



# the *coralline*

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**IFAD MTR Mission visits  
project sites**

**Tokhang Operations in  
Fisheries**

**Gender Mainstreaming:  
Women in Fisheries**



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Mission Team visits the mangrove area of FishCORAL Project in Bgy. Britania, San Agustin, Surigao del Sur.

## IFAD MTR Mission visits project sites

By SHAYNE MARIE M. ARAULLO

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) conducted the Mid-Term Review (MTR) Mission for the Fisheries, Coastal Resources and Livelihood (FishCORAL) Project after almost two and a half years of implementation. The Mission visited Project sites in Regions 5, 8, 13 and Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) last 5-26 March 2018.

The IFAD Team was composed of Mission Team Leader Tawfiq El-Zabri, Country Programme Officer Jerry Pacturan, Special Advisor Yolando Arban, Value Chain Specialist Jens Kristensen, Procurement Specialist Atty. Arthur Tantuan, and Financial Management Specialist Zidni Marohombsar.

The MTR kicked-off with a meeting with the Project Steering Committee (PSC) members, Department of Agriculture officers, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) management and regional directors, Regional Project Management Office (RPMO) heads, and

Project Support and Coordination Office (PSCO) staff. They discussed the mission's term of reference and schedule.

The IFAD Mission members and PSCO staff were divided into technical and fiduciary teams, which were composed of technical and fiduciary officers. The first team led by Mr. Pacturan visited the regions of Bicol and Caraga while the second team headed by Mr. El-Zabri visited the regions of Eastern Visayas and ARMM.

There were series of dialogues and consultations conducted throughout the site visits. Participants were composed of Local Government Units (LGUs), beneficiaries, private sectors, small and medium enterprise (SME) representatives as well as state universities and colleges have been conducted.

Before the commencement of the field visit, the Teams had advanced appointments to Regions 5 and 13 to conduct

initial fiduciary auditing. They also stopped by in the municipalities of Ragay and Pasacao in Bicol while they checked the areas covered in Bgy. Gusuan-on, Carmen in Agusan del Sur where the project has a mangrove rehabilitation activity.

### Field Visits

Various project sites have been visited by the Team to do monitoring.

In **Region 5**, The technical group met with the mayors of Pasacao in Camarines Sur and Pierto Diaz in Sorsogon who are the Bay Management Council (BMC) chair and vice chair of Ragay and Albay Gulfs respectively.

In **Region 8**, The group was split further into two teams to visit different project sites. The first group travelled to Guiuan, Eastern Samar and had a dialogue with the Municipal Agriculturist, members of Municipalities (BMC) before visiting the fish drying



project. The second group went to Motiong, Western Samar and met with the LGUs, People's Organizations (POs) and also checked the crab cracker processing and oyster/mussel culture in the area.

In Caraga, meeting with the LGUs and POs of San Agustin, Agusan del Sur and Nasipit, Agusan del Norte was initiated. The team also visited the mangrove plantation in Britania, San Agustin.

In ARMM, the team went to Datu Odin Sinsuat and Parang, Maguindanao to visit the Bay Management and Multi-Purpose Building and met the LGU and PO's representatives.

## Wrap Up

After every field visit, the Mission Team met with the Regional and RPMO and officers and recapitulated the visits and discussed the issues and concerns reported by the RPMO and proposed recommendations for inclusion in the Mission report.

The result of the Mission and draft Aide Memoire were presented to the PSC members and BFAR management.

The MTR is a comprehensive exercise held at project midpoint to reevaluate the project's development targets, the significance in light of new circumstances, and the probability of attaining them.

## FishCORAL-5 conducts mangrove rehab in Cam Sur

By ARTHUR LLABORE



Magais Railfisherfolk Organization from Barangay Magais I, Del Gallego, Camarines Sur planted more than 10,000 propagules within three hectares last March 2018 and now starting to plant additional 16,000 propagules within five hectares. Mangrove Rehabilitation Project of the FishCORAL Project under the Coastal Resource Management Component aims to improve mangrove reforestation to provide more space for reproduction of species living within the area.

FishCORAL in Bicol Region has also been implemented in Barangay San Juan, Del Gallego, Cam Sur. The Bayanihan Savings Replication Organization together with the Philippine National Police and Philippine Army joined the planting of more than 10,000 mangrove propagules last March 2018.



Region 5



Group Photos during MTR Mission

Region 8



Region 13



ARMM



## Bryde's whale stranding responded by FishCORAL staff, PCRA participants in Albay Gulf

By NONIE P. ENOLVA

Several days prior to stranding, the Bryde's whale calf was seen swimming alone in the shallow waters of Namanday, Bacacay, Albay. Separation from its mother could have caused the demise of the poor calf on July 03, 2018.

Technical staff of the Fisheries Coastal Resources and Livelihood (FishCORAL) Project undertaking Participatory Coastal Resource Assessment (PCRA) in Bacacay quickly responded to the reported stranding incident. Dr. John Paul Serrano, the Municipal Agriculturist who is also a trained veterinarian on marine mammal stranding response and medical management, alerted the rest of the

responding team of the cetacean stranding. Some participants of the PCRA were pulled out as emergency first responders.

Despite efforts of the BFAR 5 Fisheries Regional Emergency Stranding Response Team, FishCORAL Project CRM Team, the FLET and local responders headed by Dr. Serrano, the whale calf ended up getting stranded and eventually died. Bryde's whale stranding is considerably rare in the Philippines. By far, this is the sixth recorded Bryde's whale stranding in the Bicol Region since its data recording in 2005.

