs were selected for analysis (Table 1). They were chosen on the basis of the availability of information (e.g., terminal report, evaluation reports, and other secondary data sources available), scope (national, regional or specific locations), components (livelihood provision as a major component or strategy), budget and source of funds (external with or without local counterpart), and years of implementation (spread from late 1980s to recent years). Most of these projects were: (1) externally funded with or without local counterpart; (2) implemented by one national government agency with or without collaboration with other national government agencies and/or in partnership with local governments and/or non-government agencies or civil society groups; (3) implemented nationwide, region-wide or in specific local government units (LGUs) in the country; implemented with livelihood provision as the goal or as a strategy towards attaining a goal (e.g. poverty alleviation, resource management); (4) implemented with livelihood as main component or one of the components; (5) implemented at one time or in phases; (6) implemented with the fishers as the main target beneficiaries; (7) implemented for the rural poor, or the poor, vulnerable and marginalized sector.

Secondary data on livelihood programs and projects in the Philippines was collected through internet search and through contact with government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and donors/funding agencies. Interviews were conducted with their staff to obtain additional information on the selected projects and programs and on specific livelihood interventions.

Content analysis was used to analyze the data [10–15]. Content analysis is a research technique used to make replicable and valid inferences by interpreting and coding textual material. By systematically evaluating texts (e.g., documents, books, oral communication, interviews, and graphics), qualitative data can be converted into quantitative data. Researchers quantify and analyze the presence, meanings and relationships of such words and concepts, then make inferences about the messages within the texts. To conduct a content

Table 1

Selected livelihood projects and programs in the Philippines.

Fishery Sector Program (FSP) (1989–1996; 12 bays). Loan grant from the Asian Development Bank and the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund of Japan with the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) as the lead implementing agency.
Fishery Resource Management Project (FRMP) (1998–2006; 18 bays/gulfs). Funded through Asian Development Bank (ADB) and JICA loans with counterpart from the national government and local government units (LGUs) with the DA-BFAR as the lead implementing agency.
Sustainable Management Coastal Resources Project (SUMACORE) 2007–2010; Region V (Bicol), Albay Province and in Region XIII (Caraga), province of Surigao del Sur). Funded by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECID), with local counterparts. DA-BFAR was the lead implementing agency, with the provinces and municipal local governments.
Integrated Coastal Resource Management Project (ICRMP) (2007–2014; Regions 2, 3, 4B, 5, 7, and 11). Funded through the ADB loan, Global Environment Facility (GEF) grant and with counterpart from the national government. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) as the lead implementing agency.
Rural Microenterprise Promotion Program (RuMEPP) (2007–2013; Cordillera Autonomous Region, Regions 5, 8, 12 and 13). RuMEPP was funded through a loan from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) with 20% of the total project cost shared by Small Business Corporation, Micro-Financing Institutions (MFIs) and IFAD grant. The main implementing agencies were the Small Business Corporation (SBC) and the Department of Trade and Industry.
Gender-Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of Women (GREAT Women) Project (2006–2011; Bohol, Davao del Sur, Ifugao, Iloilo, Leyte, Camarines Sur, North Cotabato and Quezon). Funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) with implementation by the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW).
Regional Fisheries Livelihoods Program (RFLP) (2009–2013; Dipolog and Dapitan Cities; Zamboanga del Norte). Funding support from Spanish Agency for International Cooperation. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in partnership with DA-BFAR led project implementation.
Livelihood Enhancement for Agricultural Development Program (LEAD) . The National Agricultural and Fisheries Council (NAFC) implemented the project in both phases: LEAD 2000 Phase I (1995–1999) and LEAD 2000 Phase II (2000–2010). Implemented in regions 4 A, 4B, 5, 7, 8, 11 and 13. Assistance of regional agricultural fishery councils (AFCs), local government units and DA regional field implementing units.
Mindanao Rural Development Program 1 (MRDP 1) 2000–2004; five provinces in Mindanao). Funded through Adaptable Program Loans (APLs) from the World Bank and national and local government counterparts. The lead implementing agency was the Department of Agriculture.
Mindanao Rural Development Project 2 (MRDP 2) (2007–2012; 26 provinces in Mindanao). Funded through Adaptable Program Loans (APLs) from the World Bank and national and local government counterparts. The lead implementing agency was the Department of Agriculture.
Community-Based Rural Tourism Project (CBRT) (2004–2016; provinces of Guimaras and Pangasinan as pilot sites). Funded by the national government with the Department of Tourism as the lead implementing agency.
DOLE Integrated Livelihood and Emergency Employment Program (DILEEP) (2010–2016). Funded by the national government with the Department of Labor and Employment's (DOLE) as the lead implementing agency.
Social Transformation and Grassroots Empowerment (STAGE) Program (Ongoing since 1997). Implemented by the Institute of Social Order of Ateneo de Manila University with various donor funds in Bicol Region and Quezon Province.
Livelihood programs by the Center for Empowerment and Resource Development, Inc. (CERD Inc.) . CERD is a local non-governmental organization (NGO) operating in Samar and Surigao del Sur with various donor funds.
Programs of Sentro para sa Ikaunlad ng Katutubong Agham at Teknolohiya (SIKAT) Inc. SIKAT is a local NGO operating in Romblon, Zambales and Surigao del Norte with various donor funds.

analysis on any such text, the text is coded or broken down, into manageable categories on a variety of levels—word, word sense, phrase, sentence, or theme—and then examined using conceptual analysis. Keyword or phrase categories that were identified included project type (i.e. mudcrab, seaweed, processing), project components (i.e. organizing, awareness raising, skills development, training), target participants (i.e. fishers, household, peoples organization), challenges, and results/impacts/outcomes.

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