Tropenbos International
Forest Foundation Philippines

**REVIEW OF COMMUNITY FOREST RIGHTS:
OUTCOMES, IMPACTS, AND CONSTRAINTS OF THE
PHILIPPINES' COMMUNITY BASED FOREST MANAGEMENT
(CBFM) STRATEGY
AND THE ROLE OF CIVIL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS (CSOs)**

By

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACIAR	Australian Center for International Agricultural Research
ASREDCO	Allicia Sustainable Resource Development
BTFAI	Borbon Tree Farmers Association Incorporated
BURDFI	Bicol Upland Resources and Development Foundation Incorporated
CADC	Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claim
CADT	Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title
CALC	Certificate of Ancestral Land Claim
CALT	Certificate of Ancestral Land Title
CARP	Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program
CBFM	Community Based Forest Management
CBFMA	Community Based Forest Management Agreement
CBFMP	Community Based Forest Management Program
CDA	Cooperative Development Authority
CENRO	Community Environment and Natural Resources Office
CLUP	Comprehensive Land Use Plan
CRMF	Community Resource Managament Framework
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DA	Department of Agriculture
DAR	Department of Agrarian Reform
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DENRO	Deputized Environment and Natural Resources Officer
DepEd	Department of Education
DILG	Department of Interior and Local Government
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
ELAC	Environmental Legal Assistance Center, Inc.
ENRO	Environment and Natural Resources Office
FMB	Forest Management Bureau
FPE	Foundation for Philippine Environment
GAD	Gender and Development
GAMAFA	Gabriela Masipag Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative
HIMASACA	Hini-usang Maguuma Sa Catmondaan
ICC	Indigenous Cultural Communities
IDEAS	Institute for the Development of Educational and Ecological Alternatives, Inc
IDIS	Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
IP	Indigenous People
IPRA	Indigenous People's Rights Act
ISFP	Integrated Social Forestry Program
KBKP	Kibalang Balikatan sa Kaunlaran ng Pagkakaisa

LGU	Local Government Unit
MCBFCMA	Macatumbalen Community-based Forest and Coastal Management Association
NAGMATA	Naghisuang Mag-uuma sa Taba-ao
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NGP	National Greening Program
NIPAS	National Integrated Protected Areas Systems
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
PENRO	Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office
PNNI	Palawan NGO Network Incorporated
PO	People's Organizations
RED	Regional Executive Director
RENRO	Regional Environment and Natural Resources Office
RTD	Regional Technical Director
RUP	Resource Use Permit
SEC	Securities and Exchange Commission
SUC	State Universities and Colleges
TKFPI	Tao-Kalikasan Foundation of the Philippines Incorporated
TLA	Timber License Agreement
UKAFA	Upper Kibalang Agroforestry Farmers Association
VMCIP	VIBANARA Multipurpose Cooperative Incorporated
VSU	Visayas State University

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1995, the Philippines institutionalized the Community-Based Forestry Management (CBFM) Program as part of the government's national strategy for the management and protection of forests and its resources. Through Executive Order (EO) 263, land tenure instruments were granted to organized upland communities, people's organizations (POs), or individual households/families. This report focuses on the outcomes and impacts of the CBFM strategy in People's Organizations (POs) that were granted rights under Community Based Forest Management Agreements (CBFMA) and the Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) that support them. It aims to identify the conditions that support and constraints that hinder the CBFM strategy's positive outcomes and outputs and provide recommendations to create a better enabling environment to achieve them.

The study revealed that while a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework is in place, the CBFM strategy lacks the proper implementation and resources needed for its success. It also suffers from a lack of coordination between other key government agencies such as the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and local government units (LGUs).

While the CBFMAs provided POs with some degree of tenure security, POs still reported cases of illegal activity and encroachers. A major issue is the overlapping claims in CBFMA awarded areas by IPs as part of their ancestral domain under the Indigenous People's Rights Act (IPRA) and private parties based on tax declarations issued by LGUs. Most POs are not well-equipped to resolve these claims, and rely on DENR and NGO assistance. CSOs highlighted the need for communities to understand their rights, responsibilities, and limitations as CBFMA holders to gain confidence to properly enforce their rights. In addition, while the CBFM strategy has produced strong PO leaders, NGOs recommended that it is equally important to strengthen the community's collective and inclusive governance and increase transparency in PO's decision making.

POs and NGOs reported a decrease in illegal deforestation and an increase in forest cover due to the CBFM strategy. However, although required under EO 263's implementing rules and regulations, both DENR and POs admitted they did not have a biophysical and spatial assessment and database before they proceeded with CBFM. Hence, most of their claims on increasing forest cover are based on visual reports of increasing greener areas, and reports of ongoing restoration efforts. There is also a lack of a formal enforcement program to ensure the PO's safety against encroachers and illegal activities and regular financial and technical assistance.

NGO still play a critical role in the CBFM's strategy success as organizers for CBFM communities, policy advisers for the DENR, and partners that assist in implementing CBFM and its projects in the areas. In particular, they provide the most help on the improvement of PO's self-governance and introduction of sustainable livelihood opportunities. Thus, the report highlighted CSOs two major roles for CBFM's future implementation: first, as a catalyst to strengthen PO Federations at the local, regional, national levels and second, as a primary support and advocate for sustainable livelihood strategies that benefits the poorer and forest-dependent members of the local communities, and links POs to appropriate institutions in the production, processing and marketing of forest and non-forest-based goods and services.

The interviews and workshop highlighted common factors across themes, that need to be addressed to strengthen the CBFM strategy.

1. **Enhance community building and participatory planning** – The CBFM's success is anchored on the creation of strong communities with an affinity and responsibility over the areas they protect. While the DENR provides adequate support to establish POs, once formed, it is crucial to sustain systematic and on-going community building efforts, that includes both community leaders and members. \

2. **Increase outreach and conservation awareness** –Participation in the CBFM strategy increased when communities understood the value of their work to maintain the ecosystem and conserve biodiversity. It is suggested that dedicated local working groups composed of key CSOs in the area can be created, and would be responsible to identify priority threats in their areas and design effective outreach and conservation awareness activities that target key stakeholders.

3. **Strengthen coordination between DENR, LGUs, and CSOs** - Under the CBFM's legal framework, LGUs and DENR play crucial roles in the development of CBFM areas and are tasked to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the CRMF and work plans. It is recommended that DENR revisit how to effectively implement partnerships with LGUs and their projects.

4. **Review, monitor, and assist in CRMF and work plans' proper implementation** - It is necessary to review the effectiveness of current CRMF and work plans and monitor proper implementation by the CENRO, LGUs, and assisting CSOs. Capacity building activities should be aligned with the CRMF and work plans' objectives.

5. **Ensure proper budget allocation and management** – A permanent source of funding for the program should be earmarked both by DENR and LGUs. Proper management and mechanisms to ensure transparency should also be in place.

Specific recommendations for each outcome are:

- **On Effective and Inclusive Self-governance**
  - Update the DENR list of CBFMA POs, and provide disaggregated data. Suggested data include, but are not limited to: i) which among these POs were formed before, during, and after CBFM EO; ii) number of years implementing as POs; iii) POs with good conservation and protection practices; iv) expressed needs on capacity building and technical assistance.
  - Review of CBFM policies and work plans that should ensure rotation of leadership roles through regular elections, term limits, and qualifications and regular and responsive general assemblies and meetings.
  - Provide regular community leadership and management training focusing on improving local leadership, and enhancing member participation.
  - Implement government-led monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance with CRMF and work plans on effective decision-making processes, including providing incentive system to compliant POs.
  - Institutionalize a leadership mentoring program, to be included in CRMF and work plans.

- **On Tenure Security and Halting External Deforestation –**
  - Resolve issues on conflicting maps. National, Regional, Provincial, and Municipal maps should be in harmony, especially on the delineated boundaries, and forest areas accounted for. This can resolve overlapping claims in CBFM areas between current title holders and

external parties. In particular, a policy to resolve delineation of CADT holders' ancestral domain and CBFM holders' tenured land should be prioritized.
- Mandate and formalize volunteer forest guards certification program, which should include authority to apprehend illegal loggers and activities, rights, provide regular and uniform incentives, benefits, insurances, and proper enforcement training and tools.
- Review the enforcement mechanisms of the LAWIN Forest and Biodiversity Protection System, including training and capacitating PO members on forest patrol and enforcement. Sufficient resources (regular salaries, proper equipment and training) should be provided for them to carry on with their tasks.
- Review fines for illegal activities to be commensurate to the offender's financial capacity and extent of damage done (ex. corporations should be required to pay a percentage of profits computed in accordance to the extent of environmental damages, instead of having them pay a set monetary amount).

● **On Forest Cover Maintenance**
- Design a methodology that can provide historical data on forest cover, which can later on be used as a rough baseline data.
- Mandate gathering of baseline data on forest cover, resources, and inventory of planted species.
- Design a monitoring system to ensure that communities' progress and bottlenecks are documented, and addressed. The monitoring system's efficacy will highly depend on the success indicators set - move away from current indicators such as number of trees planted, and institutionalize monitoring for progress such as survival rates, and forest quality.
- Ensure presence of dedicated organizers, foresters, and other experts on field to better monitor and assist in the implementation of projects within the community, leading to more sustainable projects.
- Strengthen linkages with CSOs, particularly academic institutions that can aid in developing processes that take inventory of forest resources.

● **Access to External Support**
- Improve outreach and communication activities to CBFM PO, as they are mostly in remote areas. Access to information is one critical bottleneck for such communities; government agencies, and NGOs can design mechanisms to reach them better through actual community visitations, tapping local radio stations, and other communication means.
- Establish a local support and venue where CBFM POs can visit and also find opportunities for networking. One strategy could be institutionalizing CBFM in all regional SUCs where POs can access technical support, share their preferred community-appropriate project ideas, and eventually decrease their dependence on DENR.
- Improve the process of applying for CSO grants and funding; particularly by allowing to write proposals in Filipino or local dialects, and by creating screening mechanisms solely for POs. Capability training can also be done to better improve PO member's individual ability to fulfill these requirements.

● **Livelihood Improvement**
- Review and revise the existing RUP processes. The process should facilitate requests with the goal of enabling POs to actually access and use the resources. While POs can also benefit from NTFPs, bulk of the possible income from the forests can come from timber products.

- To ensure sustainable livelihoods, DENR and CSOs must develop ideas and projects with the communities, taking into consideration: i) available resources in the area; ii) ability of the livelihood to strengthen the community cohesion; iii) suitability of desired commodities or interventions; iv) product diversification; v) possible markets for the products; and vi) value-adding processes.
- Establish PO Federations that allow POs to share their experiences and best practices, compare results and metrics regarding livelihood and agroforestry, and establish avenues of trade and access opportunities to alternative forms of livelihood.
- Conduct feasibility studies on the introduction of organic farming systems as an additional source of livelihood and review existing mechanisms for implementation (i.e. DA-DENR CARP program).
- Explore the creation of a digital CBFM-marketplace, where CBFM POs can market their products and raw produce.

I. INTRODUCTION: LOOKING INTO THE YEARS OF IMPLEMENTING COMMUNITY-BASED FOREST MANAGEMENT: WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

This study focuses on the current situations and realities of the Philippines' Community Based Forest Management (CBFM) Strategy. In general, it aims to unravel the outcomes and impacts of the CBFM strategy on communities that were organized into People's Organizations (PO) and granted rights over forested areas under a Community Based Forest Management Agreement (CBFMA)and the experiences of Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) who helped the POs with their plans and implementation strategies.

Specifically, the report seeks to answer the following:
1. What are the outcomes and impacts of the collective tenure model (especially in terms of livelihoods and forest conservation)?
2. What are the conditions and constraints for positive outcomes?
3. What can Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) do better to create an enabling environment that achieves desired outcomes and impacts?

The report is divided into three main parts: the first section, provides an overview of the legal and regulatory framework of the CBFM strategy, its key actors, and current process; the second section, summarizes key findings of the CBFM's strategy's outcomes and outputs under the following themes: (i) increased tenure security; (ii) effective and inclusive self-governance; (iii) improved access to external support; (iv) lessening external deforestation; (v) communities maintain forest cover; and (vi) improving livelihoods; the final section, provides recommendations on how to improve the CBFM strategy's implementation, particularly through the work of CSOs.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted through a comprehensive desk review of the CBFM's legal and regulatory framework, as well as specific implementation structure from the national to municipal government units. This stage provided specific information and implementation gaps to develop the interview guide. The desk review was followed by in-depth interviews with 22 purposively sampled PO and NGO representatives. The interviews focused on obtaining both POs and NGOs experiences in the implementation of the CBFM strategy and if it successfully provided their expected outcomes and impacts under the following themes: (i) increased tenure security; (ii) effective and inclusive self-governance; (iii) improved access to external support; (iv) lessening external deforestation; (v) communities maintain forest cover; and (vi) improving livelihoods For each theme, participants were asked to identify the conditions that helped and the constraints that hindered their desired effects and initial recommendations to address them.

The interviews' initial results were validated through a workshop with most of the same interviewees. A major component of the workshop was for participants to assess and prioritize actions that can improve their implementation of the CBFM strategy and possible ways to collectively implement them.

The following sections will provide detailed discussions on: 1) description of CBFM strategy in the Philippines; 2) outcomes, conditions, and constraints of the CBFM strategy; and 3) reflection and concluding remarks.

III.   DESCRIPTION OF CBFM STRATEGY IN THE PHILIPPINES

a. **The Philippine Context**

The Philippines is a lower-middle income country[2] with a population of over 100 million.[3] With an annual growth rate of 1.7%, the population is expected to rise to almost 110 million by 2020.[4]

The Philippine government is a republican democratic government, composed of three co-equal branches—the executive, the legislative, and the judiciary. The territorial and political subdivisions of the Philippines are the provinces, cities, municipalities, barangays, and the autonomous regions created by Congress.[5] There are, as of this date, 81 provinces, 145 cities, and 1,489 municipalities in the Philippines.[6] The Constitution granted these Local Government Units (LGUs) local autonomy, and mandated Congress to enact a local government code that will provide a system of decentralization from the national government to the LGUs.[7] There is currently one autonomous region, the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) which enjoys local autonomy, subject to the President's supervision.[8]

Republic Act (RA) No. 7160 or the Local Government Code, enacted by Congress in 1991, devolved basic services, including enforcement and implementation of community-based forestry projects, to LGUs.[9] It also gave LGUs the power to appoint and remove officials that are funded by local funds[10], the power to generate and apply its own resources[11], and the power to enact ordinances to promote the general welfare of their inhabitants[12], provided the exercise of these powers does not contravene the Constitution or any law enacted by Congress.[13]

From 2018 data, the Philippines has a total forest land of 15,805,325 hectares, with total classified forest land at 15,050,316 hectares and unclassified forest land at 755,009 hectares[14]. According to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), from 2011-2018, the country loses approximately 63,739 hectares of forest cover[15] each year. As of 2010, these are the top 10 provinces with the most forest cover area[16]:

Rank	Province	Forest Cover	Land Area	Forest Cover %
1	Aurora	218,588	323,954	67.48
2	Apayao	223,121	392,790	56.80
3	Surigao Del Sur	226,805	455,216	49.82

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[2] World Bank, Country Profile - Philippines, as of 17 July 2017, available at: http://data.worldbank.org/country/philippines.
[3] 2015 Census of Population, Philippine Statistics Authority.
[4] 2015 Census of Population, Philippine Statistics Authority.
[5] 6 Article X, Section 1, 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines ("Constitution").
[6] Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), Provincial Summary, Number of Provinces, Cities, Municipalities and Barangays by Region, as of 30 June 2019, available at: https://psa.gov.ph/classification/psgc/.
[7] Article X, Section 2, Constitution.
[8] Republic Act ("RA") No. 11054 or the Bangsamoro Basic Law.
[9] Section 17, RA No. 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991 ("RA 7160").
[10] Section 3(c), RA 7160.
[11] Section 18, RA 7160.
[12] Section 16, RA 7160.
[13] City of Manila,et al. vs.Hon. Perfecto A.S. Laguio, Jr., et. al., GR No. 159110, December 10, 2013.
[14] National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA).
[15] Forest cover is defined here as 75% tree cover reflecting a dense canopy.
[16] Forest Management Bureau, Philippine Forest Cover (2010).

