

Partnership with NGOs in Ex-post Evaluations (Philippines)

With the emphasis on enhancing partnerships with Japanese stakeholders so as to put Japanese knowledge and experience to good use, and utilizing the expertise of external evaluators in evaluating impact and sustainability, an ex-post evaluation of the project, which involved afforestation component implemented with the cooperation of NGOs of the partner country, was conducted in collaboration with a Japanese NGO that has rich knowledge and experience in providing community-based support in developing countries.

Project title: Forestry Sector Project in the Philippines
Field surveys: November – December 2005, January 2006
External evaluators: Akira Morita (head of the mission),
Yukihiro Ishibashi, Michiko Takahashi, Maribeth N. Reboton

OISCA-International

Established in 1961, the organization is primarily involved in rural development and environmental conservation work. It has been working in the Philippines and other Asian countries on forest conservation activities and promotion and advocacy about the importance of forests.



The beneficiary survey in progress

Background and objectives of the study

The evaluation study was conducted after the completion of the Forestry Sector Project (hereafter FSP) from the NGO's point of view in terms of (1) sustainable forest management, and (2) improvement of the living standards of people in areas covered by the FSP, that were in line with the objectives of the FSP implemented from 1993-2003.

The sustainability of impact derived from the Community Based Forest Management (CBFM) strategy which was identified as a fundamental principle in the FSP was examined as well.

Findings from the study

The results at four of the five sites (excluding Lapinig Island) where the study was conducted could not be deemed fully satisfactory. Through interviewing people at the sites about their levels of empowerment and the sustainable management of the forests, it was found that the project's impact was observable in people's lives, and that this was sustained even after project completion.

Aside from some changes in the physical attributes of the FSP such as new roads, a water system, and electricity, community people note that they eat three times a day now compared with only twice a day prior to the project. They appreciate this as a direct impact of the project. The project's executing agency conducted a baseline survey covering in-

come, population, and so forth, ahead of the project. They reported that in a comparison of pre-and post projects figures, incomes have risen, nutrition has improved, and that children now have an opportunity to receive an education.

On the Issue Of sustainable forest management, despite fluctuating membership within community organizations, there is some sort of system for forest management. However, since such work is carried out on a voluntary basis, it is undeniable that the forest care is less a priority than it was during the FSP implementation, and that the mechanism to react to forest fires is not well-established.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn from survey findings:

- Forest sector projects should be implemented jointly with agro-forestry activities.
- Collaboration with executing agencies and local governments are indispensable
- NGO roles need to be strengthened
- Information and education campaigns need to be undertaken
- Funds for capacity building of community people need to be furnished



Mangrove site

[Example of site survey result]

Santo Tomas watershed subproject

•Forest management system

The subproject site management office of the executing agency continues to be actively involved since project implementation. 83 community organizations still exist. The community organizations voluntarily patrol the site for fire protection.

•Livelihood of community people

Developed from afforestation activity, peoples are growing vegetables and strawberries and breeding livestock on a voluntary basis. Incomes have increased, and more families are now able to send their children to more advanced schools or to study overseas.

See p. 65 for the full evaluation of this project.