

Chapter 4

Community-Based Forest Management Agreement: a land tenure instrument for mangroves

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides information to help POs gain a basic understanding of a Community-Based Forest Management Agreement (CBFMA), including:

- .. What is it?
- .. Is it the right thing for a PO to attempt?
- .. How much work is involved in the application process?
- .. Does the PO and its members have the necessary skills to manage a mangrove forest?
- .. What must the PO do to apply for a CBFMA?

The purpose of this chapter is to assist the PO in answering many, if not all, of its questions regarding CBFMAs. It is not intended to convince the organization to apply for a CBFMA and become stewards of the mangrove forest, but to help the group decide if this step is the right one to take.

What is a Community-Based Forest Management Agreement?

A Community-Based Forest Management Agreement (CBFMA) is a production sharing agreement entered into between a community and the government to develop, utilize, manage and conserve a specific portion of forestland consistent with the principles of sustainable development and pursuant to an approved Community Resource Management Framework Plan (CRMF) (DAO 96–29, DENR). CBFMAs are used by the DENR to award tenurial rights over forestlands to organized communities. It virtually integrates all of the old tenurial instruments on forestlands prior to 1996.

Warning

The current policy of the government prohibits cutting of mangrove tree species per Section 4, Republic Act No. 7161, otherwise known as “An Act Incorporating Certain Sections of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1977”, as amended, otherwise known as The Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines,” and “Providing Amendments thereto by Increasing the Forest Charges on Timber and Other Forest Products” dated 22 July 1991.

This means that the accompanying Community Resource Management Framework (CRMF) Plan of the CBFMA in mangrove forests must not contain the Resource Use Plan (RUP) involving the cutting of mangrove trees whether planted or not or whether growing singly or in groups.

The CBFMA can be issued only to POs or similar organizations. It cannot be issued to companies or to individuals. It also must be issued to the people who actually live on the land or have made use of it historically. The CBFMA integrates the previous household-based instruments such as the Mangrove Stewardship Agreement (MSA) and the Certificate of Stewardship Contract (CSC) of the Integrated Social Forestry Program (ISFP), both of which are no longer in use.

Unlike many other centralized types of government programs that allow people tenurial control over land, the CBFMA issuance is delegated by the DENR Secretary to the regional offices for areas of forestland 15,000 hectares and below. Pursuant to this delegation of authority, the Regional Executive Director can issue a CBFMA for areas 5,000 to 15,000 hectares while the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer

(PENRO) can issue the document for areas 5,000 hectares and below. Because mangrove areas in the Philippines appear in patches in coves or sheltered shores, an application for areas over 5,000 hectares is unlikely.

Table 4.1 shows the major Executive Orders (EOs), Department Administrative Orders (DAOs), Memo Circulars (MCs) and other legal instruments concerning CBFMAs. These sets of policy issuance help to protect the rights of the community as a steward of the mangrove forest. The community may want to check with its *Sangguniang Bayan* (SB) to see if it has any municipal ordinances or regulations that discuss mangrove forests.

The remainder of this chapter examines the benefits of possessing a CBFMA, the process and amount of effort involved in applying for a CBFMA, the duties and

Table 4.1. Legal instruments concerning Community-Based Forest Management Agreements.

- EO 263—Adopting Community-Based Forest Management as the National Strategy to Ensure the Sustainable Development of the Country's Forestlands
- DAO 96-29—Rules and Regulations for the Implementation of EO 263, Otherwise Known as the Community-Based Forest Management Strategy
- DAO 96-30—Integration of all the Community-Based Forest Management Strategy and People-Oriented Programs and Projects into the DENR Regular Structure
- MC 97-12—Guidelines for the Formulation of CRMF and AWP for CBFMAs
- DAO 98-10—Guidelines on the Establishment and Management of Community-Based Forest Management Projects Within Mangrove Areas
- DAO 98-41—Guidelines on the Establishment and Management of Community-Based Forest Management Projects Within Watershed Reservations
- Joint MC 98-01—Manual of Procedures for DENR-DILG-LGU Partnership on Devolved and Other Forest Management Functions
- DAO 30, Series of 1992—Guidelines for the Transfer and Implementation of DENR Functions Devolved to the LGUs
- DAO 98-08, dated 24 June 1998—Guidelines on Contracting Inside Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM) Areas
- DAO 98-42, dated 24 June 1998—Production Sharing Agreement with POs in the Harvest of Forest Plantation Owned by the Government Inside CBFM Areas
- DAO 98-43, dated 24 June 1998—Exemption of CBFM Projects from the Payment of Administrative Charges
- DAO No. 3, Series of 1998—Rules of Fishpond Reversion
- DAO 98-44, dated 24 June 1998—Guidelines on the Establishment of CBFM Special Account
- DAO 98-45, dated 24 June 1998—Guidelines Governing the Issuance and Transfer of Certificate of Stewardship Within CBFM Areas
- Republic Act No. 8550, Otherwise Known as The Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998, Section 49—Reversion of all Abandoned, Undeveloped or Underutilized Fishponds

