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# Life *with* Forest

**Newsletter Vol. 2 / Issue 2 / August 2019**

## **Participatory Land Use Planning (PLUP) Now on Expansion !**

PLUP is a core part of Community-based Natural Resource Management (CB-NRM) mechanism. It helps a community recognize the current status and use of natural resources including land, forest and water (through present land use mapping); and draw a future of their village in terms of land use and environment (through future land planning).

PLUP, through its process, can evoke community members to discuss and agree what should be done in order to sustain their natural resources. To realise the future land use map, they develop “village regulations” by themselves. The rules and penalties that they set are simple (e.g. “Don’t cut trees without permission of local leaders”, “Don’t do free grazing animals”, “Make fire breaks when using fire for land preparation” ) and easy to follow and monitor by themselves.

What happens if without PLUP? A good example is that some of the community plant trees with support of the government or agencies, but they are eaten by animals brought by other members within the same community due to lack of consensus among themselves. In this regard, PLUP has been considered as an essential tool for a project which involves communities to use land and forest for conservation and development.

The CB-NRM Project Phase II has been engaged in promoting PLUP to other projects and Development Partners (DPs). Hitherto, we held technical dialogue, joint workshops, training, and study tours with various agencies (e.g. FAO, GIZ, USAID-Avansa, World Bank, Conservation International, Asian Foundation). Now PLUP or its key elements are on expansion. We will be making more efforts for its further dissemination over the county.

## **Human Resource Database of the PLUP facilitators**

Facing the increasing interest among stakeholders, the Project has recently established the database of the PLUP/ CB-NRM facilitators, who completed our On-the-job training (OJT) program in the last few years. They were field staff dispatched by DPs and inter/national NGOs and trained and assessed over understanding and facilitation skills by the Project Team (including MAF officials, JICA experts, the PLUP-experienced NGOs: RAEBIA and Halarae Foundation). In April 2019, MAF-National Directorate of Forestry and Watershed Management (NDFWM) convened the OJT trainees to the meeting to discuss the database. Then they agreed to share their information through the database with stakeholders looking for field implementors. This is part of the efforts of the Project to make matching between i) DPs/NGOs, who require good facilitators for their business and ii) the OJT trainees, who explore business opportunities after OJT. If you are searching for PULP facilitators, please contact us!



**PLUP Study Tour with World Bank-SAPIP (March 2018)**



**National Workshop on CB-NRM and Community Forestry with FAO (June 2018)**



**Discussion on PLUP/ CB-NRM Human Resource Database (April 2019)**



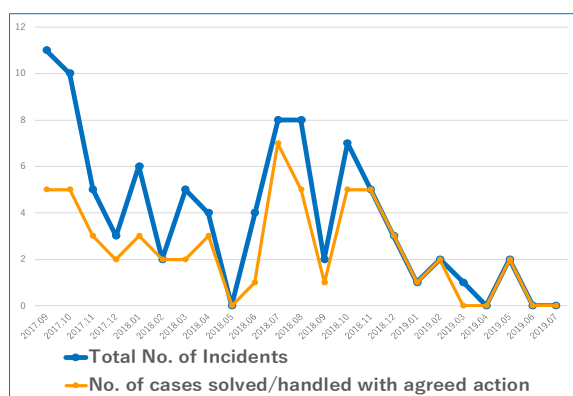


## PLUP at ground (Monitoring is most important!)

More often than not, it is considered that the strong feature of PLUP is a future land use map or the Tarabandu ceremony. While there is no denying on such views, the experience from the Project reveals that monitoring after the Tarabandu ceremony is most important to realize actual benefits of PLUP, preventing such incidents as illegal cutting, forest fire, and free grazing animals. Regular monitoring is done in a form of a monthly meeting where the chiefs of Aldeia reports to the chief of Suco and other ledears what incidents have been reported during the last meeting and how it was coped with. This monitoring is a routine activity, not one-shot eye-catching like the Tarabandu ceremony. It rather looks like an ordinal meeting without showing anything interesting outsiders. However, it is a critical process for the community to institutionalize the village regulations and the future land use plans developed by themselves. Our suggestion to PLUP implementers and supporters is to give due consideration on the value of regular monitoring by the community.