There are observed changes in spatial

relationships between cetacean mother and calf from birth to separation of yearling calves to mothers. Some animal behaviorists believed cetacean mothers initiate the majority of the mother-calf interactions at the beginning and during the first year of a calf's life, including retrieving a calf that has strayed, guiding a calf away from a danger, or protecting the calf from others. As the calves develop and their behavioral repertoire becomes larger and more diverse, they begin to venture further from their mothers and spend less time with them. By the end of the first year of the life, the calves initiate the majority of the mother-calf.

Even as they increase their



FishCORAL Project CRM Officer Fermin Rempillo, BFAR 5 - FIRST Team, PNP, Bantay Dagat Team and other participants of the Participatory Coastal Resource Assessment help out in transporting the beached Bryde's Whale calf for necropsy at the BFAR 5 Cetacean Cemetery.



independence, calves frequently return to their mothers in times of stress or fatigue.

These observed behavior can be seen as a probable pattern that lead to the demise of the Bryde's whale calf of Bacacay. Based on the gastric content, the calf was believed to be still nursing from its mother. Although there is over a hundred scars caused by cookie-cutter shark bites, it could not have caused the apparent death. Its stomach was empty, with no visible parasites and with all organs deemed normal, the calf was generally healthy. Drowning secondary to starvation is the most likely cause of death based on the result of the necropsy. Blood and tissue samples were collected and sent to the University of the Philippines in Diliman for the project: Cetacean Tissue Collection, Preservation, and Transport for Biobanking, Disease, and Pathogen

Surveillance.

The project aims to collect as much data to build a better information on the emerging health problems of these animals that can be used as feedback on ocean health. Through this research effort, whales and dolphins in the Philippines are being screened for emerging human pathogenic micro-organisms in the marine environment, and all other biological samples collected for biobanking for other further studies.

Few years ago, the UP researchers were able to collect information on *Toxoplasma gondii* with the samples from the beached Longman's beaked whale in Prieto Diaz, Sorsogon. *T. gondii* is a widespread zoonotic

protozoan that infects humans and other warm-blooded animals. It is only lately that marine mammals were recognized as its intermediate host.

The FishCORAL in the Bicol Region, through the implementation of the Coastal Resource Management (CRM) component, tackles emerging issues like the preponderance of marine mammal strandings and is targeting capacity development of partner Local Government Units to respond to similar incidents that needs immediate action.

Bicol is the Top 1st region as to having the most number of reported strandings in the country for the past three years and was considered to be the hottest hotspot region in terms of cetacean strandings. ■

## PSC approves FishCORAL Project's revised 2018 AWPB and APP

FishCORAL Project Steering Committee (PSC) recommended the approval of the project's revised Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) and Annual Procurement Plan (APP) for 2018. The meeting was held on 17 May 2018 at the Brentwood Suites, Quezon City.

The meeting was attended by representatives of PSC member agencies: Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA),.

The proposed adjustments/ revisions to the 2018 AWPB and APP were in compliance with the Mid-Term Review (MTR) Mission recommendations conducted last March 2018.

The meeting focused on the changes in the AWPB and APP's activities and budget. Recommendations in the Aide Memoire (AM), which includes the introduction of Matching Grant support as a strategy for the livelihood component and the changes in the working assignments of Community Facilitators (CFs).

Furthermore, modification of targets were discussed such as the decrease in the coverage for mangrove rehabilitation as the result of overlapping of areas with the National Greening Program (NGP) of DENR. Mr. Jerry Pacturan, IFAD Country Programme Officer, mentioned that there are instances in the municipal and even in barangay level that there were mangrove areas intended to be rehabilitated by the Project which has already been covered by the DENR.

For the proposed changes in strategies, approaches, and reallocation of funds, for succeeding years, Ms. Gemma Agagas of NEDA MES said that the level of approval would depend on the extent of the change in scope and outputs.

Meanwhile, Ms. Loida Wy of DBM advised the Project to start the request for one-year extension and complete the required documents before 2019. Ms. Jessica Muñoz, Project Coordinator, requested for consultation meetings with the concerned agencies for guidance. (Shayne Marie M. Araullo)





## FishCORAL supports mussel farming

By DARVIN ROSA



**Daram, Samar** – The Project's covered areas in Maqueda and Villareal Bays in Samar include the barangays on the east coast of the island municipality of Daram. One of these is Bgy. Cabac, with a population of 583, and whose 40 fisherfolks farm seaweeds and catch mackerels, sardines, squid, and crabs.

To further optimize the use of their environment, Amador Real and other 36 members of the Cabac Fisherfolk Association, which was organized by the Philippine Business for Social Progress, are trying out green mussel (*Perna viridis*) farming.

Last February, the FishCORAL Project provided Real and other 36 members of the Cabac Fisherfolk Association the initial assistance of 100 meter-module of green mussel each member. The module uses the long line method, which is suited for deeper waters and

sturdy enough in the event of strong winds and big waves. More so, it poses minimal obstruction to water circulation. During heavy rains, in which Eastern Visayas experience a lot, the lines will be submerged to adjust to the change in water salinity.

By May, spats have already covered the hanging lines. The harvest season will come in August. If all goes well, the Association will harvest 92 tons of mussels.

A trader in the neighboring municipality of Zumarraga has already offered to buy the mussels at Php 900 per sack, saying that he will bring the products to Davao.

The Association plans to use the revenue to refurbish and expand their mussel farms.

## PSCO facilitates streamlining workshop to fast-track implementation to achieve Project targets

In line with the agreements during the MTR Mission, a Streamlining Workshop was conducted by the Project Support and Coordination Office (PSCO) on 17-19 April 2018.

The three-day workshop was to modify the Project's strategies, work plans, and budgets for the remaining implementation years. It was facilitated by Mr. Gomercindo Tumbali, IFAD Consultant while other IFAD officers and consultants, Mr. Tawfiq El-Zabri, Mr. Jerry Pacturan, Mr. Yolando Arban, and Atty. Arthur Tantuan were present as resource persons.