responsibilities of the CBFMA holder and the management requirements of a CBFMA area.

THE BENEFITS OF THE CBFMA HOLDER

There are a number of benefits that a CBFMA brings to a PO. These include: tenurial control over the CBFMA area, the ability to use the area for a wide variety of livelihood activities, the ability to extract wood in some instances from mangroves planted in the area, and the benefits of a sustainably managed mangrove forest to the surrounding coastline.

CBFMA as a Land Tenure Instrument

The appropriateness of the CBFMA as a land tenure instrument for those who choose to be stewards of the mangrove forest cannot be overemphasized. It represents a shift away from the traditional, regulatory-oriented forestland management, toward a development, people and service-oriented one. It creates new roles and responsibilities for the DENR, the LGUs, the private sector and the communities in mangrove management. It promotes people empowerment, extolling a firm belief in putting people first so that sustainable mangrove forest management will follow. Only when communities in and adjacent to forestlands commit themselves to stewardship will the remaining mangrove forests receive proper and profitable attention.

Upon approval of the CBFMA by the DENR, the

*The **CRMF Plan** is the document defining the terms and procedures for access, use and protection of natural resources within the CBFMA area. This plan shall always be consistent with the overall strategy of the entire watershed (mangrove) area where the CBFM is located, and shall be formulated by the community with assistance from its PO, LGU and/or private entities.*

PO is given tenure over the area for a period of 25 years (renewable for another 25 years). This tenure allows the PO to make use of the resources on the land as long as the usage is sustainable and in accordance with the affirmed Community Resource Management Framework (CRMF) Plan.

Livelihood Activities

One of the major livelihood activities POs want to pursue is wood harvesting, either for firewood or construction. In CBFMA areas where plantations already exist and the trees are mature, it may be possible to begin harvesting (even while CRMF preparation is in progress as long as the PO has the Interim Resource Use Permit [IRUP] from the DENR). In cases where it is legal to harvest the wood, it would be prudent for the PO to think about a wider variety of uses than simply for firewood. For example, you could build a kiln and make charcoal or manufacture the wood into novelty items, products considerably higher in value than firewood. Alternatively, they could let the wood grow for several more years and sell it as timber or poles for building material.

Many other livelihood activities are possible, including:

- Growing *taualis* for fences and *tangal* for tannin from its bark
- Using the leaves of mangrove species such as *pagatpat* and *bungalon* as forage for goats, cattle or carabao
- Investing in the materials for beehives and selling honey, if the mangrove can support aviary
- If the area is near a tourist site, the PO can build a boardwalk through the mangroves and charge tourists entry
- Members of the PO might decide to put several *amatong* in appropriate places throughout the mangroves and use them to grow and harvest fish
- Mangrove-friendly aquaculture, such as mudcrab fattening/grow-out or shrimp culture

While this list is not exhaustive, it is easy to see that many activities are possible. The PO should decide which livelihood shall be pursued and help each other develop

Additional Benefits

- *Exempt from paying rent for use of the area*
- *Exempt from paying forest charges on timber and non-timber products harvested from plantations*
- *Consulted on all government projects to be implemented in the area*
- *Preferential access by the DENR to available assistance*
- *Receive all income and proceeds from the use of forest resources within the area*
- *Enter into agreements or contracts with private or government entities*

From Frequently Asked Questions about CBFM (DENR 1998a).

plans and define implementation strategies. There are a number of other incentives in applying for and possessing a CBFMA. These are listed below.