4	Nueva Vizcaya	193,708	390,387	49.62
5	Palawan	693,931	1,489,626	46.58
6	Agusan Del Sur	342,736	896,550	38.23
7	Cagayan	342,994	904,026	37.94
8	Isabela	378,637	1,066,456	35.50
9	Quezon	226,193	870,660	25.98
10	Bukidnon	202,322	829,378	24.39

b. Community Based Forest Management (CBFM) in the Philippines

i. History

Prior to Spain's colonization (before 1520s), land ownership in the Philippines was generally communal.[17] Forests were accessible to all and ownership was vested in whoever cleared and cultivated them first.[18] During this period, forest cover comprised over 92 percent of total land.

The colonization of Spain and the United States introduced the concept of the *Regalian Doctrine* which classified all public land, including forestlands, as state owned. This is enshrined in the past and current Constitutions[19]. The State possesses the complete bundle of property rights over forest lands and resources.

The state-controlled centralized system of forest management led to negative impacts, including massive deforestation. From its original 20 million hectares in the 1900s, forest cover declined to 17.24 million hectares by 1941, to 10.2 million hectares by the end of the 1970s.[20] This was largely due to the unrestricted monopoly of *use rights* over large forest areas awarded to logging companies.[21] The entry of logging also caused a population increase of upland communities that sought livelihood opportunities. These communities contributed to the rapid decline in forest cover due to slash and burn cultivation, illegal logging, and conversion of forests into agricultural lands.[22] The government found it difficult to determine accountability, due to the open access nature of many forestlands.

Recognizing the need for proper and local management, the 1970s initiated forestry laws and programs that involved individuals and upland communities in forest rehabilitation.[23] In particular, President Marcos established the Integrated Social Forestry Program (ISFP) which provided the first form of tenurial security to upland communities through the issuance of 25-year Certificates of Stewardship.[24] Despite this, the timber permit holders still controlled over 10 million hectares of forests, leading to the loss of over 7 million hectares of forests from 1965 to 1986.[25]

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[17] Pulhin, Juan M., et al. "Tenure Reform on Philippine Forest Lands: Assessment of Socio-Economic and Environmental Impacts."

[18] Fernandez, P. V. (1976) 'Custom Law in Pre-Conquest Philippines', University of the Philippines Law Center, Quezon City, Philippines.

[19] 1902 Organic Act, 1935 Constitution, 1973 Constitution, 1987 Constitution.

[20] Pulhin, Juan M., et al. "Tenure Reform on Philippine Forest Lands: Assessment of Socio-Economic and Environmental Impacts."

[21] Pulhin, Juan M., et al. "Tenure Reform on Philippine Forest Lands: Assessment of Socio-Economic and Environmental Impacts."

[22] Calderon, Ricardo, et al. "Analysis of Key Drivers of Deforestation and Forest Degradation in the Philippines", 2013.

[23] Pulhin, Juan M., et al. "Tenure Reform on Philippine Forest Lands: Assessment of Socio-Economic and Environmental Impacts."

[24] Letter of Instruction 1260.

[25] Calderon, Ricardo, et al. "Analysis of Key Drivers of Deforestation and Forest Degradation in the Philippines", 2013.

In 1986, at the end of a 20-year dictatorial rule, major policy changes in the forest sector centered on social justice and equity, echoing the ISFP.[26] The laws and regulations shifted from a monopolistic forestry industry to a more people responsive and participatory approach, which, among others, finally provided tenurial security to upland communities and individuals.

In 1995, Executive Order (EO) 263 was passed; a landmark policy that institutionalized the Community-Based Forestry Management (CBFM) Program as the government's national strategy for the management and protection of forests and its resources. Through EO 263, land tenure instruments were granted to organized upland communities, people's organizations (POs), or individual households/families. These included the introduction of the Community-Based Forestry Management Agreement (CBFMA) and the Certificate of Ancestral Domain/Land Claims - Community-Based Forest Management Agreement (CAD/LC-CBFMA). EO 263's Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) were released a year later. In 2004, the DENR issued its revised IRR (DENR AO 2004-29), which aimed to simplify the processes and programs that supported the CBFM strategy.

In 1997, the Indigenous People's Rights Act (Republic Act No. 8371 or IPRA) was passed. It mandated the State to protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities and their ancestral domains.[27] The law recognizes the applicability of customary laws governing property rights or relations in determining the ownership and extent of ancestral domains.[28] Indigenous peoples whose ancestral domains have been officially delineated and determined by the National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP) were issued a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) or Certificate of Ancestral Land Title (CALT) in the name of the community concerned.[29] In contrast to CBFMAs, CADTs and CALTs are based on established legitimate claims by IPs over their ancestral lands and provide perpetual ownership, with the limitation that they cannot sell their lands.[30] However, while tenure security is guaranteed, these ancestral domains are the most disputed tenure regime in the Philippines, due to the size of the area covered. It is estimated, although unverified, that 85% of the country's remaining forests are located within ancestral domains, either recognized as CADT or in the process after being claimed as ancestral domains.[31] Due to the limited time of this study, it is recommended that a review can be conducted focused on IPs and the CSOS which support their ownership and protection of ancestral domains.

As of DENR's 2018 data, 1,884 CBFMAs have been issued to 1,884 POs, covering 1,615,598 hectares. POs significantly have more male (at 124,306) than female members (at 67,050). The breakdown of CBFMAs among the Philippines' regions are as follows[32]:

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[26] DENR Policy Advisory Group (1987) 'DENR Policy and Program Agenda for the Environment and Natural Resources Sector', Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Quezon City, Philippines.
[27] Section 2(b), Republic Act No. 8371 or The Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997 ("RA 8371).
[28] Section 2(b), RA 8371.
[29] Section 3(B), RA 8371.

[30] Sections 4-12, RA 8371.

[31] GIZ, Improving governance of tenure: Enhancing guidance for the issuance of a unified tenure system. p. 28

[32] DENR, Forestry Statistics, 2018.

Region	No. Issued	Tenured Area	Beneficiaries			No. of People's Organization
			No. of Members			
			Total	Male	Female	
Philippines	**1,884**	**1,615,598**	**191,356**	**124,306**	**67,050**	**1,884**
CAR	88	62,787	1,647	1,193	454	88
Region 1	139	38,654	11,951	7,999	3,952	139
Region 2	109	264,280	8,420	6,421	1,999	109
Region 3	120	66,823	6,242	4,893	1,349	120
Region 4A	47	18,401	3,760	2,319	1,441	47
MIMAROPA	77	90,145	6,836	4,566	2,270	77
Region 5	119	49,702	8,462	5,603	2,859	119
Region 6	104	34,054	8,555	5,691	2,864	104
Region 7	211	57,656	14,794	9,149	5,645	211
Region 8	144	117,509	8,355	5,447	2,908	144
Region 9	145	90,193	10,948	6,842	4,106	145
Region 10	294	209,147	28,537	19,365	9,172	294
Region 11	105	210,063	8,633	6,233	2,400	105
Region 12	56	96,101	9,943	7,462	2,481	56
Region 13	126	210,083	54,273	31,123	23,150	126

c. **Organization and Administration**

i. **Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)**

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is the primary government agency mandated to sustainably manage and develop the country's natural resources.[33] Within the DENR, the Forest Management Bureau (FMB) is the primary bureau assigned to oversee the implementation of the CBFM.[34]

The DENR has field offices at the Regional (RENRO), Provincial (PENRO), and Community (CENRO) level. These offices are headed by the Regional Executive Director (RED), Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer, and Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer, respectively. Each office has their own responsibilities under the CBFM.

The CENRO is directly responsible for implementing the CBFM within its jurisdiction, and coordinating with LGUs, other government agencies, Non-Government Agencies (NGAs), and private entities.[35] CENROs must submit periodic reports of CBFM implementation for the PENRO's evaluation and database.[36] CENROs must also provide quarterly reports of PO's activities and outputs, on their organizational, social and economic development and the corresponding influence or impact towards the promotion of sustainable resource use and development.[37]

The PENRO supervises CENROs in the implementation of CBFM in the province, including the submission of periodic reports and the maintenance of a database for all CBFM projects in the province.[38] PENROs are also tasked to make the preliminary delineation maps that are used to determine the metes and bounds of areas to be handed over for the CBFM POs' management.[39]

The RED, assisted by the Regional Technical Director (RTD) for Forest Management Service, provides oversight in the implementation of the CBFM in the region and must maintain a database that serves as the repository of information on CBFM at the regional level.[40] The RED is required to submit quarterly reports on program implementation, including monitoring and evaluation to the FMB and Undersecretary for Field Operations. The FMB consolidates these to annual reports for the DENR Secretary.[41]

Collectively, the field offices are mandated to provide a continuing systematic orientation for local government executives at the barangay, municipal, and provincial level, local units of relevant national government agencies, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and financing organizations on the CBFM concepts, principles, objectives, processes and activities.[42] DENR field offices must also maintain and continuously update control maps and associated registries indicating the various DENR projects and tenure

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[33] Executive Order No. 192, series of 1987

[34] Section 33, DENR AO 2004-09. The FMB has the following functions and responsibilities: a. Review CBFM programs, projects, and activities of DENR to identify issues and lessons learned; b. Draft policies, guidelines, and procedures on CBFM; c. Prepare and monitor implementation of the national CBFM program of action; d. Liaise with other government and non-government organizations for support and/or participation in the program; e. Assist in the development and preparation of project proposals for financial support by donor agencies; f. Develop and maintain improved management information systems on CBFMP within the DENR; g. Serve as the technical secretariat of the CBFM Steering Committee; and h. Perform such other functions as may be directed by the Steering Committee and/or the Secretary of the DENR.

[35] Section 36, DENR AO 2004-09.

[36] Section 36, DENR AO 2004-09.

[37] Section 36, DENR AO 2004-09.

[38] Section 35, DENR AO 2004-09.

[39] Section 9, DENR AO 2004-09.

[40] Section 34, DENR AO 2004-09.

[41] Section 34, DENR AO 2004-09.

[42] Section 8, DENR AO 2004-09.

instruments over forestlands in their jurisdiction.[43] These control maps and registries should be harmonized with the Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUPS) of the respective LGU and are open to the public.[44]

ii. Local Government Units

The Local Government Code delegated to provinces, cities, and municipalities, the enforcement and implementation of forestry laws on community-based forestry projects, subject to the DENR's supervision, control, and review:

Local Government Unit	Devolved Powers
Provinces	The enforcement of the laws, rules and regulations in community-based forestry project areas, community watersheds and communal forests.[45]
Cities/ Municipalities	The implementation, management, development of and the responsibility for the sustainability of the community-based forestry projects and activities.[46]
Barangays	No devolved forest management functions and responsibilities.[47] Barangay officials may be designated or deputized by the DENR as DENROs subject to specific rules and regulations to perform environmental functions, including forest protection upon prior consultation with the local Chief Executives.[48]

LGUs may appoint an Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Officer or even create an ENR office to effectively implement the devolved forest management functions.[49] They may also enter into arrangements with the local DENR Office for one of their officers to act as the LGUs' ENRO.[50]

iii. Local Communities

The principal participants in Community-Based Forest Management Program (CBFMP) are the local communities, represented by People's Organizations (POs).[51] POs are a group of people, which may be an association, cooperative, federation, or other legal entity established by the community to undertake collective action to address community concerns and needs and mutually share benefits from the endeavor.[52] POs are granted access to the forestland resources under long term tenurial agreements, provided they employ environment-friendly, ecologically-sustainable, and labor-intensive harvesting methods.[53]

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[43] Section. 9, DENR AO 2004-09.
[44] Section. 9, DENR AO 2004-09.
[45] Section 17.3.1, RA 7160 and Section 5.1.1 ,DENR-DILG Joint Memorandum Circular ("JMC") NO. 98-01.
[46] Sections 17.3.2 and 17.3.3, 1991 Local Government Code and Sections 5.2.1 and 5.3.1, DENR-DILG JMC No. 98-01.
[47] Section 5.4.1, DENR-DILG JMC No. 98-01.
[48] Section 5.4.2, DENR-DILG JMC No. 98-01.
[49] Sections 5 and 7.2, DENR-DILG JMC No. 98-01.
[50] Sections 5 and 7.2., DENR-DILG JMC No. 98-01.
[51] Section 5, DENR AO 2004-09.
[52] Section 3, DENR AO 2004-09.
[53] Section 3, EO 263.

POs may also be a member of a local, regional, and/or national CBFM Federation.

iv. Other Key Actors

1. CBFM Steering Committee

EO 263 created a CBFM Steering Committee[54], chaired by the DENR Secretary, tasked to formulate and develop policy guidelines that will create incentives and conditions necessary to effectively carry out the CBFM strategy.[55] The Committee is tasked to review and resolve policy gaps of the CBFM Plan with other programs and projects in the Environment and Natural Resources Sector and other sectors, review and approve the CBFMP Comprehensive Action Plan, and secure support, participation, and funding for the CBFMP.[56] However, the Steering Committee has remained inoperative, due to difficulty in organizing meetings among its high-level members.

2. Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG)

The DILG is mandated to assist the President in the exercise of general supervision over local governments and advise him on the promulgation of policies, rules, regulations and other issuances on the general supervision over local governments and on public order and safety.[57]

The DILG is mandated to coordinate and assist the DENR to prepare the LGUs to undertake their shared responsibilities in the sustainable management of forest land resources[58] including aiding in periodic monitoring of devolved forest management functions[59] and assisting in seeking technical and financial assistance.[60]

3. National Commission of Indigenous Peoples (NCIP)

The NCIP is the primary government agency mandated to formulate and implement policies, plans and programs that recognize, protect and promote the rights of ICCs/IPs.[61]

All resource management/utilization instruments within ancestral lands and domains issued after the effectivity of the IPRA and upon initial determination by the NCIP shall be jointly reviewed by the DENR and NCIP.[62]

Under the CBFM, the NCIP assists in the formation of POs, when IPs are involved.[63] Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICCs)/Indigenous People (IPs) whose claims to ancestral domains/lands have been recognized through Certificates of Ancestral Domain Claims (CADCs) or Certificates of Ancestral Land

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[54] Members include Departments of Agriculture, Trade and Industry, Agrarian Reform, Finance, Science and Technology, Labor and Employment, Interior and Local Government, Budget and Management, National Defense and Justice; National Economic Development and Authority; Philippine Commission on Countrywide Development under the Office of the President, Committee on Flagship Programs and Projects of the Office of the President; Presidential Management Staff under the Office of the President; Cooperative Development Authority, and Offices of Northern and Southern Cultural Communities. The Committee may invite representatives from the Philippine Chamber of Commerce, Philippine Wood Products Association, NGO coalition groups, and other public and private organizations to become members of the Steering Committee
[55] Section 5, Executive Order 263.
[56] Section 32, DENR AO 2004-09.
[57] Section 5, RA 6975.
[58] Section 1.4, DENR-DILG JMC No. 98-01.
[59] Section 7.5, DENR-DILG JMC No. 98-01.
[60] Section 10.3, DENR-DILG JMC No. 98-01.
[61] Section 3(k), RA 8371.
[62] Section 4.2, Joint DENR-NCIP Memorandum Circular (MC) 2003-01.
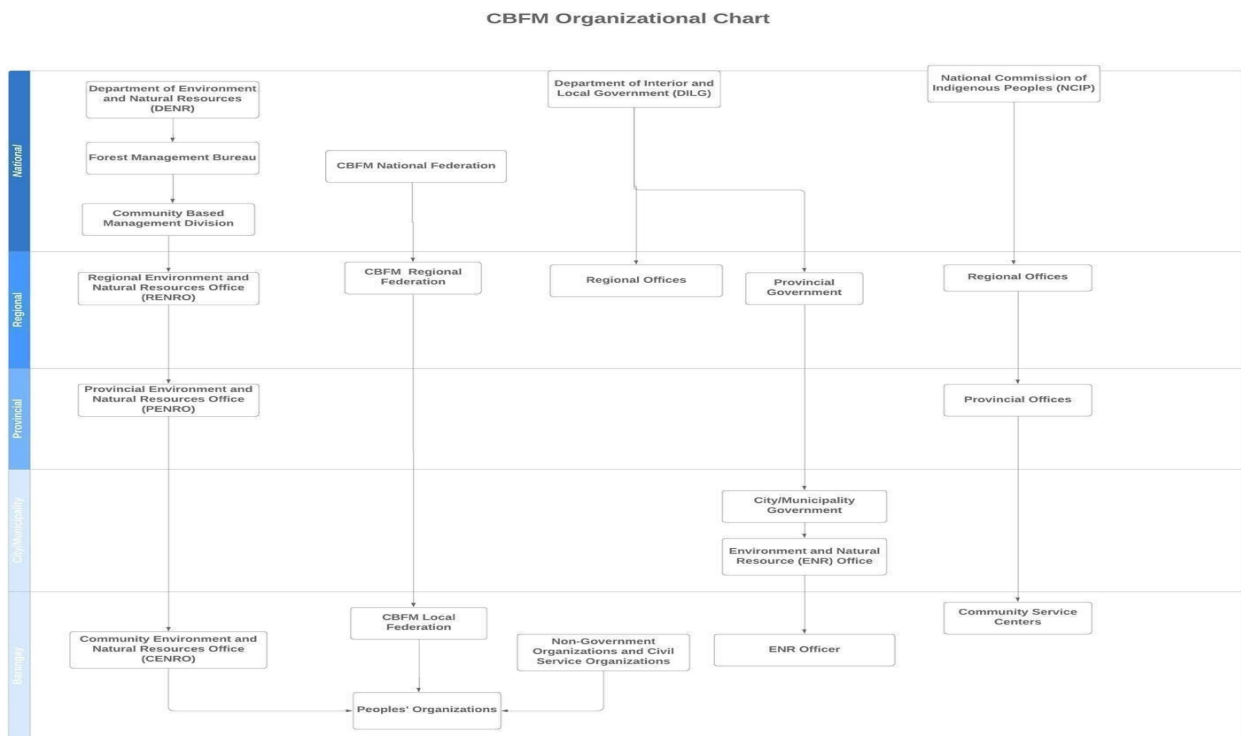[63] Section 12, DENR AO 2004-09.

Claims (CALCs), or whose domains are recognized by themselves and neighboring communities has the choice to participate in the CBFM strategy.[64]

4. Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)

NGOs perform vital roles in providing various forms of assistance to CBFM participants.[65] These include community organizing and training, establishment of livelihood projects, technical support for forestry activities like plantation establishment and maintenance, monitoring and evaluation of CBFM activities, and linking POs with government and other service-providing institutions.[66]

NGOs in the Philippine forestry sector mushroomed during the late 1980s to early 1990s when a fundamental shift in forest policy and fund allocation took place, favoring the implementation of CBFM activities.[67] But, the numbers have decreased due to dwindling financial support from the government and external agencies.

5. CBFM Organizational Chart[68]

CBFM Organizational Chart

[64] Section 4, DENR AO 2004-09.
[65] Pulhin, Juan M., et al. *Philippines Community-Based Forest Management. Philippines Community-Based Forest Management, 2005.*
[66] Pulhin, Juan M., et al. *Philippines Community-Based Forest Management. Philippines Community-Based Forest Management, 2005.*
[67] Kulbahusshan, Balooni, et al.," The effectiveness of decentralisation reforms in the Philippines's forestry sector", 2008.
[68] DENR Administrative Order (AO) 2004-09.

d. The CBFMA as a Tenurial Instrument

i. In General

CBFM was institutionalized under EO 263 as the national strategy to achieve sustainable forestry and social justice.[69] Subject to prior vested rights, it was applied to all forest lands and integrated and unified all previous forestry programs.[70][71]

The CBFM is anchored on current and applicable policies of the Philippine government to (1) democratize access to forests and forest resources, (2) improve the upland communities' socio-economic condition, (3) decentralize and devolve forest and forestland management, and (4) conserve biodiversity and maintain the environmental services of forests and forestlands to both on-site and off-site communities.[72]

Community Based Forest Management Agreement (CBFMA) is one of the tenurial instruments issued to qualified participants under the CBFM. A CBFMA is an agreement between the DENR and the participating People's Organizations (POs).[73] It was designed to ensure that the participating community enjoys the benefits of sustainable management, conservation, and utilization of forest lands and natural resources within a defined area.[74]

All uplands and coastal lands considered as part of the public domain can be covered by a CBFMA except for the following:

1. Areas covered by existing prior rights except when the lessee, permittee, or agreement holder executes a waiver in favor of the PO applying for the CBFM Agreement. Upon termination of any pre-existing permit for non-timber forest products however, the permit shall not be renewed and any new permit shall be given to the CBFMA holder;
2. Protected areas as mandated in RA 7586 (NIPAS Law) and its implementing rules and regulation;
3. Forest lands which have been assigned by law under the administration and control of other government agencies, except upon written consent of the government agency concerned;
4. NCIP certified ancestral lands and domains, except when the ICCs/IPs opt to participate in CBFM;
5. Presence of communities residing within or adjacent to forest lands and who are largely dependent on forest lands resources for their livelihood; and
6. Areas adjacent to or adjoining to existing CBFM projects.[75]

The CBFMA has a duration of twenty-five (25) years, that is renewable for another 25 years.[76]

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[69] Section 1, Executive Order (EO) No. 263.
[70] This included the Integrated Social Forestry Program (ISFP), Upland Development Project (UDP), Forest Land Management Program (FLMP), Community Forestry Program (CFP), Low Income Upland Communities Project (LIUCP), Regional Resources Management Project (RRMP), Natural Resource Management Program (NRMP), Forestry Sector Project (FSP), and Coastal Environment Program (CEP).
[71] Section 4, DENR Administrative Order (AO) 2004-09.
[72] "CBFM: A National Strategy for Sustainable Forest Management ." FFTC Agricultural Policy Platform (FFTC-AP), FFTC Agricultural Policy Platform (FFTC-AP), 30 July 2014, available at: http://ap.fftc.agnet.org/ap_db.php?id=280&print=1.
[73] Section 14(a), DENR AO 2004-09.
[74] Section 14(a), DENR AO 2004-09.
[75] Section 10, DENR AO 2004-09)
[76] Section 14(a), DENR AO 2004-09.

As of 2018, over 2,493,000 hectares of forestland is covered by 4,011 tenurial instruments.[77] Of this, 1,615,598 hectares are covered by 1,884 Community Based Forest Management Agreements (CBFMAs) managed by 1,884 POs.[78]

ii. Qualifications

A CBFMA is granted to POs with the following qualifications:

1.Members shall be Filipino citizens; and
2.Members may either be:
   a. Actually tilling portions of the area to be awarded;
   b. Traditionally utilizing the resource for all or substantial portion of their livelihood; or
   c. Actually residing within or adjacent to, and are dependent on and actually developing portions of the areas to be awarded.[79]

iii. Process

The CBFMA generally has four stages: (1) Validation and PO Formation, (2) Processing and Approval, (3) Planning, and (4) Implementation and Monitoring.[80]

1. Validation and PO Formation

A multi-sectoral group[81] validates that the intended CBFM participants possess the required qualifications through consultation meetings. Once validated, the CENRO, with the aid of the LGU and NCIP (in case IPs are involved) facilitates the formation of a PO with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), or other registering agency.

2. Processing and Approval

A registered PO, with the aid of CENRO, shall provide the following requirements:

1. Certificate of Registration of the people's organization;
2. List of officers and members of the PO and their respective addresses;
3. Resolution authorizing any of the officers of the PO to file the application for CBFMA; and
4. NCIP certification precondition pursuant to Sec 59 of IPRA.[82]

Upon application, the CENRO shall prepare a delineation map within five (5) working days, which shall be part of the CBFMA.[83] Complete applications shall then undergo an approval process[84], depending on its area coverage:

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[77] Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippine Forestry Statistics 2018, available at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/11CD_G3T1GFBCYi0jDZLp0oab12NwAtS-/view.
[78] Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippine Forestry Statistics 2018, available at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/11CD_G3T1GFBCYi0jDZLp0oab12NwAtS-/view.
[79] Section 5, DENR AO 2004-09.
[80] Sections 13, 15, 18-23, and 24-29, DENR Administrative Order (AO) 2004-09.
[81] The group is composed of composed of the DENR, Local Government Unit (LGU), other government agencies, NGO, NCIP (If there are IPs involved) and other sectors, at the local level.
[82] Section 15, DENR AO 2004-09.
[83] Section 15, DENR AO 2004-09.
[84] Section 15, DENR AO 2004-09.

Land Covered	CENRO (review and approval within 10 working days)	PENRO (review and approval within 5 working days)	RED (review and approval within 5 working days)	FMB review and approval within 5 working days)	DENR Secretary (review and approval within 5 working days)
500 hectares or below	▓▓				
More than 500 hectares to 5000 hectares.	▓▓	▓▓			
More than 5000 to 20000 hectares.	▓▓	▓▓	▓▓		
More than 20000 hectares	▓▓	▓▓	▓▓	▓▓	▓▓

3. Planning

The planning stage is composed of the preparation of a Community Resource Management Framework (CRMF) and a five-year work plan. A CRMF is prepared within 30 days after the CBFMA's approval.

A CRMF is a community's strategic plan on how to manage and benefit from the forest resources on a sustainable basis.[85] It provides detailed activities for the first 5 years which shall serve as the PO's 5-year work plan and contains the PO's vision, mission, goals and objectives, and physical development goals and objectives for indicative forest management strategies.[86] The CRMF shall also serve as the Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) for CBFM, which describes the environmental impacts of and mitigation and enhancement measures for activities to be undertaken in the area.[87]

The CRMF is completed by the PO, with the assistance of the CENRO, LGU, and assisting organizations and NGOs through orientations and training.

The CRMF should have the following components:

1. Livelihood. The CENRO, LGU, assisting organizations, and NGO shall provide supervision and guidance to the PO in identifying and setting up livelihood enterprises in upland and coastal areas.
2. Land Uses within the CBFM area. The CENRO shall serve as adviser and resource person in the Planning Team's assessment of existing and potential land uses as well as appropriate resource production systems.

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[85] Section 18, DENR AO 2004-09.
[86] Section 18, DENR AO 2004-09.
[87] Section 20, DENR AO 2004-09.

3. Market Information System. The PO shall be assisted in setting-up and regular updating of the market information system.
4. Criteria and Indicators for CBFM. Adoption of an appropriate system of criteria and indicators (C&I) as a tool for project management, monitoring, assessment, and reporting.[88]

Once a CRMF is affirmed, the PO, with the CENRO and LGU, shall prepare the five-year work plan. The work plan shall contain the baseline information, detailed strategies, activities, and targets for five years on protection, rehabilitation, development and resource utilization, organizational strengthening, financing, marketing and enterprise development.[89] It should be prepared three months before expiration of the existing plan.[90]

4. Implementation and Monitoring

The development and management of CBFM areas shall follow the CRMF. The appropriate land use and forest management systems in the production forest and protection forest shall be determined by the PO with the assistance of the CENRO to ensure the sustainability and stability in the CBFM areas.[91]

The management and development in the CBFM areas shall include plantation establishment in open areas and application of silvicultural programs[92].