Mr. Tumbali presented the overview for the workshop activities to achieve the objectives of the workshop and come up with the expected outputs. He also mentioned the preparatory work assigned to the participants prior to the workshop to achieve substantive workshop outputs.

On the other hand, Mr. El-Zabri reiterated the need to adjust the Project's

strategies and approaches in order to achieve its goals.

"We have to not only revisit the MTR Mission recommendations and Project Implementation Manual (PIM) but also discuss the issues and concerns that are hindering the achievement of the Project's target which is to alleviate the poor fisherfolks from poverty," Mr. El-Zabri added.

With this, Mr. Pacturan proceeded in presenting the Matching Grant (MG) Investment Support for the FishCORAL Project. MG is an approach being followed by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in the livelihood projects and will be part of the revisions to the livelihood guidelines and implementation of the livelihood projects.

After the presentations and discussions, Regions 5, 8, 13, and ARMM representatives presented their recalibrated 2018-2020 Multi-Year Plan & Indicative Budget (MYPIB), 2018



Mr. Jerry Pacturan,  
IFAD Country Programme Officer

Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) and Annual Procurement Plan (APP).

The Project has to submit the revisions to the Department of Agriculture (DA) Clearing House for endorsement to the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) Investment Coordinating Council (ICC) for approval.

(Shayne Marie M. Araullo)



## Project staff undergo Matching Grant Training



As part of its implementation support mission, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) conducted a Matching Grants (MG) Training to capacitate the FishCORAL Project implementers.

The training, held last 27-28 June 2018, is part of the Fishing Industry and Trade (FIT) livelihood development approach to MG investment support to commercial marine aquaculture.

Mr. Jerry Pacturan, IFAD Philippines Country Programme Officer, and Mr. Jens Kristensen, IFAD Value Chain Specialist, led the two-day training where they presented the New Commercial Approach to Livelihood Support and the Identification of Investment through Value Chain Approach.



Resource persons from the government lending institutions were also invited to present their credit programs for fisheries. Ms. Gliceria Angeles of the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) discussed the Credit Programs for the Fisheries Sector, while Mr. Norman Cajucom of the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC) talked about the Insurance Plans for the sector.

Through the training, the Project staff were able to formulate the value chain map of the region's selected commodities and deliberated the issues and concerns in the implementation of the new strategy. The IFAD and the FishCORAL also came up with the revised MG Guidelines where they able to review the list of beneficiaries and eligible



applicants.

With the presence of Atty. Arthur Tantuan, IFAD Procurement Specialist, certain issues were also addressed such as the acceptable budgetary items covered by the MG.

With the recommendations of the IFAD Team during the mid-term review mission conducted in March 2018, the component 2 of the Project will be changed into Fishing Industry and Trade (FIT). The Project will not only provide livelihood assistance to the poor fishing households but will introduce the value chain framework approach.

*(Shayne Marie M. Araullo)*



## FishCORAL Region 8 holds Bizplan Dev't Writeshop for new CFs



Ms. Paulyne Santos, Livelihood Enterprise Development Officer of Region 8, facilitates the training cum writeshop for newly hired Community Facilitators of Region 8.

Having the biggest number of community facilitators among the four regions covered by the Fisheries, Coastal Resources and Livelihood (FishCORAL) Project, the Regional Project Management Office (RPMO) of Eastern Visayas organized a Business Plan Development Training to capacitate the newly hired Community Facilitators (CFs).

CF play an important role in the achievement of the Project's goals that bridge communities, local government units (LGUs), and other project implementers. Each CF is assigned to the barangays to assist, communicate, and consult with the LGUs regarding project interventions. In Region 8, there are 500 barangays and 63 CFs.

The first day of training was opened by Ms. Lina Palobe, Agricultural Center Chief II of Region 8, who emphasized that being truly committed and enjoying the work they are assigned to do is one of the best way to aid the project beneficiaries.

The training cum writeshop involved series of lectures from Institutions and Gender Specialist Rhine Joy Lesigues

and Livelihood Specialist Mariquit Alano.

Ms. Lesigues presented the overall project overview to give the basic and sustainable livelihood framework and elaborated on the rules and guidelines in selecting the project's beneficiaries.

Following their lectures, both Ms. Alano

and Ms. Lesigues discussed and elaborated the basic concepts, principles, and methodology in writing a business plan before proceeding to the writeshop proper. Business plan outline, template, and formula were also provided for the reference and guidance of the CFs.

The following training days were focused on the formulation of the business plans. Before writing, Ms. Alano explained thoroughly and gave examples by component.

The crafted business plans of the CFs were then presented for critiquing and enhancement. Some of the fisheries commodities presented were mud-crab fattening, fish processing (dried fish), cassava production, and grouper culture in fish cage.

All business plans produced in this writeshop were subject for review of the TWG/RPMO and Municipal Project Management Office (MPMO) and hopefully be implemented and used by the People's Organization as their livelihood once approved.

*(Shayne Marie M. Araullo)*



Ms. Lesigues guides and assists the participants in writing their proposed business plans for the project beneficiaries.



## PSCO holds procurement planning workshop for officers, staff

To further capacitate the FishCORAL's officers and staff's knowledge in their specific key areas in attaining the Project's goals, the Project Support and Coordination Office (PSCO) had organized a regional procurement planning workshop for procurement officers, CRM officers, livelihood officers and assistants, and Livelihood Enterprise Development officers of regions V, VIII, Caraga, and ARMM.