Benefits for the Surrounding Coastline

As mentioned in Chapter 1, mangroves provide a multitude of benefits to the surrounding coastline and nearshore waters. Mangrove forests are responsible for producing as much as 600 kilograms of fish per hectare that can be caught in the nearby coastal waters. Mangroves act as shelter for younger fish and hunting grounds for older ones, and their leaves are a source of nutrients for fish. In addition to these services, mangrove forests provide protection against waves and storms. Finally, mangrove forests trap sediment washed down from upland areas, keeping it from burying coral reefs and seagrass beds.

A CBFMA provides benefits to the nearby coastal waters through the protection and maintenance of the natural mangrove forests and the establishment of new mangrove plantations. Given these and other benefits, it is likely that a PO will consider applying for a CBFMA to be a worthwhile activity. The following section outlines how the PO can apply and how much work an application is likely to take.

The CBFMA Application Process

1. *Form a PO if one is not in existence.*
2. *Determine that you want to apply for a CBFMA.*
3. *Identify the planned CBFMA area.*
4. *Gain the support of the LGU and develop and submit a CBFMA application.*
5. *Develop a map of your proposed area.*
6. *Upon CBFMA approval, develop a Community Resource Management Framework and Annual Work/Resource Use Plan (CRMF, AWP/RUP).*
7. *Begin working as stewards of the mangrove area under your CBFMA.*

GENERAL STEPS FOR CBFMA APPLICATION

This section presents the general steps to take in applying for a CBFMA, as well as the level of effort those steps involve and the approximate cost. The box outlines the application process.

There are several preconditions a PO must meet before applying for a CBFMA.

- First, the applicants must be Filipino citizens.
- Second, they must live in or near the forest they are applying to manage.
- Third, they must be part of a people's organization or be willing to form such an organiza-

We Don't Have A People's Organization (PO)!

It is necessary to form a PO before applying for a CBFMA. In order to do this, the group needs to write a constitution and by-laws and elect officers. You may then approach either the LGU, an NGO or CENRO to help the registration with the Department of Labor and Employment, the Securities and Exchange Commission or the Cooperative Development Authority. PO registration and site identification can be accomplished at the same time.

tion (a PO must have a minimum of ten members). Prior to applying for a CBFMA, register your PO with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) or the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Once these preconditions have been satisfied, the PO may send a letter of interest to the local Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) requesting for assistance. This letter should be endorsed by resolutions from both the *barangay* council (*Sangguniang Barangay*) and the municipal council (*Sangguniang Bayan*, or SB).

The DENR manual, How to Participate in the CBFM Program, has suggested language for both the application letter and the resolutions (DENR 1998b).

The PO will have to work with one or more members of the *barangay* council and SB to get them to put forward a resolution. It may take some time to effectively communicate what the PO is trying to accomplish and up to 2 weeks or even a month to obtain resolutions from each LGU.

It will be necessary for the PO to become more familiar with the CBFMA process. An orientation briefing may be performed by a member of the CENRO, the LGU or someone from an assisting nongovernment organization. The leaders of the PO should work with the appropriate individual to set up a meeting with the PO membership. The meeting will discuss:

- Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM) as a strategy and program
- The features, principles and scope of CBFM
- Who can participate
- The concept of the DENR, LGU, PO partnership and the roles of the partners
- The steps to follow to apply for a CBFMA
- The benefits of a CBFMA

While the orientation itself will last only a couple of hours, it may take weeks to arrange.

The next step is for the PO to determine the potential CBFMA area. While the members of the PO probably have a pretty good idea of the area it wants to apply for, it is best if everyone is able to discuss the location and boundaries. After this discussion, it will be necessary for a group from the PO to walk around and through the area to make certain that it knows what it contains. This will constitute the required resource

If you are applying for a CBFMA without the assistance of a CO, you may refer directly to Chapter 6 for information on how to develop a community-based map.

mapping and assessment of the area. If the PO is working with a community organizer (CO), he or she will help develop the map. Finally, the PO can contact the CENRO and request a survey of the area to check the accuracy of the map. It may take several weeks for staff from CENRO to come to the site and perform the survey.