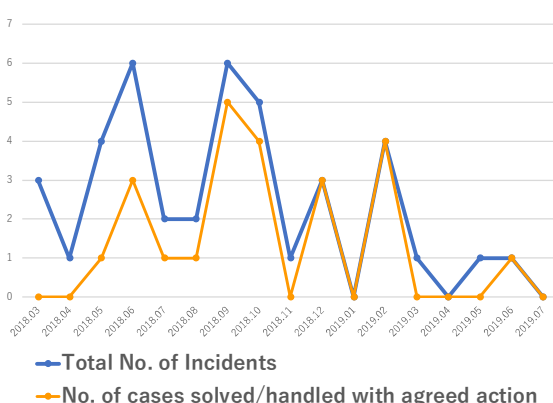
In our project, both MAF officials and JICA team members attend the monthly monitoring meetings to facilitate discussion on the incidents happened in a community and make a record of solving issues. The figures and tables below summarize the records of monthly monitoring undertaken by the communities in the target villages of the Project. In the figure, **the blue-color line** shows the number of the incidents/cases reported by the community, which jeopardized the condition of natural resources, including illegal cutting, forest fire, and crop damage by free-grazing animals, whereas **the orange-color line** indicates the number of the cases solved by the community, e.g. by using the village regulation, between-family discussion and other collective activities agreed at the monitoring meeting. In the table, the figures of the both numbers are summarized on a semi-annual basis. Note that the Project divides its support for 7 villages into the two batches: the 1<sup>st</sup> batch contains 4 villages and the 2<sup>nd</sup> one includes 3 villages.

### Records of Monthly Monitoring in 1<sup>st</sup> batch of 4 sucos (Fatisi, Bocololo, Fahisoi R and Fahisoi L)



Monitoring period	No. of cases reported	No. of cases solved	% of the solved
Sept.2017 - Feb.2018	37	20	54%
Mar.2018 - Aug.2018	29	18	62%
Sept.2018 - Feb.2019	20	17	85%

### Records of Monthly Monitoring in 2<sup>nd</sup> batch of 3 sucos (Kotolau, Manucasa and Maumeta)



Monitoring period	No. of cases reported	No. of cases solved	% of the solved
Mar.2018 - Aug.2018	18	6	33%
Sept.2018 - Feb.2019	19	16	84%

The 1<sup>st</sup> batch villages show the declining tendency in the number of the incidents reported while increasing the ratio of the solved cases with collective actions over time. This provides a robust view that the communities are enhancing the capacities for preventing the incidents as well as for solving them. On the other hand, the 2<sup>nd</sup> batch villages demonstrate a bumpy tendency, repeating downs and ups for several times; however, as can be seen in the table, the ratio of the cases solved against the total number of the reported has increased over 1 year, thus implying improvement in their capacity for solving the cases.

## Results from On-farm demonstrations in Sustainable Upland Farming Promotion Micro Program

Whilst supporting the implementation of the village regulations, the Project has been supporting the implementation of Micro Programs (MPs) e.g. for sustainable upland farming and reforestation with the aim of realising their future land uses. For 2018/19 season, the four villages (Bocolelo, Fatisi, Fahisoi (Remexio) and Fahisoi (Liquidoe)) completed the whole process of Sustainable Upland Farming MP, which include a series of training (e.g. on compost making, the use of A-frame, constructing bench terrace, organic liquid fertilizer formation) and application of the new techniques both at demo plots and individual farms. Approximately 250 males and 100 females have been participating in the MP. Where the data are made available with sample survey, it was found that the yield of maize in the demo plots was boosted up compared to farms without applying the techniques introduced by the MP (See the table below). In terms of technical application, more than 90% of the beneficiaries have employed the techniques that they have learnt from the training at individual farms in 2018/19 season. At the MP evaluation workshop held in June 2019, they have prepared the action plan of continuing the improved farming techniques either by group or by individual. From now on, due follow-up shall be made by MAF officials, especially extension officers.

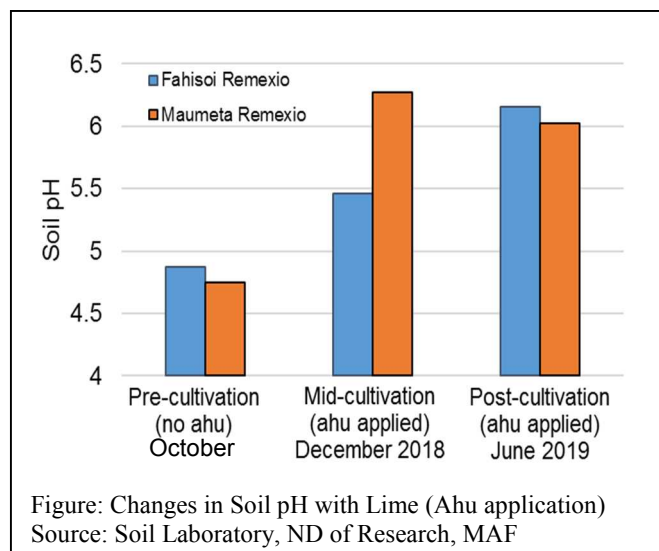
**Table: Records of maize yields at the demo plots in Suco Fatisi and Suco Bocolelo**

Suco	Status	No. of sample*	Yield Range	Average Yield
Fatisi	With Project	19	1.8-3.2 ton/ha	2.4 ton/ ha
Bocolelo	With Project	25	1.2- 3.2 ton/ha	2.0 ton/ ha
Bocolelo	Without Project	15	0.6-0.9 ton/ha	0.7 ton/ha

Note: \* Yields of maize were measured by 2m x 2m land. / Source: Halarae Foundation