The three-day workshop was held in Icon Hotel North Edsa, Quezon City last 13 to 15 February 2018. It generally revolved around planning – how vital it is in achieving one's target and its advantages in having and practicing one.

Mr. Allan Urtal, Procurement Specialist, emphasized that,

**“A plan is like a map. Without it, you won't know what road to take.”**

He added that planning aids the Project's team in organizing resources and activities efficiently and effectively to achieve goals.

Ms. Jessica Muñoz, Project Coordinator, presented the background of the Project as a refresher for all members after the attendees were given the chance to introduce themselves as official part of the Project. It was followed by a review of the schedule of activities for the rest of training days.

The Project's Logical Framework was discussed by Mr. Raymund Dela Cruz Jr., Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. He accentuated that the log frame is the Project's basis when it comes to the activities to be executed within the period of time.

Ms. Mariquit Alano's, Livelihood Specialist, discussed the livelihood guidelines. Then, she also mentioned



Mr. Allan Urtal, Procurement Specialist, leads the 2018 Regional Procurement Planning Workshop on February 13 to 15 in Icon Hotel North Edsa, Quezon City.

that the beneficiaries of the Project are the poor fishing households in the FishCORAL communities which aggregates to almost 91,000 and that 60% or around 54,000, are the target of the Project for livelihood support to increase their income by 10% at the end of the Project.

Mr. Urtal moderated the three scheduled workshops. In the first activity, participants were asked to identify the key result areas of each component based on their Terms of Reference (TOR). This aimed to identify and clarify the workload of each member of the Project so they would perform more efficiently based on their TORs.

It was followed immediately by the second workshop on identifying the items for procurement for CRM and livelihood components vis-à-vis 2018 Annual Procurement Plan (APP).

And on the following day, the third workshop was conducted. Participants were requested to formulate the one-month and six-month plans for each component. These activities were the highpoints of the training.

The outputs of the workshops were presented individually and deliberated by the team. Issues and concerns were raised and addressed; suggestions and recommendations were also given for the betterment of the plans which will be implemented in the next six months.

The three-day workshop concluded with an open forum where the attendees evaluated their training experience. Majority of the participants said the activities really helped them to better understand their roles and make them more confident to produce better and more efficient outputs.

*(Shayne Marie M. Araullo)*

**The FishCORAL Project's beneficiaries include a total of 188,000 households in which almost 91,000 are fishing households.**



## POs receive seaweed kits from BFAR

By MYLENE E. ASUQUE

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) under the regular fund distributed seaweeds seedlings and paraphernalia to three People's Organizations formed under the FishCORAL Project.

The distribution was led by the Provincial Fisheries Office together with Local Government Unit of the Municipality of Placer, Masbate headed by Fishery-Coordinator Mr. Dasyl Kevin L. Rustia (former FishCORAL Project CF, now organic personnel of Cawayan) assisted by BFAR-FLDT Ms. Jennifer J. Golosino and BFAR-CF Ms. Mylene E. Asuque on June 5-6, 2018.

The two-day activity successfully took place with the active participation the POs namely Us wag sa Kalisdan Fisherfolk Association of Brgy. Nagarao, Quibrada Fisherfolk Association of Barangay Quibrada and Guin-Awayan Fisherfolk of Barangay Guin-Awayan. Barangay Captains and other officials also participated in the said event.

"Aatamanon namon an iyo ginhatag na kabuhayan. Nagapasalamat kami kay nahatagan kami san oportunidad na madagdagan an amon kita", said one of the PO members.

(We will take care of the livelihood you have given to us. We are grateful because of this given opportunity to raise our income).

Seaweeds farming is one of the main livelihood of fisherfolk in Placer. The seaweed intervention of BFAR will give opportunity for the POs to shift from fishing to seaweed farming and help reduce fishing pressure within the municipal waters. The provided alternative livelihood will also aid in the reduction of poverty cases by providing additional income to fishing households.



## FishCORAL, local authorities conduct awareness campaign in Masbate

By RYAN CHRIS BERNARDO

Cawayan Masbate – To educate people on the effects of illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing activities, the "Social Awareness Program" was commenced in Barangay Begia Cawayan Masbate last May 12, 2018.

BFAR FishCORAL Project Municipal Agriculture Office together with the Philippine Army and the Philippine National Police of Cawayan, Masbate joined forces to edify the significance of marine and coastal resources and ways to preserve the bodies of water.

Topics of the program include "Sustainability in Fisheries Resources" discussed by the BFAR 5 FCP Community Facilitator (CF), giving the participants a perspective why sustainability is becoming more and more important and why it becomes the cornerstone of every fishing

activity in Barangay Begia. Furthermore, local agriculture authorities provides knowledge on various fishing gears, both environment-friendly and destructive methods and points out the effects of these gears to the marine habitat. Over-all objectives of the FishCORAL Project was discussed.

The resource speakers from the Philippine National Police and the Philippine Army deliberate about crimes, drugs and violence related laws and penalties and how it can affect the lives of the people within the coastal areas.

Part of the community facilitation activities of the FishCORAL Project is to invest knowledge on the resources users and sharing this knowledge is key to rebuilding institutional capacities.



## Fisherfolks enroll in Aqua-based Business School

By RHINE JOY LESGUES

The Aqua-based Business School (ABS) was well received in its orientation in different FishCORAL communities in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao in April this year.

The ABS orientation last April 25, 2018 marked a day of realization for Bakikis Agri-Aqua Development Incorporated. The orientation, which seeks to develop the business skills of FishCORAL communities in ARMM, was held in Brgy. Bakikis, Kapatagan, Lanao del Sur.