A multi-sectoral team composed of representatives from the RENRO, PENRO, CENRO, LGU, AOs/NGOS, and other concerned sectors shall annually monitor and evaluate implementation.[93] The M&E Report is submitted to the DENR RED and DENR-FMB. The CENRO, PENRO, and RENRO are also tasked to regularly monitor CBFMA implementation.[94]

CBFMAs may be nullified due to non-compliance with, or continued violations of its the terms and conditions.[95]

iv. Rights of CBFMA Holders

CBFMAs legally entitle their holders to *access, use, management* and *exclusion* rights for a period of 25 years, and renewable for another 25 years. Specifically, the PO is granted the following rights:

1. To occupy, develop, protect, manage, and utilize the forest lands and its resources within a designated CBFM area and claim ownership of introduced improvements.
2. When appropriate, allocate to members and regulate rights to use and sustainably manage forest lands resources within the CBFM area[96];
3. To be exempted from paying land rental for use of the CBFM areas[97];
4. To be properly informed of and consulted on all government projects to be implemented in the area. A PO's consent shall be secured by the DENR prior to granting and/or renewal of contracts, leases,

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[88] Section 18, DENR AO 2004-09.
[89] Section 21, DENR AO 2004-09.
[90] Section 21, DENR AO 2004-09.
[91] Section 24, DENR AO 2004-09.
[92] Includes timber stand improvement (TSI), assisted natural regeneration (ANR), other silvicultural management systems in plantation and natural forests, development of non-timber forest resources, and activity for biodiversity utilization and conservation.
[93] Section 30, DENR AO 2004-09.
[94] Section 30, DENR AO 2004-09.
[95] Section 38, DENR AO 2004-09.
[96] Section 6, AO 2004-09.
[97] Section 6, AO 2004-09.

and permits for the extraction and utilization of natural resources within the area to a third party; provided that an equitable sharing agreement shall be executed by such third party with the PO prior to any grant or renewal of such contracts, leases, and permits[98];

5. To be given preferential access by the DENR to all available assistance in the development and implementation of the Community Resource Management Framework and 5-year Work Plan of the PO[99];

6. To enter into agreements or contracts with private or government entities for the development of the whole or portions of the CBFM area, and/or economic activities within it.[100] This should be consistent with the CRMF and the 5-year Work Plan.[101]

7. To obtain just compensation on improvements made in the CBFMA area, based on the fair market value, when the CBFMA is terminated without fault or negligence on the CBFMA holder[102];

8. Use as collateral the standing crops in the area planted by them, subject to the affirmation of the DENR issuing authority concerned.[103]

v. Restrictions

Since the State retains the right to alienate the land, rights to CBFM areas are restricted:

1. The CBFMA becomes unenforceable if a CBFM area is reclassified as alienable and disposable, or to any other legal status allowing settlers ownership rights greater than those offered under the CBFMA.[104]

2. Non-transferable.[105]

3. Harvesting, processing, and transport of forest and biodiversity products in CBFM areas is subject to existing rules and regulations.[106]

vi. Conditions

Besides the implementation of the CBFMA, the CRMF and Work Plan, the PO is also responsible for the following:

1. Take the lead in boundary delineation and parcellary surveys within their CBFM area;
2. Designate areas according to their sustainable use and, when appropriate, allocate and regulate resource-use rights in accordance with national laws, rules, and regulations;
3. Develop and implement equitable benefit-sharing arrangements among its members;
4. Protect, rehabilitate, and conserve the natural resources in the CBFM area and assist government in the protection of adjacent forest lands;
5. Develop and enforce policies on the rights and responsibilities of PO members and accountability of PO leaders;

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[98] Section 6, AO 2004-09.
[99] Section 6, AO 2004-09.
[100] Section 6, AO 2004-09.
[101] Section 28, DENR AO 2004-09.
[102] Section 16, AO 2004-09.
[103] Section 17, DENR AO 2004-09.
[104] Section 16, DENR AO 2004-09.
[105] Section 17, DENR AO 2004-09.
[106] Section 26, DENR AO 2004-09.

6. Be accountable for any violation borne by the subcontractor in which he/she had entered into for the development of the entire or portions of the CBFMA area, and/or economic activities.
7. Develop mechanisms for addressing conflicts regarding forest use and protection;
8. Be transparent and promote participatory management and consensus building in all activities and endeavors; and
9. Pay forest charges for forest products harvested from natural forest as well as fees and other taxes required by the government.[107]

The DENR can deputize PO members as Deputy Environment and Natural Resources Officers to have legal authority to assist the government in protecting the forest lands, such as apprehending illegal loggers and confiscating illegally cut timber.[108]

vii. Implementation

To date, close to 2,493,000 million hectares of forests and forestlands are in the hands of local communities compared to less than 200,000 hectares in 1986.[109]

In general, land tenure security of CBFMA holders reportedly improved.[110] In terms of access, the PO members do not have to worry about speculators and land grabbers, and can exclude other parties from their claimed lands and resources.[111] The tenure instruments also provide them certain political space to participate in the management of common-pool resource areas such as forested areas which used to be the sole domain of the State and/or TLA holders.[112]

Even so, CBFMA holders have reported difficulties in exercising their rights, due to the following key issues:
1. **DENR retains control and power of resource use rights** – Despite the intent to decentralize management, the rights of CBFMA holders are heavily controlled by the DENR. DENR can cancel CBFMAs and declare moratoriums on issuance of new forest management agreements, at any time. In addition, harvesting of forest products, especially timber, requires the application of Resource Use Permits (RUPs), which involve time and transaction costs. Tenurial instruments may also be unilaterally suspended or cancelled by the DENR, at any time and without due process, as experienced in 2006 where the DENR Secretary unilaterally suspended all existing CBFMAs in 8 regions.[113] This heavy-handed management of CBFM lives little space for local communities to be effectively involved in goal-setting and decision-making processes.
2. **Failure of CBFM to provide sustainable livelihoods** – due to the complicated, costly, and at times, arbitrary process to acquire the necessary permits, it is difficult for communities to maintain adequate and continuous income-generating activities from the CBFM areas. There are also no benefit-sharing arrangements with the government that provide financial support.
3. **Lack of adequate capacity building of POs** - Communities as *de facto* forest managers need a comprehensive and continuing capacity building encompassing the whole range of technical,

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[107] Section 7, DENR AO 2004-09.
[108] Section 25, DENR AO 2004-09.
[109] DENR, Philippine Forestry Statistics, 2018.
[110] Pulhin, Juan M., et al. Tenure Reform on Philippine Forest Lands: Assessment of Socio-Economic and Environmental Impacts. College of Forestry and Natural Resources, 2008.
[111] Pulhin, Juan M., et al. Tenure Reform on Philippine Forest Lands: Assessment of Socio-Economic and Environmental Impacts. College of Forestry and Natural Resources, 2008.
[112] Pulhin, Juan M., et al. Tenure Reform on Philippine Forest Lands: Assessment of Socio-Economic and Environmental Impacts. College of Forestry and Natural Resources, 2008.
[113] Pulhin, Juan M., et al., "People, power and timber: The politics of community-based forest management", 2009.

managerial, financial, and organization aspects of sustainable forest management.[114] Most POs are ill-equipped, and even outsource necessary requirements such as the CRMFs and Work Plans, that requires additional costs.[115]

4. **Lack of adequate funding** – While EO 263 requires the DENR to allot adequate funding to implement the CBFM and establish a separate fund[116], in reality, CBFM only received a small fraction of the total forestry sector budget the last five years. The lack of available financial resources has crippled the proper implementation of CBFM.

These issues, and their possible solutions were discussed during this report's interviews and workshops.

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[114] Pulhin, Juan M. et al. "Three decades of community-based forest management in the Philippines: emerging lessons for sustainable and equitable forest management", 2007).
[115] Pulhin, Juan M., et al. Tenure Reform on Philippine Forest Lands: Assessment of Socio-Economic and Environmental Impacts. College of Forestry and Natural Resources, 2008.
[116] Sections 7 and 8, EO 263.

IV. OUTCOMES, CONDITIONS, AND CONSTRAINTS OF THE CBFM STRATEGY

Representatives[117] from POs, NGOs, academic institutions, and the government were interviewed on their views on the outcomes, conditions, and constraints of the CBFM strategy on seven key themes: tenure security, effective and inclusive self-governance, access to external support, halting external deforestation, community-based conservation, livelihood improvement, and the role of CSOs.

The participants of the report were composed of CSOs, specifically 11 PO representatives, 9 NGO participants, and 2 members from the academe, totaling 22 interviewees. These research participants were selected on the basis of: 1) accessibility, 2) response time; and 3) willingness to participate. The participants represented the country's different areas:

Area	Number of Interviewees
Luzon (NCR, Regions 2, IV-A, MIMAROPA, 5)	13
Visayas (Regions 7 and 8)	6
Mindanao (Region 11)	3

For NGOs, interviewees were selected based on number of prevailing projects under the CBFM strategy, number of PO partners, geographic location, and recommendations by PO participants and DENR. For POs, participants were selected based on their geographic location, CBFM area size, number of members, and recommendations by DENRand participant CSOs.

Officers of DENR National Office's Community Forestry Section, which oversee the implementation of the CBFM strategy, were also consulted. The list of all interviewees is detailed in Annex A.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted, using a questionnaire (Annex C) which delved into the interviewees' views on the effect of the CBFM strategy on each key theme, and the conditions that helped and constraints that hindered the success of each outcome. Each interviewee was requested to score the effect of the CBFM strategy on each of the expected outcomes, based on the following scale:

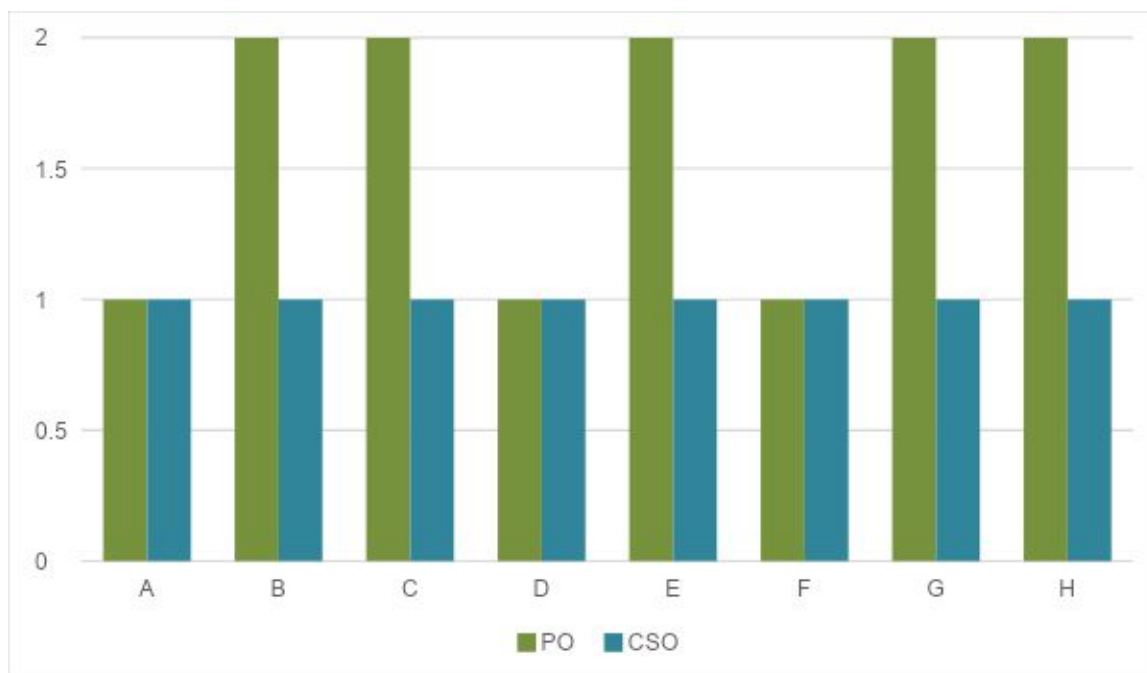| -2	-1	0	+1	+2
Very negative/ inadequate	slightly negative/ inadequate	negligible/ neutral	slightly positive/ adequate	very positive/adequate

An overview of the mode for each theme and the difference in ratings by the different CSOs are included in Annex D. However, some participants chose not to rate a theme which they were unfamiliar with or was not their organization's focus. Due to participants' time constraints, a number of interviews had to be shortened.

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[117] List of all interviewees under Annex "A".

Based on the CBFM review and interviews, a workshop was organized last 7 February 2020 at Alabang, Muntinlupa City, Philippines. Of the 22 interviewees, 11 participants attended. The workshop was designed to aid participants to reflect on the key conditions and constraints identified during the interviews and determine strategies to strengthen how they can shape conditions and overcome constraints.

Results and Discussion

This section provides the detailed accounts of the research participants; and emerging constraints, and enabling conditions for each CBFM outcome. In general, most POs gave a higher rating on the different CBFM outcomes. They perfectly rated effective and inclusive self-governance; access to external support; halting external deforestation; difference in livelihood improvements; and role of CSOs. On the other hand, most CSOs rated all aspects as slightly positive/adequate. While ratings from both POs and CSOs are on the positive end, some of their specific experiences tell otherwise.

A. Tenure Security
B. Effective and Inclusive Self Governance
C. Access to External Support
D. Halting External Deforestation
E. Communities Maintaining Forest Cover
F. Livelihood Improvement
G. Difference in Livelihood Improvements
H. Role of CSOs

a. Tenure security

Majority of the research participants rated CBFMA's effect on tenure security as mostly slightly positive (1). Participants highlighted four expected outcomes in tenure security: First, the PO's full ownership of the area; second, the protection and partnership with LGUs and government agencies; third, accomplishment of their CRMF framework; and lastly, assistance to the community in forest protection and livelihood. In reality,

participants only felt partial ownership over the CBFM area because of LGU resistance and the number of claimants and migrants in the area. Despite this, participants felt they were able to accomplish most DENR requirements under their CRMF and also opened assistance to their communities as proven by government projects (National Greening Program, agriculture projects with the DA) and livelihood support POs have received.

Participants agreed that the legal recognition of the community's rights over the CBFMA-awarded area and its resources, was one of the strongest factors that strengthened tenure security. Visayas University (VSU) shared that some POs were previously informal settlers that DENR assisted to become CBFMA holders. NGO Yakap Kalikasan said the shift proved that government recognized communities' pivotal role in forest conservation and management.

From the POs interviewed, their legal recognition as duly registered associations fostered a feeling of ownership and responsibility over the land. The POs reported that this also developed a sense of community within their members. NGO Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE) shared that the CBFM strategy aided their forest conservation work to be more strategic and have greater impact as they now dealt with organizations versus individuals or households. It helped funders and NGOs more easily provide access to resources and support.

However, this effect is not widespread. NGO Environmental Legal Assistance Center (ELAC) shared other POs' difficulty to mobilize cooperation and action among its members. ELAC and VSU emphasized the importance of establishing unity within POs to strengthen tenure security. ELAC stated it is essential for the CBFM strategy to focus on cultivating community and sense of ownership, while being sensitive to the people's existing culture and context. CBFM's objectives should be complemented by relevant, regular and sustainable programs, such as community organization, leadership, and enterprise and livelihood management. FPE shared the same sentiment that there is a preference to assist POs that are more united, leaving those that were not adequately organized on their own.

Another important factor was a proper understanding of the rights, responsibilities, and limitations provided to CBFM holders. PO Naghisuang Mag-uuma sa Taba-ao (NAGMATA) reported that members gained confidence against encroachers and in reporting illegal activity when they are able to explain their rights as CBFMA holders. In contrast, some PO members have tried to sell CBFM areas to businesses, due to a misunderstanding that they owned the land. Thus, businesses and resorts have been established in some CBFM areas. Yakap Kalikasan also shared that some POs only see the CBFMA as a piece of paper, and do not appreciate the obligations and responsibilities attached to it, especially to foster forest protection. To address this, FPE recommended stronger IEC campaigns or workshops focused on a proper understanding of CBFM rights and responsibilities.

NGO Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) shared that stronger monitoring of PO establishment is still needed. NTFP reported the formation of illegitimate POs by DENR contractors, or those led by lawyers or businesses instead of forest communities.