## Lime (Ahu) application to improve acidic soil

In general, crops can grow well in soils with the level of pH between 5.5. and 7.5. In some of the target villages, especially Suco Fahisoi R and Suco Maumeta, demo plots were newly developed from abandoned areas. In such a case, the soil pH was likely to be lower than ideal, showing strong acidity in soil characteristics and thus preventing the healthy growth of crops. In order to neutralize the pH level, the Project made an attempt to apply lime (i.e. Ahu) prior to land preparation. More concretely, farmers, when applying compost into planting holes, mix Ahu with soil taken from a hole, which was then back to the ground to cover compost. For this experiment, due collaboration was made with Soil Laboratory under National Directorate of Research, MAF, particularly in making soil analysis and identifying the pH level along with Ahu application. The following figure shows the average soil pH quantified at pre-cultivation, during the growing season (mid-cultivation), and after harvest (post-cultivation).



The results indicate the overall positive effects of Ahu application on the improvement of soil condition. Careful attention should be given to the fact that ahu applied in October 2018 were still influencing the soil pH in June 2019. This could imply that Ahu application could be a kind of investment to ensure the better pH condition for the rest of the production season. The cost of Ahu is also affordable for farmers. Only one issue should be noted: the workload of application should be well estimated and informed to farmers. In our project, the farmers had commented that it was worth doing, as they enjoyed better production than otherwise.





## MAF's follow-up of the Phase-1 Target villages for continuation and expansion of the CB-NRM mechanism

JICA has been supporting the CBNRM Project Phase II since 2016, while MAF has succeeded in taking care of the villages that had been supported by the Project Phase I (2005-2010). Following 2017, MAF allocated 10,000 USD for 2019 budget for the continuation and expansion of the CB-NRM activities in the 6 villages in Aileu Municipality supported by Phase 1 and started its disbursement from May 2019. With this financial resource, the village regulations were reviewed and updated; and some good-performing farmers identified to show a model case of permanent farming and reforestation. The funds are further to be injected to strengthening monitoring by the community leaders on natural resource management and the continuation/ expansion of the demo plots for the wider dissemination of the techniques. As such, the activities and effects of the Project Phase I has been sustained by MAF.

This kind of collaboration between MAF and JICA is actually one of the benefits of JICA Technical Cooperation, in which JICA experts and MAF officials are working together on routine basis: We have a weekly meeting to share progress and issues among officials at working level and joint monitoring system with MAF management, including Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) Meeting at least once a year. Through these exercise and systems, the project activities are being internalized by MAF. The Project will continue this co-working approach and put more efforts for internalization of the CB-NRM activities in the government undertakings.



### Developing the CB-NRM Roadmap

The Project has been assisting the Taskforce formed by Directorate General of Forestry, Coffee, and Industrial Plants (DGFCIP), MAF, in developing the roadmap for the expansion of the CB-NRM mechanism over priority watersheds in the country. So far, the Taskforce has documented the final draft of the roadmap, which is to be consulted with relevant stakeholders both public and private for endorsement. The roadmap delineates the historical and current situation of forestry in Timor Leste and prioritize watersheds for making intensive interventions for sustainable management, including the introduction of the CB-NRM and Community Forestry (CF). Stakeholder analysis is also made for the roadmap, taking into consideration that there are many projects supported by various DPs for forestry and watershed management and they could generate synergy/ complementary effects to each other. The Taskforce will make necessary preparation and arrangement for implementation of regional consultation and embark on it from September onwards. We expect that this exercise could enrich the contents of the roadmap while deepening the understanding of key stakeholders on the effectiveness of the CB-NRM mechanism.

### Drafting Policy Recommendations for the CB-NRM mechanism

While proceeding with the formulation of the roadmap, the Taskforce has also drafted policy recommendations to MAF, with the aim of reinforcing regulatory framework for the CB-NRM expansion, including the implementation of the roadmap, and creating enabling environment for MAF officials (DGFCIP) to undertake their relevant tasks as part of the government routine services. This draft policy recommendation is also subject to public consultation in addition to the roadmap. Following are some of draft ideas on the recommendation to assure CB-NRM expansion in the country.

- *Mainstream CB-NRM as a key government program for sustainable forest management by issuing a new ministerial order for expansion of CB-NRM*
- *Develop legislative frameworks with the technical guidelines/ standard operating procedures for implementation of CF*
- *Foster field facilitator and trainers for introduction of the CB-NRM /CF*
- *Mobilize and effectively use resources in coordination and collaboration with relevant government organizations, MAF DPs, and external funding sources*
- *Integrated the CB-NRM mechanism, particularly PLUP and institutionalization of the village regulations, into village development and management activities led by Municipal/Post-administrative offices*

### Upcoming Events


- CB-NRM roadmap consultation
- DP coordination meeting by DGFCIP
- Knowledge sharing activities with different DP

**For further details, please contact us:-**

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