It was attended by 19 PO members and at the end of the session, ABS in Brgy. Bakikis have 16 enrollees of which 10 are male and 6 are female. The enrollees also agreed to meet every Tuesday, 9 am – 12 noon at Maglangit Beach Resort. As they look



forward to the learning they will acquire, they also plan to have their business launch on October 2018.

The ABS was also received positively in different areas in Maguindanao including Brgy. Matuber, Datu Blah Sinsuat with 12 enrollees (9 men and 3 women); Sambulawan, Sultan Kudarat, 19 enrollees (14 men and 5 women); and Kidama, Matanog, 16 enrollees (10

men and 6 women).

The half-day activity entailed series of sessions which include Checking Expectations on Topic, Facilitators, Resource Person, and Co-participants where they expect to learn about business, a patient facilitator, an expert and Maranao speaking Resource Person, and active participation of co-participants.

It was followed by Formulating House Rules wherein the participants put emphasis on the attendance and punctuality. To level their responsibilities, the facilitator is expected to be always prepared for the session while participants are expected to guarantee the facilitator's safety while in the area.

The ABS Orientation was conducted by the FishCORAL ARMM RPMO led by the Institutions and Gender Officer, Ziahara Esmail; Livelihood Officer, Honey Lou Marcelo; Livelihood and Enterprise Development Officer, Sandra Gani; and Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Aieleen Manko; Community Facilitators and supported by the Institutions and Gender Specialist, Rhine Joy Lesgues.

The ABS, as a participative curriculum, was positively received by the community despite challenges like scheduled attendance to ABS classes.

The fisherfolks' decision to enroll in ABS was reinforced when it was explained to them that the curriculum will enable them to be business-minded, and that they will be launching their products as their culmination activity.





# Mangrove rehab in covered Project areas in ARMM

By MYLENE E. ASUQUE

The devastating storm that ravaged the country in 2013 highlighted the role of Mangrove ecosystem in coastal protection when a coastal community was saved from the being swept clean by Storm Haiyan - thanks to patches of mangrove stands that stood between General McArthur, Eastern Samar, and impending disaster.

## Mangrove status in the Philippines

Reports suggests that from 1918 to 1994, roughly 70% of the country's original mangrove growth were lost due to excessive land conversion to aquaculture farm and exploitation for its wood. With all the global changes occurring around us, a growing recognition of the importance of coastal greenbelts is recognized all the more - from nursery and breeding ground for commercially and ecologically important organisms, to climate change alleviation through

carbon storage.

In the Philippines, conservation efforts to restore mangrove populations are being done. Sometimes, however, in attempts of PR stunt by corporations and even government agencies without consideration of the biology mangrove species, often leading to utter waste of government resources, doing more harm than good.

## Rehabilitation Project in Sultan Kudarat

Sultan Kudarat Municipality has been subject to strong weather events in the past. As a matter of fact, deaths from the storm hit the coastal area in the 2014 prompted the construction of concrete barrier or dike which aims to shelter the municipality from flood that drains out of Rio Grande de Mindanao. According to community, the construction costed at least 3 million. Only later realizing that the same benefit can be

achieved by rehabilitating nearby mangrove areas.

Aside from protection from storm, the community also enjoys bounty of marine products from these ecosystem. Some of the products present in the area include shrimp and mudcrab which play a major role in the economic sector of the municipality.

This growing recognition and acceptance of the importance of mangrove ecosystem in the areas prompted the implementation of mangrove rehabilitation project by FishCORAL Project in Brgy. Inawan and Sambolawan, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao. The project aims to rehabilitate 94 hectares of mangrove areas for two barangays by involving coastal communities in the nursery rearing, out-planting, and maintenance of rehabilitated sites.

The mangrove rehabilitation project under Coastal Resources Management component (CRM) commenced on July 2018, with initial planting of 18 hectares, amounting to approximately 54,000 mangrove seedlings planted on the seafront of the two target Barangays. The project utilizes *Avicennia sp.* seedlings to ensure survivability considering the zone at which the mangrove seedlings were planted, in contrast to the frequently used *Rhizophora* species which does not do well in exposed areas prone to uprooting by waves.

"We believe that our livelihood and coastal protection is deeply dependent upon mangrove ecosystem. We are so happy to be the recipient of this project," said Faisal Dalanda, president of Bantay Bakawan Fisherfolk Cooperative - the PO contracted to implement the project in the area.

Almost 45 community members are participating in the rehabilitation. The project is expected to be completed on September 2018.





# FishCORAL joins 9th Annual IPGN Assembly

By RHINE JOY LESGUES



The FishCORAL Project joined the 9th Philippine Gender Network (IPGN) General Assembly which aims to reinforce the importance of gender sensitivity in the region.

The IPGN General Assembly is an annual gathering of gender focal persons of IFAD-supported projects to share experiences, accomplishments, good practices, strategies, and challenges in implementing gender activities.

The assembly, held last 22 to 25 May 2018 in Mantangale, Alibuag, Misamis Oriental, was hosted by Convergence on Value Chain-Enhancement for Rural Growth and Empowerment (Project ConVERGE), a project supported by the IFAD under Department of Agrarian Reform.

The theme of this year's IPGN is, "Aligning IFAD-Philippines Gender Network (IPGN) with COSOP 2017-2022: Scaling up IPGN for social and economic empowerment of women".

Mr. Jerry Pacturan, IFAD Country Programme Officer, challenged everyone to empower not only the women but also encouraged men to empower women.

He then presented the IFAD's Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP) 2017-2022 that highlighted the reduction in gender gaps. However, Mr.

Pacturan also noted that challenges are still present.

Mr. Pacturan assured that IFAD will continue to focus on the social and economic empowerment of women and their organizations and apex networks. He also recognized the need to create synergies with public agencies and the private sector to promote equal access to decision-making, assets, investments, services, knowledge, and markets.