DENR's regular support and technical assistance was also credited as an important factor. UKAFA and KBKP in Davao City commended DENR's help in establishing their PO, which included aid in developing their CRMF and work plans. They also reported that DENR regularly visits and monitors their activities. NGO Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) in Cebu City shared that DENR helped resolve conflicts with claimants when it organized a meeting with POs, claimants & community members to discuss CBFM policies, CRMF, and benefit sharing among the stakeholders. However, DENR's

assistance is not consistent. VSU shared that in the same region, the CBFM program still suffers because of a lack of qualified and regular DENR personnel. While the CBFMA provides grounds for revocation, DENR reported it seldom exercises this option. It currently follows general guidelines of due process for reported violations. DENR stated that the agency's priority is to assist all erring POs to comply with the CBFMA, over its cancellation.

During the workshop, participants clarified that DENR's activities, while helpful, are still project-driven. POs are focused on the project implementation, and usually just operates on a project-to-project basis. Officers only monitor a specific project, rather than the PO's status. Consequently, POs also become active only when they receive and implement projects and become inactive once projects are completed.

Other government agencies' recognition of CBFMA holders' rights also strengthen tenure security. The Department of Agriculture (DA) undertakes projects within the CBFMA area with the PO's authorization and partnership. However, some POs, especially in Mindanao and Palawan, expressed difficulty with the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), due to the unresolved overlaps with CBFMA awarded areas and recognized ancestral domains, which have led to the land's divided management. Balikatan and UKAFA in Davao City have reported that there are conflicts between IP and non-IP members, as the former preferred to no longer renew the CBFMA after its validity period and just sell their property rights. As of date, DENR and NCIP have not reached an agreement on how to resolve these overlapping claims, especially after expiration of the CBFMA's 25-year validity period. For now, disagreements are either mediated by the PO chairman through regular meetings with the IP leaders, such as in Balikatan, or through available dispute resolution mechanisms in the barangay with NCIP and DENR's assistance.

Local government support and coordination was also highlighted. NGO's IDIS shared that Davao City's Watershed Management Council increased POs tenure security by supporting initiatives such as the Bantay Bukid program, which provides forest guards across six barangays. DENR has deputized these forest guards as Environmental Natural Resources Officers, which help secure CBFMA areas against trespassers and illegal loggers. In comparison, Palawan POs and NGOs recounted attempts by their own local government to usurp the PO's rights over the area, for mining or large-scale infrastructure projects. POs recalled their difficulty to obtain their LGU's endorsement for CRMF and work plan renewal. These conflicts not only strained POs and NGOs financial resources and manpower, but also raised safety concerns, especially for PO and NGO leaders.

In Visayas and Palawan, CBFM areas' lack of clear delineation have resulted in conflicting claims. In Palawan, some occupants proved ownership through tax declarations issued by local assessors over CBFMA awarded areas. VSU shared that POs struggled to start projects in the contested property. To address this, VSU and the local barangay helped claimants and CBFMA holders enter into benefit sharing arrangements. In these cases, claimants are provided a portion of the area to cultivate and gain income. PO Borbon Tree Farmers Association Incorporated (BTFAI), based in Borbon, Cebu also credited benefit sharing arrangements, and shared that previous claimants have joined their PO as members and aid in forest conservation. VSU stressed these issues could be avoided altogether with proper coordination between the local government and government agencies.

Workshop participants highlighted the need to enhance coordination between agencies and LGUs to address these overlapping claims of land rights in the same areas.

Strong local dispute resolution mechanisms were a common element that increased tenure security. POs shared that the barangay mediated disagreements within the PO and with outsiders. Although less frequent,

matters were also elevated to the Mayor's Office or DENR Central Office for resolution. In other instances, local CSOs, such as ELAC and VSU, acted as mediators. POs valued when these mechanisms were fair, impartial, quick, and readily available.

Depending on the presence of these factors, tenure security's effect in relation to external actors varied. Due to DENR's strong assistance, Balikatan and UKAFA reported a decrease in trespassing and illegal logging after the CBFMA was awarded. Conversely, Palawan and Visayas POs still faced issues of trespassing and illegal activities due to a lack of local government support and limited DENR assistance. Palawan's MCBFCMA organized their own enforcement team against forest violators, funded by the PO or through donations. All CSOs expressed the need for more forest guards to help patrol areas and more participative legal mechanisms that authorized communities to not only report but enforce their rights against encroachers.

The regularity of DENR's assistance affected how POs viewed the need for other CSOs support. In Balikatan and UKAFA, NGO assistance to improve tenure security was not mentioned. In contrast, CSO support in tenure security was cited as crucial in areas where DENR's assistance was minimal or irregular, such as in Palawan.

b. Effective and inclusive self-governance

While POs highly rated their capacity for self-governance at 2, majority of the NGOs and academic institutions provided a rating of -2. Participants hoped that the CBFM strategy would first, develop leadership; second, strengthen community building, especially youth involvement and participation, and lastly, organize communities effectively. In practice, the CBFM strategy developed strong leaders although this is not uniform in all areas. It also contributed to organizational development but not enough to sustainably strengthen organizing work within the PO. Membership involvement was only reported to be strong in a few POs, with most choosing other more profitable livelihoods.

PO leaders reported their right to decide independently for all CBFMA related matters, without intrusion from DENR or other CSOs. They ensure that decision making is effective and inclusive through regular meetings among their officers and general assemblies with the other members. The meetings' frequency depends on the PO, ranging from monthly or quarterly. PO leaders stated that they use these meetings to consult their members on new projects, update them on their progress, as well as hear members' ideas and concerns.).

In Palawan, the Palawan Federation of all CBFM organizations, hold regular board meetings and assemblies. According to Palawan PO MCBFCMA, these assemblies are utilized by POs to share their issues and struggles, and consider solutions based on other POs experiences.

Decision making was generally reported to be equal, between men and women. Many POs interviewed had women leaders. POs and NGOs credited Gender and Development (GAD) related training, which raised awareness and helped develop gender equality in communities.

Some POs, such as Gabriela Masipag Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative (GAMAFA), MCBFCMA, HIMASACA and BTFAI also encourage youth participation and involvement in decision making and have provided youth leaders with education and training.

Leaders were voted during general assemblies, although it was unclear how often elections were held. In UKAFA, their board officers represented the different areas covered by the CBFMA. PO UKAFA said that

the board composition helped ensure inclusivity in decision making. In POs HIMASACA and NAGMATA, governance was strengthened by organizing members into relevant committees such as by responsibilities (community organizing, project management, agroforestry) or livelihood (hog raising, goat raising, vermicast, nursery, water system). Most chairpersons also credited capacity building activities in leadership training and community formation, which helped them lead their communities. In some POs, members also attended these training sessions.

POs stated that their CRMF work plans, and by-laws together with DENR's presence and assistance in meetings helped strengthen decision making and ensure decisions were aligned with the PO's goals and objectives.

While the POs reported strong leadership and collective governance, other CSOs (NGOs and academic institutions) raised concerns on the concentration of power on PO leaders alone. In most POs interviewed, leadership positions are held by the same person or are transferred to family members for many years, without rotation. While this was reportedly with the PO members' approval, some NGOs questioned its effect on the quality and inclusivity of decision making within the community. Some PO leaders also lacked the necessary qualifications and training, especially in handling finances, to effectively lead their organization.

During the workshop, current leaders shared their difficulties in finding successors. In Palawan, the Regional Federation's current officers visit different POs, prior to elections, to encourage potential leaders to run. To guide them, previous officials become advisors, that help them learn how to effectively communicate their community's needs to the government and NGOs.

Both DENR and NGOs reported that POs relied on NGO and government support for major decisions, especially related to the implementation of the CRMF and work plans.

NGOs were concerned if the regular meetings and general assemblies were being effectively run and adequately participated. NGOs in Palawan and Mindanao shared difficulties in gathering PO members together due to time and distance constraints, and PO members' disinterest. As observed by ACIAR, this is highly dependent on the amount of assistance members receive from the PO. In NAGMATA, there is high member participation since they receive various projects and services from the organization. In contrast, BTFAI is experiencing low participation due to problems with past leadership. Membership in the past year dwindled from 41 to 27 members. NAGMATA stated that this was due to the inadequate income they receive to sustain their family's basic needs.

Thus, while active leadership is appreciated, CSOs, besides POs, voiced the need to strengthen collective and inclusive governance and increase transparency in PO's decision making. ELAC observed the lack of a purposive attempt on the government's part to collectively strengthen communities and integrate members in decision making. Usually, training and assistance are concentrated on well-known leaders and already active POs. NGO IDEAS, shared that in most POs, the DENR provided leadership roles to traditional leaders and elders, without a proper election process. VSU raised the same concern that while many POs are determined, they are prematurely left on their own, without the training and skills to act independently and ensure sustainability. In addition, workshop participants highlighted the lack of proper monitoring by DENR of governance-related matters which results in weak regulation and reports of corruption.

FPE voiced the need for more regular training on governance, which NTFP recommended should include PO members. According to IDIS' Legaspi, it is essential to continuously monitor the effects of all community interventions, especially after a project ends. IDEAS echoed that DENR should continuously supervise and

monitor transparency and accountability in organizations. If left unchecked, malpractices will eventually be institutionalized.

c. Access to External Support

All POs ranked CBFM's effect on their access to external support as +2, while majority of the NGOs and academic institutions gave it a rating of +1.

Participants expected the CBFM strategy to introduce partnerships between POs, NGOs, and LGU and create linkages with external organizations. They hoped for assistance in the development and implementation of CBFM policies (including execution of their CRMF and work plans) and training in proposal drafting and project implementation. POs also hoped that access to external support would have less rigid or demanding requirements.

In practice, POs reported receiving a variety of support. DENR has led capacity building activities and training on diverse subjects (training in seedling plantation, gender development, among others) and provided equipment for livelihood projects, such as a tram line in Davao City to transport produce directly to the market. NGOs such as IDIS have provided capacity building support on financial training, watershed protection, and community organizing and leadership while ELAC provides enforcement training, legal assistance and advocacy support. Academic institutions, particularly Visayas State University, have worked with CBFMA communities to provide quality seedlings, and to capacitate communities on proper seedling selection and management.

Despite the variety, most support, especially from the private sector, is concentrated on reforestation aid through seedling donations and tree planting activities. While helpful, POs shared that these activities do not fully address their primary needs, especially in livelihood initiatives. POs shared that they require the most assistance to establish and improve their current livelihood practices. A majority of PO leaders identify the need for resources and capital that will allow them to process and sell their harvested products and alternative livelihoods such as dressmaking and handicrafts. POs stated that besides DENR and select NGOs, most support is sporadic and failed to leave sustainable results.

The recognition of POs as a legitimate legal entity enabled POs access to external support from NGOs, academic institutions, government agencies (particularly DENR, DA, and DTI) and private corporations. Government assistance is usually provided through programs such as the National Greening Program (NGP), the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), and other CBFM related projects.

The DENR is the primary agency responsible for mobilizing support for CBFM POs. This comes in the form of endorsing CBFM POs to other existing CSOs and government agencies for them to implement projects within their respective areas. The DENR is also responsible for ensuring that these projects are aligned with CBFMs policies. Consequently, POs identify that maintaining a good working relationship with the DENR is a primary factor for receiving consistent support through projects and grants. A good track record with the DENR also allows POs to be entrusted with more projects resulting in additional resources for the community.

Such cases are apparent in a majority of the interviewed POs who heavily rely on the DENR's endorsements for grants both from other government agencies, and the private sector. As such, a majority of POs demonstrated a lack of initiative to secure external support, without DENR assistance. VIBANARA reported that the process to look for other support is costly, so they are content with the partnerships DENR can

provide. UKAFA in Davao City shared that they were not aware of other sources of assistance or how to look for them.

Workshop participants highlighted the need to strengthen leaders' political will to proactively look for partners and projects for their community. Leaders and members benefited from proper capacity building workshops that also allowed them to discuss the community's preferred programs and projects. In addition, qualified PO leaders would also ensure that projects will be implemented well.

The lack of initiative is also facilitated by a lack of avenues to network and forge partnerships with other CSOs. POs found it difficult to establish partnerships with other NGOs due to the remote or rural location of their areas. A possible solution are online platforms. HIMASACA updates an existing profile of their PO online through a partnership with NGO, Go Green PH. Tao-Kalikasan leaders have also shown initiative to research and directly contact NGOs online.

Another solution is the establishment and operation of strong CBFM PO Federations. When active, PO federations are able to establish support between communities in the region, provide spaces for POs to establish partnerships and strategies, and market their products. Among the interviewees, POs in Region 2 and MIMAROPA have reported a functioning PO federation. Others remain defunct or meet infrequently to establish any effective support.

It was reported that POs with access to regular NGO assistance tend to depend on them. IDIS reported PO's overreliance for IDIS to provide them partnerships with other CSOs, and assist them to draft proposals and implement awarded projects. PNNI also shared that POs depended on them to help enforce their tenure security against outsiders.

The difficulty of securing external support also varies depending on the requirements needed for grants and projects. Palawan PO MCBFCMA shared that they were discouraged to look for partnerships due to complicated processes and requirements that were difficult for PO members to understand and comply with. Leaders also cited their lack of proficiency in English. and their low educational attainment as a hurdle. FPE, a grant-giving organizations, tries to address these roadblocks by simplifying their grant application process, and lessening technical requirements.

POs such as GAMAFA and UKAFA hold regular meetings and community consultations to discuss community needs and obtain their members' consent before introducing new projects to their area. They also use these gatherings to decide which areas the project would be implemented and who would manage them.

A major enabling factor for providing quality external support to communities is the implementation of community-led projects that are tailored to the PO's current capabilities and conditions. A good example is the partnership of Cebu POs NAGMATA, HIMASACA, and BTFAI with NGO ACIAR which has shown an increase in the overall capabilities of the community in terms of livelihood establishment, forest conservation, and the internal management of their members. Workshop participants also recommended the conduct of feasibility studies before projects were introduced.

Taken altogether, while they provided high ratings, the quality of support varies depending on the POs' capacity to actively and independently search for and secure external support and implement sustainable projects. The available support is also disproportionate, with POs having more access to reforestation aid, than livelihood support.

d. Halting External Deforestation/Overseeing Forest Resources

Participants hoped that the CBFM strategy would decrease and eliminate illegal activities and accompanying threats, particularly in the implementation of an enforcement program against encroachers and illegal activities. However, illegal activities still persist in most POs, due to a lack of existing support and sporadic assistance from DENR's budget allocation for mandated forest guards.

DENR gave CBFMA's function to halt external deforestation a perfect rating of 2. While the interviewed POs also positively (+1) rated their capabilities to oversee forest resources, the majority of NGOs and academic institutions provided a negative rating (-1). Their accounts provided a spectrum of operational challenges in continuing their work. In general, the POs interviewed expressed that they find it difficult to monitor the forest area as the awarded size is greatly disproportionate to the available members who can carry out the responsibility.

The POs identified their leaders' capability to negotiate or mediate with outsiders as one of the prominent enabling mechanisms in halting external deforestation. This emerged especially when the POs' CBFM areas have land claimants within the awarded areas who asserted rights, and did not want to cooperate with the POs' plans.

PO members' initiative to confront illegal activities also emerged as one crucial enabling mechanism. VIBANARA, a PO from Isabela, shared how their members' initiatives proved helpful, especially in cases when the violators are other PO members, or their relatives. GAMAFA, a PO from Quirino, increased their members' sense of responsibility by assigning specific areas to monitor, together with training and seminars on forest protection.