Once the CENRO has performed the survey, it is necessary to develop a map to include in your CBFMA application. The map will take at least 1-2 weeks to complete depending on the size of the area.

Remember to include any resolutions—by the barangay or the municipality—and any other supporting documents that support the application!

Assuming the PO is already registered, it is time to apply for a CBFMA. The application itself is fairly easy to complete. Elements include: an application letter sent to the CENRO indicating the proposed CBFMA area, a copy of the PO certificate of registration and a list of the PO officers and members (including their addresses and names of spouses for those who are married).

At this point, the CENRO will review the application and draft a CBFMA in consultation with the PO. This

will cover discussions of the terms and conditions of the CBFMA, including PO incentives and responsibilities. Upon completion of the review, the application will be forwarded to the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) for approval by the PENR Officer, or sent back to the PO if modifications are required.

Work Requirements of the Mangrove Forest Stewards

Once the CBFMA application goes to the CENRO, the PO can begin working on the most important part of the process: the Community Resource Management Framework (CRMF) and the Annual Work Plan/Resource Use Plan (AWP/RUP). Below are brief descriptions of these documents.

Typically, most PO members will be looking at a CBFMA as a way to *enhance* their livelihood, not as a

The amount of work the member of the PO will do depends in part on the amount of work they want to put in. Some people will almost immediately begin to back off on what they said they want to do while others will forge ahead and do more work than expected. Of course the organization will also have to have meetings and the officers will have a heavy workload.

livelihood all by itself. But as time goes by, people may find that their “secondary” livelihood is more income generating than their primary livelihood. The amount of cash or food one receives from forest activities will ultimately determine how much work they will do there (aside from their dedication and commitment to conserve the CBFMA area).

Activities such as planting new areas or tending a nursery will take more time than others (establishing an *amatong*, for example—a resemblance of a natural coral reef constructed on waterways in the mangrove forest which bottom fish use for shelter and foraging). Those who are most dedicated to establishing plantations for eventual harvest will tend to do that work. In general,

the amount of work and time people spend working on the forest will correspond to what they believe they are benefiting from it.

The PO will need to find a way to equitably share the duty of guarding the area. In some cases this may not be necessary. In other cases, however, the PO may discover the area is beset by poachers, or is the target of illegal fishpond development. In those instances, an organization must work with the municipal authorities to protect the area (much like “*bantay dagat*”)—and possibly authorize a group like “*bantay bakawan*.”

Planning to meet work requirements—The Community Resource Management Framework (CRMF), as defined earlier, describes the present situation in the community and the CBFMA area, presents a strategic resource management plan and outlines how the PO will manage the area (short, medium and long term). It includes an assessment of what resources are present, a discussion of how the area will be allocated, what the proposed socioeconomic and environmental indicators will be and the proposed marketing and financing strategies. The CRMF is submitted at the beginning of the CBFMA period and may be modified if significant changes are needed. Then the CENRO approves the CRMF. If the CENRO takes no action on the CRMF within 30 days of submittal, the plan is considered approved.

The Annual Work Plan/Resource Use Plan (AWP/RUP) discusses in detail how, what and when everything will happen. The plan’s focus is the following year’s activities including resource development and the forest resources that will be utilized. The PO is required to file an AWP each year with the LGU and the DENR-CENRO. The CENRO approves the AWP/RUP. If the CENRO takes no action on the AWP/RUP within 30 days of submittal, the plan is considered approved.

The document itself need not be long or complicated. It is simply intended to provide guidance and understanding for both the PO and the DENR, detailing forest activities for the following year. The AWP/RUP should include what, where and how much one intends to develop or plant for the year, and to what

degree (what, where and how much) the extractable mangrove resource will be harvested. It should also discuss any other livelihoods the PO will be pursuing. In most cases, the AWP/RUP may not discuss harvesting trees and other vegetation until a plantation has been established. This typically does not occur until the 5th or 6th year of CBFMA operation.

The overall CBFMA application process, including CRMF and AWP/RUP approval, can take from 4 to 6 months.