Meanwhile, series of discussions were also conducted during the three-day event. Ms. Jessica Muñoz, Project Coordinator of FishCORAL Project, presented the activities undertaken, and different ideas and concerns raised under last year's IPGN when the

FishCORAL hosted the 8th IPGN.

Sharing of updates, challenges, and achievements of every Project in relation to gender and women empowerment were conducted through posters prepared before the event. Planning workshop and presentation of gender-related activities per Project and IPGN activities for 2018-2019 were done as well.

One of the highlights of the this year's assembly were the field visit to the ConVERGE's Coco Sugar Project in Brgy. Linabo, Balingasag, Misamis Oriental where beneficiaries shared their stories of success and struggle before touring the participants in their processing center.

Another noteworthy event was the solidarity night as tribute to Ms. Badeene Verora, IFAD's previous Gender consultant and Project ConVERGE' Gender and Institutions Coordinator.

Before the closing of the assembly, the election of chair and vice-chair was conducted. Ms. Laetitiamarie P. Garcia, Gender and Institutions Development Specialist of Project ConVERGE was elected as the IPGN 2018 Chairwoman and Ms. Rhine Joy G. Lesgues, institutions and Gender Specialist of the FishCORAL Project as the Vice Chairwoman.



ConVERGE Project's Coco Sugar Project in Brgy. Linabo, Balingasag, Misamis Oriental





## Gender Mainstreaming: **Women in Fisheries**

The gender gap in leadership positions, especially in fisheries, is still very prominent and it is not because of lack of credentials, but rather of stereotypes. But, one woman in Surigao del Sur broke the barrier.

Two-term mayor Maria Clarita Limbaro of the Municipal of Bayabas proved that women are as capable as men to lead when she was elected last year as the chairman of Coastal Community Alliance Unified for Sustainable Ecosystem (CCAUSE) which serves as the baywide management council (BMC) for Lianga-Hinatuan-Bislig Bays.

CCAUSE was initially organized and launched in 2010 under the Sustainable Management of Coastal Resources (SUMACORE) Project but no follow through activities were done. However, on September 2017, the alliance was revived through the initiative of the FishCORAL Project as support to its efforts in Coastal Resource Management (CRM).

As mayor of a fifth class municipality,

Limbaro was hesitant at first when she was appointed as the alliance leader. "Being the chosen chairman of the alliance is one of the greatest challenges I have ever (faced) in my life because it is not easy to lead nine (9) municipalities and one (1) city. More so, we know that men dominate this sector as it deals with fishery laws," Limbaro said.

Despite her apprehensions, Limbaro took the opportunity as a challenge—not only to herself, but to her community as well. She envisions CCAUSE as an instrument to uphold fishermen empowerment and community involvement to sustain the coastal resources where fisherfolks generate their livelihood.

Today, the CCAUSE Management Board conducts regular meetings

address key issues confronting the alliance and the covered areas. They also pass and approve resolutions—including one template for an ordinance regulating extraction, selling, and marketing of lobster and crablets in the municipal waters for the adaption of member-Local Government Unit (LGUs) as mitigating response to the massive collection of lobster fry in the area.

CCAUSE may still be new but it is now being recognized for having significant accomplishments and good practices. Collaborative efforts of member-LGUs and its leadership are vital in the performance of the pact and Mayor Limbaro affirms that **women can become leaders they are meant to be.**

*(Shayne Marie M. Araullo)*



## FishCORAL cites gender empowerment as effective way to achieve community goal

By RHINE JOY LESGUES

“Why do we need to focus on empowering women?  
Why is it important to give emphasis on gender equality?”

These were some of the questions discussed during the series of trainings on Gender Sensitivity which were conducted in Regions 5, 8, Caraga, and ARMM (FishCORAL areas) during the entire Project Year of 2017.

More so, Gender and Development (GAD) misconceptions were tackled. One of it was highlighting that GAD is not about women alone but being inclusive and working together towards development. Basic orientation on gender was also emphasized.

Ms. Pauline Nayra, Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) GAD Resource

Pool member, administered the trainings and conferred about how convenient the usage of Gender Analysis Tools in assessing presence of gender issues and needs in an area.

After the training, Community Facilitators (CFs) reverberated the knowledge they have acquired by organizing gender analysis and orientation to their respective areas and/or barangays. This aims to increase comprehension of "gender" and emphasizing the importance of women's roles, both in their respective household and in the community.

The FishCORAL envisions a healthy environment where everyone practices equal rights and appreciates the roles and contributions of each member of the community regardless of their gender.

All the Gender Sensitivity trainings were well received and participated in by attendees. The series of trainings were just the beginning of advocacy for GAD and mainstreaming gender in FishCORAL communities.



Gender Sensitivity Training in Butuan City.





Members of the Rural Improvement Club of Masao, Butuan City gathers together in a weekly savings.

## Poor Can Save: A success story of some fishing households in Butuan, Lianga Bay

By MARISOL D. TUSO

Saving is the hardest thing to do not only for a typical fishing household but for many of the low-income rural communities. With meager income they earn, they find hard to set aside for savings.

Although poor, many of the fishing households in some coastal barangays of the Butuan and Lianga Bays have saved. Guided and encouraged to save, they have proved that even the poorest of the poor can actually manage their income and set aside to save.

A fish vendor of barangay Punta, Nasipit, Agusan del Norte, Eliza A. Valmoria, is earning an average monthly income of Ph3,000.00. Eliza has three children, but she still manage to save weekly.

Eliza is a member of Punta Fisherfolks and Dwellers Association, (PFSDA). Through the Fisheries, Coastal Resources and Livelihood Project (FishCORAL), which is jointly implemented by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Department of Agriculture- Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, the

group was trained on People's Organization Revitalization Training, wherein Module 3 which is on Savings Mobilization, taught them on the importance of savings and the science behind savings.