NGOs and VSU pointed out that communities increase their sense of responsibility over the forest areas after regular capacity building efforts aimed at helping them recognize the importance of watershed protection. NGOs also observed that voluntary forest patrollers increase in number when salaries or regular incentives are provided.

The interviews on halting external deforestation mostly revolved around the POs' patrolling and reporting work, and the DENR's support and feedback mechanisms. As the CBFM POs are the ones expected to patrol over the CBFM areas, they also function as the frontline reporters of any illegal activities within the forest areas. A major limitation is the CBFMA POs' lack of authority to apprehend illegal loggers and activities. VSU emphasized the difficulty of devolving the policing responsibilities to POs; especially for cases when the violators are prominent personalities or companies. Alongside this concern is the POs' lack of sufficient budget to perform forest protection activities.

POs expressed the need for a responsive and reciprocal report processing protocol where DENR is mandated to provide feedback from their submitted reports of violations. POs also expressed that they need institutional support to improve their forest patrollers' salaries and incentives; and continuous livelihood support to steer communities away from illegal logging activities.

Another reality for the CBFMA POs is that as forest protection and patrolling activities do not provide enough economic incentives, most of the PO members are encouraged to look for other better-paying opportunities in the lowlands. While CBFM's idea is to integrate conservation and protection, mostly through timber products as main sources of livelihood, POs haven't really harvested this intended outcome. NGO IDEAS from Palawan, and BTFAI from Cebu shared that as acquiring resource use permits (RUPs) are getting more difficult, even PO members turn to illegal forest activities to earn money.

During the workshop, participants emphasized the need to include enforcement as a critical and independent CBFM program, instead of a small component of forest conservation efforts. In addition, while CBFM POs receive capacity building support on law enforcement, these are mostly done in a classroom setting where they learn concepts and ideas. However, actual enforcement happens on the ground, with many unforeseen factors and risks; and POs might not have built their confidence to enforce during their training period.

While communities are already provided with tenure security through the CBFMAs, honing this tenure as an inspiration to protect the areas is another step. The situation calls all actors to support the communities' need to also benefit from being stewards of the forests. Another critical facet is recognizing that aside from benefiting from protecting the forests, PO members and their families must also be protected from impending risks, and threats. FPE, a grant-making organization, suggested that all forest patrollers must have basic insurance.

e. Community-based Conservation

Majority of the interviewees positively (+1) rated CBFMA's function to promote community-based conservation. The POs even gave it a perfect rating of +2.

CBFM's major premise is by providing POs tenure and technical support, they can maintain their forest cover. But even with the POs' positive rating on their capability to do so, the general overview indicates that communities feel that they have no concrete data to prove that they have done good work to maintain their forest cover. Both DENR and the POs acknowledged that they did not have a biophysical and spatial assessment and database before they proceeded with CBFM. Hence, most of their claims on increasing forest cover are based on visual reports of increasing greener areas, and reports of ongoing restoration efforts. The POs also cited increasing biodiversity, measured through appearances and recurrences of animals, as evidence of improving forest cover.

The POs expressed that maintaining their forest covers largely depended on their capacity to educate members and communities on the importance of forest protection. POs shared how their members join forest protection activities once they have understood and seen its benefits. Some of these benefits include having regular sources of livelihood, and income from forest products. Leaders of ASREDECO from Quirino specified that they improved their protection activities when their members and communities recognized the importance of forests to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Another important enabling mechanism for the CSOs was having land use zoning within their CBFM areas. PO UKAFA from Davao said that their PO members have designated areas that they can manage. They identified production, cultivation, and protection areas. This proved to be useful in terms of providing PO members options to develop their forests, while also maintaining their protection zones. NGO IDIS, cited an example of how the CBFM POs they work with provide mechanisms for members to have individual farm plans. NGO Yakap Kalikasan also stressed the importance of recognizing that not all CBFM activities need to be communal in nature; some families or individuals might perform better if they implemented certain activities on their own. Letting the communities harness the multifunctionality of the areas provide them a wide range of activities, sources of income, and aspirations. According to VSU, this organized multifunctionality also enhances the communities' appreciation of both their responsibilities, and acquired benefits.

Other enabling mechanisms include a strong PO leadership, established PO rules and regulations, coupled with the members' willingness to follow their CRMF work plans.

The POs also mentioned that they received technical and financial support from DENR, LGUs, and NGOs. From DENR and LGUs, support is usually through technical assistance, providing seedlings, incentives to restore forests, and responding to the POs' reports on illegal forest activities. For NGOs, they provided seedlings, capacity building projects, and tree planting events.

The POs expressed the opportunity to operationalize forest restoration by strengthening the implementation of the National Greening Program (NGP), and establishing a more proactive permitting process. VSU shared that most communities would benefit from a permitting process where they will be allowed to harvest and given certificates for quality assurance. NGP emerges as one critical aspect of CBFM to maintain and improve forest cover, however continuous interface has yet to be put in place. Moreover, the government also has to review the program itself, especially in terms of setting success indicators. Currently, DENR is measuring NGP by the number of seedlings planted; but this does not translate to actual areas reforested, and account for the actual survival rates of the trees planted.

VSU and ACIAR shared the same challenge; while CBFM POs are expected to reforest their areas, most POs do not have the capacity to produce quality seedlings, and nurture quality nurseries. Hence, most of their efforts are focused on helping the POs ensure that they have quality seedlings and nurseries.

While the government, POs, NGOs, and SUCs provide positive feedback on CBFMA's role to maintain or improve forest cover, it is imperative to also turn critical eyes on looking for methodologies to provide concrete baseline data, and for strategies to implement a monitoring process that can guide communities where to plant, and what to look out for. Setting success indicators for reforestation programs are also critical - as communities will most likely operate on the basis of complying to the indicators set. Instead of counting trees planted, communities can actually measure success through adopting certain reforestation areas, and monitoring the survival rates, and forest quality.

f. Livelihood Improvement

Participants expected a sustainable community-based livelihood system that utilized a bottom-up approach in project development. They hoped that the CBFM strategy would introduce a balance between biodiversity conservation and watershed management with livelihood opportunities for communities. Because of an increase in income and diversified livelihood, they also hoped that more people would participate in POs. They expected livelihoods to continue, even after the projects which introduced them ended.

While DENR and the majority of the CSOs positively (+1) rated livelihood improvement, much has to be addressed in fully harnessing the potential of CBFM's livelihood efforts. Most of the POs reported that government projects such as NGP and CARP have helped them diversify their livelihood and access other sources of funds. On the other hand, it has resulted in an increased dependency for some POs to these external programs. VSU and PO MCBFCMA observed that some POs have limited regular livelihood outside these projects and once the project funds are used, do no maintain the introduced livelihood but seek other sources of income. In response, NGOs, such as ACIAR, FPE, and IDEAS adopted more participatory project development to increase PO's ownership over their livelihood initiatives. Both ELAC and YAKAP KALIKASAN emphasized that the introduced livelihood projects should be sensitive and appropriate to the community's culture, capabilities, needs, and available resources. By increasing people's involvement, they are more committed to owning and maintaining their livelihood.

Capacity building efforts, both internal within the PO and provided by external institutions, emerged as crucial enabling mechanisms that can jumpstart communities' interest and confidence to undertake livelihood

efforts. These include handicraft making, coffee and wine production, agroforestry, horticulture, sustainable gathering of forest resources, and skills training on financial management and enterprise development. But even with the government agencies and CSOs' support, majority of the POs still expressed that it is not enough to fully equip them with the technical and managerial skills needed to develop and expand their livelihood. FPE mentioned that the training and mentoring should progress as the PO and their social enterprises develop.

Managing livelihood projects or enterprises also require good leaders and active members. Proper training to PO leaders and members was a key factor as it helped POs become more confident in dealing with external actors and be more critical prior to the introduction of any livelihood projects. Most CSOs expressed the need for POs to continuously do organizing work, and identified transparency among members as an important factor to improve PO's self-governance, and in turn, their livelihood projects. It was observed that POs with good track records are more likely to secure livelihood projects than others. Both VSU and NAGMATA expressed that POs' learning and experiences eventually contribute in building their confidence to take on new projects or expand their livelihood. NTFP stated that members are encouraged to be more active through incentives and support from their PO. Benefit sharing within the communities emerged as an enabling mechanism. In the case of Davao's KBKP, a percentage of their profit acquired from bulk orders are shared by the community and the rest is reinvested back to the community's livelihood efforts by the purchase of equipment and tools such as transportation or carabaos. VIBANARA from Isabela has both individual businesses for each member, and a communal business for the PO's benefit sharing.

The responsible government agencies - DENR, DA, and DTI – should ensure continuous support, availability of market information, market linkages other than middlemen, and mechanisms to link the POs to other facilitating agencies that can help them establish or improve their livelihoods. An easier harvesting permitting process can also help POs maximize their time and opportunity to earn more. In Palawan and Cebu, POs found it difficult to obtain CFMF approval and their LGUs endorsement. Some participants also had alleged experiences of corruption and manipulation in some DENR-initiated projects.

Lastly, a lack of adequate capital was a major constraint experienced by all POs. Even with NGO support and the initiative to build organizational funds, most of the POs still lack enough capital for new livelihood projects, to maintain plantation establishment or production development as expressed by GAMAFA and Palawan CBFM Federation. ELAC emphasized the need for the government to creatively design funding and market linkage mechanisms to encourage communities to start and sustain their livelihood options.

While CBFM promotes forest protection and management, it should also explicitly ensure and promote profitable livelihood options for communities. Most of the respondents expressed that without a proper source of income, the people are vulnerable to commit illegal forest activities to support their basic needs.

g. Difference in livelihood improvements

On livelihood improvements, most POs expressed that there is no gender discrimination in livelihood roles, and that labor division depends on the member's strengths and interest. The members are engaged in livelihood activities which they are culturally accustomed to do in their area. It has been observed that most of the male members do intensive labor work, while the women are engaged in more creative and nurturing work like handicrafts, weaving, and taking care of the nursery.

NGOs agreed with POs' experience on the prevalence of gender equality in their communities. PNNI shared that gender is irrelevant to work distribution, but is dictated more by the community traditions they are

accustomed to. FPE stated that livelihood opportunities are discussed as a community or as a household, with no difference on what livelihood is available for men and women.

At present, there are no specific mechanisms to ensure equal distribution of livelihood programs among PO members. When rated based on livelihood improvement per gender, most respondents gave a positive score for women and men's livelihood improvement. The youth's average rating is neutral, as most were in school or did not express interest in CBFM work.

h. Role of CSOs

CSOs play important and diverse roles within the CBFMA strategy as organizers for CBFM communities, policy advisers for the DENR, and partners that assist in implementing CBFM and its projects in the areas.

The roles of CSOs, NGOs in particular, are critical to make CBFM work at community, and individual levels. While regulations have been put in place, with DENR playing a central role, NGOs critical contribution are focused on the improvement of PO's self-governance and introduction of sustainable livelihood opportunities.

As proven by the interviews and workshops, POs still require assistance to establish a functional and appropriate governance system, before they can address other issues such as deforestation, and linking their conservation work to mitigating, and adapting to climate change. Thus, NGOs should still focus their time and effort to prepare communities to handle responsibilities and build their confidence as an organization. While POs are tenure holders, it is another matter to make sure that communities feel empowered to assert their rights and carry out their responsibilities.

However, all CSOs consistently raised the difficulty to balance providing POs with their needs and support with CSOs desire to foster POs' self-sufficiency, especially after their projects end. While some POs have achieved independence such as MCBFCMA, this is still more the exception than the rule. Thus, CSOs must reassess how, what kind, and the limitations of assistance to provide, to ensure POs continue to operate without breeding dependency on government and CSO partners.

NGOs should consider the conditions of different POs that might hinder support, including a lack of access to information, and community's capacity for proposal making and project management. Participants suggested the following recommendations to enhance access:

1. Improve information dissemination of available grants and programs from funding agencies and NGOs. Use various medium of communication such as radio, TV, internet or network of people to reach POs, especially those in the rural areas.
2. Simplify requirements and procedures for project proposal and grant application. Allow the use of Filipino or native language.
3. Provide training support in making feasibility study, project budget, and research projects.
4. Provide an extension officer or a staff who will regularly do groundwork and integrate with the PO or community in order to fully understand its situation and challenges.
5. Act as a facilitator or a catalyst. Train the staff to have the right mindset and competencies needed to support the PO or community.

Lastly, an important aspect of NGOs' work is to build relationships with both national and local government. It is critical for CSOs to strengthen coordination and partnership with the government, in order to represent

their communities' interests better and better plan how they can work together them. Having a good working relationship with government can allow easier integration of ideas and aspirations from communities, as well as a better position to negotiate. A good starting point would be to actively participate in DENR's CBFM National Working Group that provides a space for all CSOs with the government to unify efforts in strengthening the CBFM strategy.

During the workshop, CSO participants identified as a top priority, the strengthening of existing PO federations and organizing new federations in areas where they either never existed or are now inoperative. PO participants shared how helpful it was for them to have avenues to learn how other regions implement CBFM and be part of a larger and stronger group that can address common issues together. CSO can establish these alliances at more local levels (i.e. at municipality or city level or regional).

V.   RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAYS FORWARD

The set of recommendations is not all new, nor skews the literature to a different leaning; most of these suggestions even strengthen the earlier studies on and recommendations made to improve CBFM. The interviews and workshop highlighted common factors across themes, that need to be addressed to strengthen the CBFM strategy.

1. **Enhance community building and participatory planning** – The CBFM's success is anchored on the creation of strong communities with an affinity and responsibility over the areas they protect. While the DENR provides adequate support to establish POs, once formed, it is crucial to sustain systematic and on-going community building efforts, that includes both community leaders and members. These efforts should be sensitive to the existing culture, context, and history of the community.

    Participatory local planning and management should also be developed. The CRMF and work plans should include stakeholder participation that can be monitored through indicators such as regularity of local elections, addition of term limits that leadership positions can be held, and the continuity of attendance and participation of members in meetings, trainings, and activities.

2. **Strengthen existing PO federations and establish or revive new federations.** During the workshop, participants highlighted the assistance and support provided in more regular assemblies of all POs in various regions. They envision the regular meetings to be initiated through the national PO federation, and to serve the following purposes: i) update DENR master list, and recording of CBFM PO members; and ii) revive defunct regional federations. The group also envisions the regular meetings to serve as a venue where they can understand how to establish integrated livelihood systems.

3. **Increase outreach and conservation awareness** – In line with community building, participation in the CBFM strategy increased when communities understood the value of their work to maintain the ecosystem and conserve biodiversity. It is suggested that dedicated local working groups composed of key CSOs in the area can be created, and would be responsible to identify priority threats in their areas and design effective outreach and conservation awareness activities that target key stakeholders. These programs can then be coordinated with the LGUs and DENR.

