

SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS APPROACH

One of Forest Foundation's main goals is to understand poverty, which it sees as a multidimensional problem. According to The World Bank, poverty is the lack of the basic capabilities (economic, human, political, socio-cultural, and protective) and conditions needed for living with dignity.

The Philippine government measures poverty in terms of the monthly income families receive. According to the latest data by the Philippine Statistics Authority, the Philippines' poverty line is marked at a monthly income of PhP 10,727. The agency says 16.6% of the Philippine population (around 17.6 million Filipinos) live below the poverty line—meaning their per capita income is not sufficient for their basic food and non-food needs.

Tackling poverty is part of the Foundation's contribution to the local REDD+ (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation) strategies. The REDD+ concept combines forest protection with objectives of climate protection, biodiversity conservation, and improvement of local livelihoods, as well as the enhancement of forest carbon stocks and sustainable management of forests.

OBJECTIVES

With this in mind, Forest Foundation incorporates the sustainable livelihoods approach in its forest conservation work.

Due to the close interactions and interrelationship of natural resources and socioeconomic conditions of communities, the program takes advantage of successful and effective partnerships and networks to implement sustainable landscape actions.

Forest Foundation's sustainable livelihoods approach aims to ease poverty by implementing the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) in its four focal landscapes for the protection and sustainable management of Philippine forests and their biodiversity.



Partner weavers of the Community Crafts Association of the Philippines, our grantee, show their handicraft products.

These actions are expected to provide economic opportunities to communities and allow them to see forest protection as an economic incentive—not just as environmental. These actions are also directly linked to easing indigenous and exogenous poverty.

SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS FRAMEWORK

The Foundation follows the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) developed by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) which analyzes the community's assets, their strategies where they make a living, its context, and the factors that make their livelihood vulnerable to stress and shocks, including its policies that affect their livelihood.

SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS APPROACH

To better understand the activities under the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, its approach must first be defined.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) seeks to improve rural development policy and practice by recognizing the seasonal and cyclical complexity of livelihood strategies. The approach recognizes that a person's livelihood also includes the capabilities, assets, income, and activities one may require to cover his or her basic needs. Under the SLA, a livelihood is sustainable when it allows people to cope with (and recover from) setbacks and stress, such as natural disasters and economic or social upheavals. Such livelihood must also improve their welfare and that of future generations' without degrading the environment or natural resources.

For this reason, the context of poverty among forest-dependent communities must be defined to illustrate the relevance of interventions by development institutions. The SLA provides an analytical framework that promotes systematic analysis of the underlying causes of poverty. It focuses attention on people's definitions of poverty and considers a wide range of factors that contribute to it.

PROJECTS SUPPORTED

1.

PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH (PAR), ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT ON SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD CAPITAL

In 1997, Michael Lipton argued that poverty persists because development was designed by and for people in urban areas. Development planning should focus on participatory approaches to correct the urban bias. PAR is widely acknowledged as the approach that can facilitate this process. It involves a collaborative effort between the researcher and the community to identify an area of concern and generate knowledge about that issue. PAR can also plan and carry out actions that may substantively address the issue.

Forest Foundation considers PAR in analyzing community livelihoods using the SLA framework to achieve a comprehensive grassroots plan on general to specific livelihood outcomes and responses.



Products of Brooke's Point Coco Product Producers Cooperative and Nagkakaisang Tribu ng Palawan—organizations assisted by Bayan Academy, a grantee of Forest Foundation.

2.

COMMUNITY ENTERPRISES CATALYZED WITH PARTNER COMMUNITIES AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Forest Foundation supports the development of a social enterprise from its preparation, idea generation and screening, feasibility studies, business planning, prototyping, and implementation to monitoring. Transactional and social inclusion services are also considered essential in the process formulation of social enterprises. The Foundation strongly supports policy development, community strengthening and organizing, as well as networking and partnership-building.

3.

CHARACTERIZATION OF AND SUPPORT FOR OPTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE FINANCING MECHANISMS

The economic values of landscapes continue to be poorly reflected in market considerations despite their ability to produce goods and services with economic value. This undervaluation often leads to degradation or conversion of forests to other land uses. Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) schemes try to correct this by creating appropriate economic incentives enabling the transfer of financial resources from the beneficiaries of ecosystem services to its providers.

In line with this, Forest Foundation extends its support to the conduct of studies on the valuation of forest landscapes services and making information available to the relevant market in its focal landscapes. This may also include community organization and consultation, identification of ecosystem services, valuation studies, networking and partnership building for the PES buy-in, and institutionalization.

The development of social enterprises within the focal areas would aid in poverty relief.



Pouches handcrafted by DETFAWAI (Dimasalang Egongot Tribe Farmers and Weavers Association, Inc.), a grantee of Forest Foundation.