The training aims to impart fishing households on effective handling of personal finances towards financial literacy. At the end of the module, they were then organized into a Savings Club.

Eliza, together with the rest of the members of the Savings Club in barangay Punta, come together every Saturday to save.

For PFSDA Savings Club, each member bring their share with a minimum of Php50.00 per share and a maximum of up to five shares during the meeting and save. The amount they save are recorded in a Savings Pass Book verified by the Record Keeper of which amounts are saved.

The group savings then comes as a Loan Fund wherein, members can borrow for an interest of 5% up to 10%

interest depending on the group consensus. Members can only borrow up to three times of their total share and will pay within three (3) months.

**"I like this savings because anytime I needed money, I can borrow without difficulty and so much requirements," said Eliza.**

"Instead of borrowing money outside which has high interest, we borrow here. And, the interest incurred from our loans goes back to us through dividend share at the end of the saving cycle," Evangeline E. Ighot, Chairperson of the Masao Rural Improvement Club-Savings Mobilization Club in barangay Masao, Butuan City.

A total of eight (8) Savings Club are now operating in the Caraga region, particularly in Cabadbaran City, Carmen, Nasipit, and Butuan in Agusan del Norte and in the municipalities of Cagwait and Barobo of the province of Surigao del Sur.



One Savings Mobilization Club has already shared-out their savings in barangay Punta, Nasipit. After 9 months of savings cycle, each Php50.00 share earns Php11.00.

The poor can really save. Elvira Lasco, who is also a member of Punta Fisherfolk and Dwellers Association-Savings Club was able to save Php8800.00 after 9 months. With the savings revolving throughout the period and among the members, she was able to get Php10,755.36. This means that within 9 months of savings cycle, she was able to earn Php1,955.36, a 22.22% income from her savings.

**“I learn to save and it was not easy for me because I have my children going to school. So, I need to adjust my budgeting. And, I am happy that I was able to save,” says Elvira.**

In sitio Anunang, barangay Gamut, Barobo, Surigao del Sur, Helen Gabayan also learned to save.

**“What I like here is that, my saving is earning. Instead of spending money for vices, I will just keep the money and save,” she said.**

Helen is a member of Anunang Gamut Fishermen Association, a People's Organization supported by the project in the Lianga Bay.

A mother of six of the same barangay, Felician Olvido, also shared her thoughts in the savings system.

“I can manage my meager budget. Example, if I earn Php20.00 today and then the following day, I keep it so that I can save it on our weekly savings. I also learned that although poor, we can really save if we want to,” says Felician.

Through the Savings Club, members of the People's Organization in the fishing community developed the discipline of time management, attendance to meetings and activities of the organization, and meeting decorum. Before

they save, each member recites their policies according to their assigned number. In so doing, everyone is fully aware of the Savings Club policies.

“We are now time conscious. And, we are now getting closer to each other,” Helen said of barangay Anunang.

The members also developed camaraderie to each other. Aside from saving, they also put-in their share for the Social Fund. When one gets sick, die, or in an emergency situation, the group can immediately provide financial support.

In Masao Rural Improvement Club-Savings Club, three (3) members were provided with Php500.00 each for medical assistance. Another member of Anunang Gamut Fishermen Association-Savings Club also availed Php1,000.00 assistance when his family member had an accident.

*(With stories from Dian Dumbase, Jayrald Perez, and Juliebe Tranquilan-Community Facilitators)*



Rural Improvement Club-Savings Club Chairperson Evangeline Ighot presides the meeting during a weekly savings in barangay Masao, Butuan City



# POs celebrate “Month of the Ocean” thru coastal clean-up, nipa planting

By JONALENE MESOGA



In celebration of “Month of the Ocean”, the local government of Bato, Camarines Sur spearheaded the “Coastal Clean-up Drive and Tree Planting Activity” in the three barangays of Pagatpatan, Payak, and Palo on May 30, 2018.

The event, headed by Mayor Frank Bernaldez and supervised by the Municipal Agriculturist Officer Hector Llagas, AT Fisheries Cristene Docot, together with the FishCORAL-5 staff, successfully took place with active participation of the three newly organized People's Organizations (POs) namely Nagkakaisang Samahan ng Maliliit na Mangingisda ng Brgy. Pagatpatan (NSMMBP), Association of Integrated Small Fishersfolk of Brgy. Palo (AISFBP) and Unified Fishersfolk Association of Brgy. Payak (UFABP).

The “Month of the Ocean” is promotes awareness on the importance of conservation, protection, and sustainable management of the country's coastal and marine resources but it also a great way to get people involved.

Simultaneous with the clean-up drive is the planting of 2,000 pieces Nipa (*Nypa fruticans*) in barangay Payak.

Nipa, a mangrove associate, is believed to help arrest the effects of global warming along with other climate change impacts.

**“People should join beach clean-ups because they provide a fun environment that fuels an awakening towards the need to examine our consumer lifestyles. After picking up all the plastics and specifically single use plastics off the beach, it’s hard to ever go back to using them or not speak up against them.”**

## Kahi Pacarro

The “Month of the Ocean” is celebrated annually in the Philippines during the month of May by virtue of Presidential Proclamation No. 57 signed by then President Joseph Estrada on January 09, 1999. Activities to be conducted in observance of the MOO aims to highlight the importance and significance of conservation, protection, and sustainable management of Philippine coastal and marine resources and that the country is committed to the sustainable use and management of ocean and coastal resources which are vital life-support systems and economic assets where benefits should accrue to both present and future generations of Filipinos.