4. **Strengthen coordination between DENR, LGUs, and CSOs -** Under the CBFM's legal framework, LGUs and DENR play crucial roles in the development of CBFM areas and are tasked to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the CRMF and work plans. In practice, coordination between DENR and LGUs is infrequent, leading to problems in land classification and management, and strained resources. It is recommended that DENR revisit how to effectively implement partnerships with LGUs and their projects. A good example is the cooperation between DENR, NGOs, and Davao City's Watershed Management Council and their programs.

   The interviews also showed how strong collaborations between the government and CSOs have led to more effective results under the CBFM strategy, both in conservation and livelihood efforts. It is recommended to organize formal and collective partnerships between the government and CSOs, including the academe, especially within existing government programs.

5. **Review, monitor, and assist in CRMF and work plans' proper implementation -** Many of the problems raised during interviews, especially on livelihood and land use, are required to be included in the PO's CRMF and work plans. Thus, it is necessary to review the effectiveness of current CRMF and work plans and monitor proper implementation by the CENRO, LGUs, and assisting CSOs.

   Capacity building activities should be aligned with the CRMF and work plans' objectives.

6. **Ensure proper budget allocation and management –** A permanent source of funding for the program should be earmarked both by DENR and LGUs. Proper management and mechanisms to ensure transparency should also be in place.

Specific recommendations for each outcome are:

- **On Effective and Inclusive Self-governance**
    - Update the DENR list of CBFMA POs, and provide disaggregated data. Suggested data include, but are not limited to: i) which among these POs were formed before, during, and after CBFM EO; ii) number of years implementing as POs; iii) POs with good conservation and protection practices; iv) expressed needs on capacity building and technical assistance.
    - Review of CBFM policies and work plans that should ensure rotation of leadership roles through regular elections, term limits, and qualifications and regular and responsive general assemblies and meetings.
    - Provide regular community leadership and management training focusing on improving local leadership, and enhancing member participation.
    - Implement government-led monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance with CRMF and work plans on effective decision-making processes, including providing incentive system to compliant POs.
    - Institutionalize a leadership mentoring program, to be included in CRMF and work plans.

- **On Tenure Security and Halting External Deforestation –**
    - Resolve issues on conflicting maps. National, Regional, Provincial, and Municipal maps should be in harmony, especially on the delineated boundaries, and forest areas accounted for. This can resolve overlapping claims in CBFM areas between current title holders and external parties. In particular, a policy to resolve delineation of CADT holders' ancestral domain and CBFM holders' tenured land should be prioritized.

- Mandate and formalize volunteer forest guards certification program, which should include authority to apprehend illegal loggers and activities, rights, provide regular and uniform incentives, benefits, insurances, and proper enforcement training and tools.
- Review the enforcement mechanisms of the LAWIN Forest and Biodiversity Protection System, including training and capacitating PO members on forest patrol and enforcement. Sufficient resources (regular salaries, proper equipment and training) should be provided for them to carry on with their tasks.
- Review fines for illegal activities to be commensurate to the offender's financial capacity and extent of damage done (ex. corporations should be required to pay a percentage of profits computed in accordance to the extent of environmental damages, instead of having them pay a set monetary amount).

● **On Forest Cover Maintenance**
- Design a methodology that can provide historical data on forest cover, which can later on be used as a rough baseline data.
- Mandate gathering of baseline data on forest cover, resources, and inventory of planted species.
- Design a monitoring system to ensure that communities' progress and bottlenecks are documented, and addressed. The monitoring system's efficacy will highly depend on the success indicators set - move away from current indicators such as number of trees planted, and institutionalize monitoring for progress such as survival rates, and forest quality.
- Ensure presence of dedicated organizers, foresters, and other experts on field to better monitor and assist in the implementation of projects within the community, leading to more sustainable projects.
- Strengthen linkages with CSOs, particularly academic institutions that can aid in developing processes that take inventory of forest resources.

● **Access to External Support**
- Improve outreach and communication activities to CBFM PO, as they are mostly in remote areas. Access to information is one critical bottleneck for such communities; government agencies, and NGOs can design mechanisms to reach them better through actual community visitations, tapping local radio stations, and other communication means.
- Establish a local support and venue where CBFM POs can visit and also find opportunities for networking. One strategy could be institutionalizing CBFM in all regional SUCs where POs can access technical support, share their preferred community-appropriate project ideas, and eventually decrease their dependence on DENR.
- Improve the process of applying for CSO grants and funding; particularly by allowing to write proposals in Filipino or local dialects, and by creating screening mechanisms solely for POs. Capability training can also be done to better improve PO member's individual ability to fulfill these requirements.

● **Livelihood Improvement**
- Review and revise the existing RUP processes. The process should facilitate requests with the goal of enabling POs to actually access and use the resources. While POs can also benefit from NTFPs, bulk of the possible income from the forests can come from timber products.
- To ensure sustainable livelihoods, DENR and CSOs must develop ideas and projects with the communities, taking into consideration: i) available resources in the area; ii) ability of the

livelihood to strengthen the community cohesion; iii) suitability of desired commodities or interventions; iv) product diversification; v) possible markets for the products; and vi) value-adding processes.
- Establish PO Federations that allow POs to share their experiences and best practices, compare results and metrics regarding livelihood and agroforestry, and establish avenues of trade and access opportunities to alternative forms of livelihood.
- Conduct feasibility studies on the introduction of organic farming systems as an additional source of livelihood and review existing mechanisms for implementation (i.e. DA-DENR CARP program).
- Explore the creation of a digital CBFM-marketplace, where CBFM POs can market their products and raw produce.

IV. REFLECTION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

On its 25th year of implementation, it is timely to reflect on the CBFM strategy's successes and failures, and the factors and conditions that led to these results. Currently, both government and CSOs are preparing and reviewing the next phase of implementation, as the validity period of earliest awarded CBFMAs lapses. It is now a crucial period for both the DENR and POs to decide whether to continue the work that was started.

The CBFM strategy was designed to both fulfill forest conservation objectives and livelihood opportunities for communities. The DENR has established a strong legal and regulatory framework to achieve these aims. However, success of any community-based interventions heavily relies on defining and identifying these communities. Are these communities a geographically-bound group of people who just need to come together to access a set of benefits; or are they a group of people who already have an intrinsic sense to come together for a common good? Another success factor is helping the community understand the nature of resources, rights, and responsibilities given to them. In the case of CBFM, communities need to meet their daily needs, but harvests can come as late as five to 10 years after the program is introduced. Within this period while waiting for the harvests, where will they source of incomes come from? This period is where the gaps need to be filled, especially in terms of having regular sources of livelihood, and making sure that communities do not resort to deforestation activities.

The study provides hope that despite the reported difficulties to implement and reap benefits, POs, NGOs, and the academic institution still see CBFM as the most viable way to conserve and benefit from our forests. This study also provides specific points for DENR and other key agencies to revisit, enhance, and revise their current policies in order to bolster the rights and responsibilities provided to communities. As important, a proper monitoring and adequate funding of the implementation of the CBFM strategy is vital to its success.

The participants of this review are a small fraction of the key actors that comprise, manage, and work under the CBFM strategy. It is hoped that their in-depth and personal experiences and recommendations can be starting points for CSOs to review and reassess their work with POs, and encourage other CSOs to address the highlighted gaps.

In particular, the report highlighted two major roles CSOs can play to enhance the CBFM strategy's impacts: first, as a catalyst to strengthen PO Federations at the local, regional, national levels and second, as a primary support and advocate for sustainable livelihood strategies that benefits the poorer and forest-dependent

members of the local communities, by linking POs to appropriate institutions in the production, processing and marketing of forest and non-forest-based goods and services.

Throughout the review process, the importance of CSOs role in the success of the CBFM strategy was apparent. NGOs provide POs with the proper support and training needed and act as conduits to the government. Academic institutions provide the technical input and assistance necessary to ensure the communities' proper implementation of CRMF and work plans. More intangible, but nonetheless vital is the feeling of value and assurance provided by these partnerships between communities and CSOs. In closing, all key actors involved have to reshape their responsibilities in such a way that they all reap the harvests of the strategy.

ANNEX A: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Name and Position	Organization	Region	Category
Olivia Melendez, Area Coordinator	Non-Timber Forest Products - Exchange Programme (NTFP-EP)	National	Non-Governmental Organization
Janet Martires, Executive Director	Yakap Kalikasan Tungo sa Kaunlaran ng Pilipinas Inc. (Yakap Kalikasan)	National	Non-Governmental Organization
Cherylon Herzano, Program Officer / OIC	Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE)	National	Non-Governmental Organization
Eugenio T. Eugenio, NLO Coordinator	Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE)	National	Non-Governmental Organization
Roger Garinga, Executive Director	Institute for the Development of Educational and Ecological Alternatives, Inc. (IDEAS)	National	Non-Governmental Organization
Romeo H. Obedoza, Chairperson*	VIBANARA Multipurpose Cooperative, Incorporated (VMPCI)	2	People's Organization
Antonio D. Agnapan, Chairperson*	Gabriela Masipag Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative (GAMAFA)	2	People's Organization
Nida Collado, Chairperson and Palawan Federation President*	Macatumbalen Community Based Forest and Coastal Management Association (MCBFCMA) & Palawan Federation of CBFM/CADC Holders Association	4B	People's Organization
Rolito Galon, Secretary*	Palawan Federation of CBFM/CADC Holders Association	4B	People's Organization
Atty. Robert A. Chan, Executive Director*	Palawan NGO Network Inc. (PNNI)	4B	Non-Governmental Organization
Atty. Grizelda Mayo-Anda, Executive Director	Environmental Legal Assistance Center (ELAC)	4B	Non-Governmental Organization
Joselito Balbin, Chairperson	Palbong Community Based Forest Management Association (PCBFMA)	4B	People's Organization
Wilfredo A. Endionela, Chairman	Tao-Kalikasan Foundation of the Philippines Inc. (TKFPI)	5	People's Organization
Marisa Etulle, PO President*	Naghisuang Mag-uuma sa Taba-ao (NAGMATA)	7	People's Organization

Rogato Ombajeno, PO President*	Borbon Tree Farmers Association Incorporated (BTFAI)	7	People's Organization
Mercedita Mollena, PO President	Hiniusang Mag-uuma Sa Catmondaan (HIMASACA)	7	People's Organization
Kenneth Doria, Community Organizer / Extension Officer*	Australian Center for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)	8	Non-Governmental Organization
Dr Arturo Pasa, College of Forestry and Environmental Science Dean & ACIAR Project Coordinator*	Visayas State University (VSU)/ Australian Center for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)	8	Academic Institution
Dr. Anatolio Polinar, Associate Professor, College of Forestry*	Visayas State University (VSU)/ Australian Center for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)	8	Academic Institution
Erlinda Suam, Chairperson	Kibalang Balikatan sa Kaunlaran ng Pagkakaisa (KBKP)	11	People's Organization
Miliano Payusan, Chairperson	Upper Kibalang Agroforestry Farmer Associations (UKAFA)	11	People's Organization
Judy Ann Legaspi, Watershed Network Organizer*	Interface Development Interventions (IDIS)	11	Non-Governmental Organization

<u>* - those marked are the 11 participants that attended the CBR workshop last 7 February 2020.</u>

Name and Position	Government Agency	Region	Category
Luz Lansigan, Chief - DENR Community Forestry Section	Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Forest Management Bureau (DENR-FMB)	National	Government
Joshua Saluria, Community Development Officer	Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Forest Management Bureau (DENR-FMB)	National	Government
Angelita Racelis, Project Support Section	Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Forest Management Bureau (DENR-FMB)	National	Government

ANNEX B: WORKSHOP SUMMARY AND RESULTS

The workshop was organized to: 1) discuss initial research results; 2) validate salient findings; 3) re-discuss thematic ratings with the group; and 4) formulate suggestions and priority action points to enhance CBFM implementation. The workshop was held on February 7, 2020, at Alabang, Muntinlupa City, Philippines.

Workshop participants were 11 same interviewees from NGOs and POs included in the study. The workshop was divided into four sessions:
- Session 1: A) Tenure security, and effective self-governance, and B) Halting deforestation and maintaining forest cover;
- Session 2: A) Access to external support, and B) Livelihoods and livelihood improvement;
- Session 3: CSO Strategies and Collaboration; and
- Session 4: Ways forward.

I. Workshop Summary

Workshop Session 1: Tenure Security and Effective Self-Governance
Group rating: +1

Expected Outcomes	- PO's full ownership of CBFM area - Protection and partnership with LGU - Existing CRMF - Assistance to the community - Less political interventions, neutral standpoint particularly with DILG
Actual Outcomes	- Partial ownership of CBFM Area because of resistance from LGU, migrants with political back-ups, and claimants - Assistance to the community - POs were able to accomplish the requirements from DENR - Special body from DILG
Enabling Conditions	- POs having second liners - POs' policy on elections, and terms of officers - Geographical proximity of members - Logistics and/or committee system in managing the organization - Federation support - Integrating watershed management with CBFM - Capacity building
Constraints	- Lack of turn-over from previous officers - Age of members and leaders - Lack of financial management POs a. Lack of transparency, reporting b. Presence of corruption c. Lack of monitoring and regulation from DENR) - Weak PO a. Lack of proper regulation and monitoring b. Weak organizing work and conscientization of the PO members

	c. POs were organized by LGU d. Insufficient education of members makes them vulnerable to pursue their self-interest e. Dummy POs

Workshop Session 2: Halting Deforestation and Maintaining Forest Cover
Group rating: +1

Expected Outcomes	- Decrease or eliminate illegal activities and accompanying threats within the CBFM area - Prioritize enforcement as a program
Actual Outcomes	- Illegal activities still exist - Inconsistent support for forest guards - Lack of financial and technical support - No data for forest cover - Enforcement of policies in not given enough emphasis in projects
Enabling Conditions	- DENR helping with and taking action on reports - Initiatve of community to patrol their own areas
Constraints	- No layer of protection for forest guards - No insurance for forest guards - Policing powers are not with CBFM PO members - Illegal activities carried out by big people and/or companies

Workshop Session 3: Access to External Support

Expected Outcomes	- Participation of POs, NGOs, and LGUs in partnerships. - Assistance with updating CRMF - Proposals for funding and capacity training - POs receive linkage from external organizations - Less rigid/demanding requirements - Funding for enforcement as a program
Actual Outcomes	- Strengthened support of NGOs (esp. in forest protection) - Support through funding (forest guards and livelihood); but support is still limited
Enabling Conditions	- Linkage for POs with good track record - Enhanced political will of leaders
Constraints	- Disputes with NCIP and PCSD - Weak PO leaders

	- Lack of information
	- Difficulty making proposals
	- Internal Corruption
	- Expenses from implementing unsustainable projects
Other Discussion Points	- Discussion on the Harmonization of CBFM and IP communities as "local communities"
	- Implement projects with good and immediate return of investment

Workshop Session 4: Livelihood Improvement and Differences in Livelihood Improvement
Group Rating:
Livelihood Improvement: +1
Differences in Livelihood Improvement: +2

Expected Outcomes	- Sustainable community-based livelihood system
	- Bottom-up approach in project development
	- Increased participation of POs
	- People can continue their livelihood even after the project
	- Balance between biodiversity conservation/watershed management with Livelihood Under the CBFMA, the people is accountable for conserving the environment while pursuing socio-economic development
	- Diverse livelihood
	- Increase in income
Actual Outcomes	- Livelihood are mostly project-based and top-down approach
	- POs are having difficulty with the transition from reforestation to livelihood
	- POs have received support for equipment for product processing
	- Support from DENR and CBFM coordinator
	- Income from livelihood is not enough
Enabling Conditions	- Livelihood projects
	- PO initiative and being critical with DENR projects
	- Organizes POs and good track record
	a. Good leadership
	b. Transparency
	- Support from Barangay and LGU
	- Training and experience helps in building confidence among POs
	- Top 3 provides of external support:
	a. NGO
	b. DENR, DTI, DOLE, and DA
	c. LGU (depends on the area)
Constraints	- Lack of capital (i.e. PO's financial counterpart in projects)

	- Challenges with DENR process
	a. There's no budget for maintenance and protection after planting the trees. In the case of Palawan CBFM Federation, even though they included the maintenance budget in their plan, it was still removed by the DENR. The participants suggest that the project support should extend for 3 years in order for it to be sustainable.
	b. Alleged corruption and manipulation with project budget by the DENR
	c. Lack of people's participation in project development. Most of the projects are ready-made from DENR.
	d. Tedious process and policies to get RUPs and CRMF approval which prevent the POs from harvesting and could also affect losing the economic value of the trees
	- Climate change
	- Challenges with the LGU
	a. Tendency to be politicized
	b. Difficulty getting permits/endorsements
	- Lack of POs capability
	a. Weak organizing work
	b. Lack of support from DENR coordinator
	c. Lack of information

II. Workshop Results and Discussions

Balancing conservation and livelihoods
CBFM has not been fully designed and implemented as a strategy, but more of a project-based community level intervention. This resulted to the lack of complementing and sustainable conservation and livelihoods efforts on the ground. In most POs, while communities see the need to conserve, their more crucial needs to earn and to provide for the family come first.

