

Identified Solution with Upscaling Potential

Solution: Land use planning and Fencing of Mangrove Sites as Protection for Vulnerable Communities

Storyline/Narrative:

The municipality of Bontoc, Southern Leyte is a fourth income class municipality which is situated near the second business center of the province. It became a municipality in June 1950. The municipality lies along a rich alluvial plain which made it the rich producer of abaca, copra and tobacco before. Bontoc is drained by the Salog and Divisoria Rivers, two rivers that have caused in the past some flooding in the municipality.

It is not the natural hazards, though that have driven the current population in Barangay Talisay to relocate in the mangrove sites of the municipality. The history goes back to the peace and order situation in the 1960's and '70s of some of the municipality's remote areas that the municipal government made the decision to have the displaced communities temporarily settle in its mangrove sites first. But as years went on, the temporary shelter became permanent houses.

By the year 2003, when other municipalities within Southern Leyte experienced the occurrence of landslides/mudslides and frequent earthquakes with tsunami warnings due to the presence of the active Cabalian volcano, the municipal government decided to address the problem of many vulnerable communities living along the coastal side and along their protected mangrove areas.

Photos/Documentations:



Source: <http://www.southernleyte.gov.ph/>



It was in 2010 that the Bontoc municipal government, in partnership with the GIZ undertook the conflict-sensitive participatory land use planning. All barangays were mobilized by the Municipal Planning and Development Team to participate, help articulate their needs towards increased adaptive capacities to disasters and the effects of climate change. It was in the series of barangay development planning with land use thematic mapping exercises that the issues and concerns on the mangrove sites and their important role to ensuring food security and human safety specially during typhoons were thoroughly discussed with community representatives. From the barangay level planning, the results were consolidated and became the basic inputs into the formulations of the municipal comprehensive land use and development plans and the corresponding zoning ordinance.

The comprehensive land use plan and zoning ordinance formulations highlighted the fact that the municipality was losing its protected mangroves not only to the informal settlers but that the more serious threat were the beach resorts investors and land speculators. From the land use conflict analysis, the planning team identified the core problem to be the issuance by the Community Environment and Natural Resource Office (CENRO) of the instrument called Revocable Permit Application (RPAs) which for a fee entitled the applicants to occupy a portion of the protected mangrove areas without tenure security but in those who occupied such areas eventually have put up permanent structures to be used as arguments against ejection. With the vulnerable communities living in such mangrove sites getting involved in the participatory land use planning, it was easier for the municipal government to handle. A relocation site was reflected in the proposed land use map, site development and alternative livelihoods and other safeguard measures were reflected as priority program and projects. The zoning ordinance provided for a moratorium period to allow the vulnerable communities to have the transition to occupy the relocation sites for them, while being allowed to continue with their fishing activities near the mangrove sites.

The land speculators and investors persisted with their move press on getting their Revocable Permit Applications so as to build their structures. The Municipal Planning and Development Office






Municipal Fence against illegal protected mangrove occupants and land speculators

counteracted their move by invoking the provisions in their Zoning Ordinance that no permanent structures shall be put within the municipality's protected mangrove sites. The municipal government likewise allocated the budget to put around the delineated area actual fences to make it visibly glaring both to the issuing national entity of the temporary permits and to the general public that hence on, the protected mangrove sites of Bontoc Municipality is for food security and human safety specially of the fishing sector. To date, the barangay councils and the residents are in partnership with the municipal government in ensuring that the installed fences are maintained.

To further ensure the safety of the communities, the municipal government mobilized the barangays to have their disaster risk reduction orientations and drills. Easy communication prior to strong typhoons are easily done using the ACCBio's support of radio and communications set which initially were for the operations of the Bantay-Dagat but eventually serve also for disaster preparedness, as the municipal disaster risk reduction and management staff have made use of such support gadgets as part of their of their early warning system and preemptive evacuations whenever necessary.



<p>Benefits:</p>  <p>Fishing communities continue to benefit from the abundant fish supply within the municipal waters, ensuring them their livelihoods and food security.</p>	<p>Co-benefits:</p>  <p>Disaster risk reduction = being able to do preemptive evacuations for communities living along coastal and mangrove sites has been observed by the municipal team. Aside from fishing, those who are to be transferred in the relocation sites are able to start up with farming activities for their food security.</p>
<p>Identified issues and concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issuance of Revocable Permit Applications to investors and land speculators in protected mangrove areas 	<p>Suggested way forward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The municipal government to continue engaging the Department of Environment and Natural Resources- regional and community level to pursue the co-management of the protected mangrove sites in the locality