Under the Local Government Code of 1991, the primary responsibility for management of municipal waters has largely been devolved to the local

government units as coastal communities represent the locus of implementing sound coastal resource management practices.

Cooperation and participation of fisherfolks are necessary to ensure the success of small-scale fisheries management schemes. Fishers' organizations should be considered as a channel through which management decisions can become operative. Projects for fisheries development, many backed by international assistance, often fail mainly because of lack of participation of the local people in the conception, preparation and implementation of the programs.





## A Day in a Life of a Community Facilitator

By GHIEMEL FEART L. RICACHO

"Walang trabahong madali" that quote always come into my mind whenever I feel pressured to do my job well as a Community Facilitator (CF). But as they say, just like in any other jobs, challenges exist.

Some people say that my line of work looks so simple and common such as gathering the fisherfolk to attend meetings, seminars, and trainings to capacitate them but believe it or not, it is a difficult task to accomplish. Most of the fishermen tend to skip these activities saying that they have more important things to do, which is understandable, but what they fail to see is the benefits they will be able to attain in joining these events.

But I am a CF and giving up is not an option. So, I try non-stop to convince them. I started establishing good relationship with the fisherfolk where they can openly communicate with me with any concerns and issues related to the implementation of the Project. And once they see the assurance that our objective to help them is true and pure, they slowly participating in the activities organized for them. What's more amazing is that they don't just join but actively share their ideas and opinion somehow enjoy the whole duration of the activities.

And as a CF, I considered this a great accomplishment because I believe that in these little ways, I am able to impart additional knowledge and skills that they can use in their daily lives.

We also think of different ways and strategies in facilitating the fishing communities especially on participating to government programs. We also encourage them to do better not just for their own good but for their community as well saying that the success of any project involves that effort of the entire community. As a CF, we have to take part in every aspect of the project implementation to make difficult things bearable and efficient for the coastal communities.

On July 12 and 13, 2018 our team which was composed of MLGU representatives, Carangay Council officials and the FishCORAL Project staff, were able to facilitate registration of ten (10) fisherfolk, and thirty-eight (38) FishCORAL Project profiling. Getting the fisherfolk's interest, active participation, and willingness to support the project makes us feel accomplished and proud considering that the far-flung barangay is in the southernmost tip of Cagraray Island, a remote place and challenging place to travel to. As what the people their said, we brought hope to their community.

Besides the challenges we face in the field, we also have deadlines to meet and submit in the office which make us render overtime work. Don't get me work, I love my job and it's not an issue at all. Doing overtime works mean accomplishment of tasks and completion of these responsibilities mean we are able to help our fisherfolk.

Unity is one quality that a team must possess. If we dig the deeper meaning of the word "camaraderie", it is what I see in the FishCORAL team because at end of the day, it is not the hours that we put in our DTRs but the knowledge, experiences, skills, and friendships that we have gained and built along this FishCORAL journey.



## Tokhang Ops in Fisheries

The "Oplan Tokhang" operations are not only conducted to suppress drug-related cases but also to battle illegal and unregulated fishing.

In San Agustin, Agusan del Sur, the Fishery Law Enforcement Teams (FLETs) rolled out the Oplan Tokhang last year to protect the municipal's fisheries and aquatic resources. "Tokhang" is a combination of Visayan words "tuktok" and "hangyo" which mean to approach and talk.

Supt. Danilo Uriarte, chief of FLET, said that before they conduct the operations, they roam around the coastal areas first and ask the residents about known violators or any concern about the seas or fishery. Team members also provides watch list of illegal fishing gears existing in the barangay such as beach seine (locally known as baling), gill net with scaring device (locally known as "lampurnas", and poisonous substances among others.

"In here, we are aware who are the illegal fishers that is why it's easy for us to locate their house and serve them with letters requesting to refrain from using unauthorized fishing gears. At the first offense, we conduct tokhang and just talk to them but if they do it again, gears will be confiscated, they will be apprehended and cases will be filed," Supt. Uriarte said.

In 2017, at least 56 violators were apprehended by the deputized fish wardens.

As of now, the numbers of illegal fishers have incredibly dropped, as there is no single case reported for the use of illegal fishing gears. Nonetheless, the operations continue.

Supt. Uriarte added that having a sufficient number of members make it

easier for the team to patrol the areas.

"We have more than 60 members in total, thanks to FishCORAL Project for giving us the budget and trainings to capacitate our personnel to properly enforce all rules and regulations governing the protection of areas of jurisdiction," Supt. Uriarte added.

(Shayne Marie M. Araullo)



San Agustin FLET Leader Supt. Danila Uriarte with members (from left to right) Ronald Fernandez, Pedro Querdo, Roselo Aguilar, Rolly Abaño, Jr., Artemio fernandez, and Dionel Alicarte.

## RECIPE FOR FISH DOUGHNUTS

### YOU WILL NEED:

- 1 kg all purpose flour
- 4 pcs egg yolk or 2 pcs whole large egg
- 2 1/2 cups of white sugar
- 1 cup cold water (with 1/2 cup milk powder)
- 1/2 bar fresh butter
- 6 tbsp baking powder
- 6 tbsp fish powder
- oil for frying
- confectioner sugar for dusting

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Sift the dry ingredients, and them set aside.
2. Cream butter; add beaten egg and milk.
3. Add gradually the dry ingredients into cream mixture.
4. Knead until well blended.
5. Use rolling pin and doughnut cutter for desired size and shape.
6. Heat pan then deep fry until golden brown.
7. Use strainer to drain the oil.
8. Sprinkle with confectioner sugar.
9. Cool and serve.

Source: Regional Fisheries Post Harvest and Marketing Division of BFAR-5



# THE CORALLINE

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