Complementarities between conservation and livelihoods are evident in the early parts of any conservation project – when communities are told that they can plant certain species of trees, and harvest these after a specific period of time. CBFM POs are then inspired to reforest, expecting that these areas will later on translate to income.

However, as projects go on, trade-offs on the ground are more evident. First, conservation efforts rarely translate to actual or significant income. Take the case of the forest guards, which are not fully supported both on financial, and protective levels. According to PNNI, agencies fail to see forest patrolling and enforcement as a legitimate livelihood opportunity for POs. Second, existing policies on timber harvesting, and other resource use permits do not provide a complementary approach to conservation and livelihood. Consequently, CBFM POs are encouraged to prioritize planting agricultural commodities with more prompt and regular returns. In addition, not all CBFM POs have access to technical support that can help them identify suitable crops, or help them trace available markets for their produce. Another effect is that CBFM

POs are more inclined to invest in other income-generating activities outside of the CBFM areas, as they start losing the economic value of trees and other conservation efforts.

Conditions and constraints

A. Tenure Security and Effective Self-Governance
For tenure security, participants highlighted community organizing, PO's initiative, and DENR support as key conditions. Notably, Palawan participants alone highlighted the pivotal role of NGO assistance.

For constraints, participants identified the lack of adequate and regular DENR support, the overlapping claims of ownership over CBFM areas, and a lack of coordination between agencies as key constraints. Participants also highlighted the need to enhance PO's affirmation and understanding of the CBFM strategy.

Participants extensively discussed their problematic relationship with the DENR. IDIS shared that POs in Davao do not receive the necessary support and guidance from the agency, especially in the apprehension of illegal loggers. VSU added that as most of the activities are project-driven, DENR's officers only monitor a specific project, rather than the status of the PO as a whole.

Participants also shared the tedious process for them to harvest products and facilitate ownership of resources and the low participation of POs in project development, such as choosing the tree species to plant in their areas.

In governance, participants identified a good logistics process, proper observance of elections and term limits, and Federation support as key conditions. They also highlighted access to proper capacity building workshops that promote leadership especially for their potential future leaders. In Davao, IDIS shared how helpful integrating the watershed management framework was with the PO's CBFM plans.

Key constraints were a lack of proper monitoring by DENR of governance-related matters which results in weak regulation and reports of corruption. Most leaders are also growing older without successors, leading to a lack of turn-over of power. PO leaders are also not provided the proper education and management skills which make them vulnerable to pursue their own self-interests. In addition, there is weak organizing work and conscientization of the PO members.

MCBFCMA and NAGMATA shared difficulties in finding their PO's next leaders. MCBFCMA shares that, prior to elections, she visits different POs to encourage potential leaders to run. To guide them, previous officials become advisors. MCBFCMA raised the importance for PO leaders and members to be able to actively and critically deal with government agencies and other partners to avoid exploitation. She emphasized the need for them to learn how to effectively communicate their community's needs.

Halting External Deforestation and Maintaining Forest Cover
Participants identified the community's initiative to patrol and take care of their assigned areas, and DENR's responsiveness to report and act on illegal activities and encroachers as key conditions. LGU support was also highlighted, especially in terms of providing confidence and immediate feedback to forest patrollers. Participants also emphasized the strong causality between sustainable livelihoods to deter communities from returning to illegal practices (e.g. small-scale mining, kaingin, and charcoal production).

A common constraint is the lack of focus on making enforcement as a core CBFM program, rather than a small component of forest conservation efforts. PNNI shared the lack of direct support provided to forest guards for them to effectively do their work. Current legal mechanisms are insufficient to ensure communities' protection once they report illegal activities. Lack of strong local leadership in most POs was also cited as a constraint.

Another critical point raised was how conservation and enforcement are being taught to communities. While CBFM POs receive capacity building support on law enforcement, these are mostly done in a classroom setting where they learn concepts and ideas. However, actual enforcement happens on the ground, with many unforeseen factors and risks; and POs might not have built their confidence to enforce during their training period.

The group also shared the sentiment of not being presented with up-to-date data on forest cover. While POs can report increasing greener areas, the reality is that these new green patches could be plantation areas. The group shared that it will be helpful for them to also see the fruits of their conservation and enforcement efforts on the ground.

Access to External Support
Participants identified the presence of leaders' political will to proactively look for partners and projects for their community. Leaders and members benefited from proper capacity building workshops that also allowed them to discuss the community's preferred programs and projects. Participants also identified DENR support in opening up linkages with NGOs and other POs as a key condition.

In contrast, POs without good leadership fail to secure and implement projects well. In addition, a major deterrent for many POs, especially those lacking in technical skills, are the difficult procedures and requirements that are perquisites for them to access needed support. PNNI's Bobby Chan stated that these requirements are not only rigid but also demanding to the community's capital, time, and manpower. PO leaders discussed PO leaders and members' difficulty to understand the technical requirements imposed by DENR and some NGOs, especially when the material is only in English.

It was also raised that many projects are not community-driven. Rather, many projects are imposed for the communities to implement, without proper monitoring and evaluation on how profitable or sustainable it would be. In some cases, these resulted in communities incurring expenses. IDEAS and PNNI recommended that community needs should come from the PO themselves and recommended the conduct of feasibility studies before projects were introduced.

Support for livelihood was also mentioned as a key factor to maintain support for the community as members would most likely participate in projects that are financially stable or when they are not preoccupied with securing their daily needs.

Livelihood and Livelihood Improvement
Participants identified good leadership and transparency as key conditions in the improvement of livelihood in CBFM areas. When these two conditions are present, POs are able to organize themselves well and maintain a good standing. Regular support from DENR and LGUs were also highlighted, especially when both directly coordinated with the communities in identifying the livelihoods that would be most beneficial. Finally, proper training to PO leaders and members was a key factor as it helped POs become more confident in dealing with external actors and be more critical prior to the introduction of any livelihood projects.

Key constraints were the challenging DENR processes, similar to what was raised for access to external support. DENR does not provide support to maintain and monitor livelihood projects, even for reforestation projects. Some participants alleged experiencing corruption and manipulation in some DENR-initiated projects. DENR's tedious process and policies were reiterated as critical constraints that crippled the sustainability of livelihood projects, especially in harvesting resources. For some POs, LGUs also had inefficient and difficult policies to acquire permits.

Internally, livelihoods endeavors suffered from a lack of capital and proper understanding to manage and organize communities well. GAMAFA shared that it was necessary for POs to have their own capital to start projects. GAMAFA and VSU raised that most POs do not have enough technical skills on project proposal writing, preparing budget, etc. since most of the members have insufficient educational background.

III. CSO strategies, common agenda, next steps and recommendations

During this session, participants identified their priority action steps that can help improve the current CBFM implementation. Participants also discussed how they can implement these actions and who they need to implement and strengthen their efforts.

a. **Regular CBFM PO meetings, and learning sessions for the 16 regions**
The group listed this as their first priority, as it addresses one of the core issues of CBFM implementation – which is to strengthen CBFM POs and provide opportunities where POs can learn from other regions. While issues on the ground are different, and they work on varying contexts, the group shared that learning how one region is doing, and how they address issues greatly helps their own work.

They envision the regular meetings to be initiated through the national PO federation, and to serve the following purposes: i) update DENR master list, and recording of CBFM PO members; and ii) revive defunct regional federations. The group also envisions the regular meetings to serve as a venue where they can understand how to establish integrated livelihood systems. MCBFCMA & Palawan Federation of CBFM/CADC Holders Association   shared her vision to come up with a digital CBFM-marketplace, where all the CBFM POs can share their products and raw produce.

b. **Strengthen PO-led livelihoods**
To complement their first priority action, the group wants to strengthen PO-led livelihoods. They hope these can be implemented through building economic and environmental capital; building and expanding their networks; accessing project support, especially for maintenance and monitoring of livelihoods; workshops to discuss community preferred programs; and through active mentoring.

The group shared that CBFM POs, while they have good ideas and know their community and have the willingness to implement, they do not have enough capital to build an enterprise or sustain livelihood projects. GAMAFA shared how they struggle with their PO's furniture-making endeavors, due to the lack of resources to purchase processing equipment and machineries. While DENR and CSO-supported projects help in scoping and initial livelihood development, support often becomes limited for value adding training or post-processing machineries.

c. **Shift to organic farming systems**
Despite anticipated difficulties in implementation, the group identified this as a priority because they see the need to harness its economic and environmental benefits: it will contribute to conserving

forest areas and also increase their products' value. GAMAFA and ACIAR shared how corn plantations, despite being a regular source of income for some, become a major cause of land degradation; especially for those areas that have long used glyphosate as a herbicide.

The group recommends a shift to organic farming systems, not just within the CBFMA areas, but even in the adjacent patches of lands. The group identifies DA as one of the major key players to help them upscale organic farming, especially as it coincides with the DA-DENR CARP program. Palawan Federation of CBFM/CADC Holders Association shared that the DA is encouraging organic farming. The challenge is introducing and sustaining the right practices across all farming regions, especially the remote areas. MCBFCMA shared her experience   of using organic fertilizer using vermicomposting, which contributes both to her savings, and to the implementation of the community's solid waste management program.

d.   Develop next leaders

At the core of CBFM implementation is the reality that most of the performances of the POs are driven by their leaders. As such, the group recommends developing the next leaders for the POs. They envision this through: i) having clear policy on qualification, recruitment, election, and terms of office; ii) identifying potential leaders; iii) establishing a more formal mentoring approach; and iv) implementing a monitoring system. The group agrees that a mentoring approach will help develop leaders that can mobilize POs and members.

A specific strategy is to include the development of leaders in PO's CRMF and work plans. This would also entail an active monitoring system, where leaders' progress are monitored.

e.   Strengthen initiative to patrol and enforce

Lastly, the group recommends to consider enforcement as a program, rather than a project component. Enforcement as a program would entail a bigger, and more regular funding support from DENR, and other organizations. It would also ensure that enforcement is at the forefront of CBFM implementation; which translates to giving POs due credit and power to patrol over their forest areas.

The group also recommends reviewing the existing LAWIN protocol. If LAWIN were created to empower communities to patrol and report, then CBFMA POs should be the first priority to be capacitated in using the application; and also the priority to be provided with sufficient equipment to carry on with the tasks.

WORKSHOP PROGRAM

Time	Activity	Description	Speaker/Lead Facilitator

8:00-8:15 am	Registration		
8:15-8:30 am	Opening Remarks		**Dr. Juan Pulhin,** *Professor and Chair of UPLB Interdisciplinary Study Center for Integrated Natural Resources and Environment Management*
8:30-8:45 am	Introductions	In this session, participants shall introduce themselves and their work on the CBFM strategy.	
8:45-9:00 am	Presentation of Project and Initial Results Workshop Rules		**Samantha Sy,** *Governance Specialist*
9:00-10:00 am	**Session 1:** **Tenure Security and Effective and Inclusive Self-Governance** **Halting Deforestation and Maintaining Forest Cover**	This session presents the initial results for outcomes, conditions, and constraints on four themes: tenure security and effective and inclusive self-governance and halting deforestation and maintaining forest cover. Participants shall compare expected outcomes with actual outcomes. Participants shall validate, identify, and rank in priority the key conditions and constraints for each theme. The session ends with a 30-min plenary discussion of the validated results.	**Samantha Sy,** *Governance Specialist* **Heidi Mendoza,** *SILG Program Coordinator*
10:30:10:45 am	**Wellness Break**		
10:45: 12:15 am	**Session 2:** **Livelihood and Differences in Livelihood Improvement** **Access to External Support**	This session presents the initial results for outcomes, conditions, and constraints on three themes: livelihood and differences in livelihood improvement and access to external support. Participants shall compare expected outcomes with actual outcomes. Participants shall validate, identify, and rank in priority the key conditions and constraints for each theme.	**Regie Mendoza,** *CBR Research Assistant* **Xavier Musngi,** CBR *Research Assistant*

		The session ends with a 30-min plenary discussion of the validated results.	
12:15-1:15 pm	**Lunch Break**		
1:15- 2:00 pm	**Session 3: CSO Strategies and Collaboration**	Participants shall discuss and develop strategies to work on the identified key conditions and constraints in sessions 1 and 2. Participants shall identify areas of potential areas of collaboration and develop a common agenda and work plans. Participants shall discuss the role of CSOs in relation to communities and the CBFM strategy.	**Heidi Mendoza,** *SILG Program Coordinator*
2:00-2:15 pm	**Wellness Break**		
2:15-3:30 pm	**Session 3: CSO Strategies and Collaboration**	Participants shall discuss and develop strategies to work on the identified key conditions and constraints in sessions 1 and 2. Participants shall identify areas of potential areas of collaboration and develop a common agenda and work plans. Participants shall discuss the role of CSOs in relation to communities and the CBFM strategy.	**Heidi Mendoza,** *SILG Program Coordinator*
3:30-4:00 pm	**Ways Forward**	This session summarizes the workshop results and discusses next steps and how the findings of the review and workshop report will be shared.	
6:00-7:00 pm	**Dinner**		