Gaining Support from Local Government Unit(s)

The concerned municipality may also institute administrative requirements of its own. Because these will be specifically for the CBFMA area, the PO will

*A **resolution** is a legal instrument issued by any level of government (from the barangay to the President) indicating endorsement, or lack of endorsement, of a particular situation. An example is a resolution of a barangay council to support a PO, the first step in obtaining an ordinance.*

*An **ordinance** is a legal instrument issued by a municipality or city that prescribes laws or regulations. An example is an ordinance requiring all illegal fishpond developers in the proposed CBFMA area to cease developing fishponds or face fines.*

*A **letter of support** is submitted by a municipality to a national government (or any other) agency indicating that the municipality is supporting an activity and/or requesting assistance.*

most likely be able to negotiate to keep these to a minimum.

Resolutions, ordinances and letters of support can be of great help in pursuing a CBFMA. While it is possible to process an application without the support of the *barangay* council and the SB, their support makes it much easier.

The barangay resolution—It is important that the PO plans out what it wants to accomplish before

presenting any requests to the *barangay* council. The PO must decide what it wants to say to the council and who will say it. To begin, the PO members should discuss and decide as a group what kind of political assistance is needed, and what a resolution can provide toward that end. For example, are there problems with squatters or illegal fishpond development? Is there a claim on the area by another *barangay* or by a person who is not a *bona fide* resident of the site?

The stronger and more complete the resolution, the better off the PO will be in the long run. Therefore, when a PO is considering what to include in the *barangay*

Table 4.2. Examples of actions the people's organization can request from the *barangay* council and the Sangguniang Bayan.

Barangay Council Resolution

1. Endorse formation of the PO.
2. Endorse activities of the PO.
3. Endorse area the PO has proposed for the CBFMA.
4. Endorse application for the CBFMA.
5. Request assistance from the SB in all aspects of the CBFMA application process.
6. Request assistance from the SB in solving problems associated with other claimants.

SB Resolution and Ordinance Resolution

1. Endorse formation of the PO.
2. Endorse activities of the PO.
3. Endorse area the PO has proposed for the CBFMA.
4. Endorse application for the CBFMA.
5. Request assistance from the DENR in all aspects of the CBFMA application process.
6. Request assistance from the DENR and BFAR in solving problems associated with other claimants.

Municipal Ordinance

1. Set aside land identified in the CBFMA for member use only.
2. Forbid development other than that identified in the CBFMA and associated papers.
3. Set aside prior claims on the area identified in the CBFMA.
4. Provide for protection of forest area under the CBFMA.
5. Provide logistic support to the PO.

resolution it should also consider what to include in the municipal resolutions and ordinances. Table 4.2 provides examples of what can be requested from the *barangay* council and the SB.

The PO can use this information as a checklist to determine if there are other issues affecting the CBFMA that require the attention of the council or the SB. In general, the PO will decide if it needs a resolution from the *barangay* endorsing the founding of the PO and supporting its intent to apply for the CBFMA to manage the area. This is the simplest resolution a *barangay* council can pass and may be all that is necessary.

After the PO drafts its resolution, it must meet with the *barangay* council to inform the council that the PO has been organized. Some PO members will have spoken informally with members of the council. This now needs to be done formally with the officers of the PO attending the *barangay* council meeting, explaining in detail their proposed activities. Table 4.3 outlines the information the PO will want to provide the council.

A PO officer should talk to the *Barangay* Captain and Secretary in order to get on the meeting agenda. The officer should explain what the PO wants to present to the council and who will be attending. The PO should indicate that it will be requesting a favorable resolution that can be taken to the SB.

It is important for the main presenters to practice what they intend to say to the council. Some of PO members should act as the *barangay* council and have the presenters practice their presentation before them. Several practice sessions will allow the PO members to find areas that must be strengthened.

It may take days or weeks for the resolution to be passed. During this time, the local SB representative (*Kagawad*) should be informed that the PO will be requesting time to meet with the SB, the purpose being to request a resolution endorsing the PO and its activities. If the PO believes it will need support from ordinances, it would be wise to indicate that the PO will be asking the SB to pass specific ordinances.

The municipal resolution, ordinance and letter of support—Once the *barangay* council resolution is

Table 4.3. Outline of the *barangay* council presentation.

1.0 Introduction

The President of the PO tells the council the name of the PO and introduces the officers. If the by-laws and other papers are complete, distribute them to the council. Explain this is the first step in applying for a CBFMA; once the resolution is endorsed by the council, the PO makes a presentation to the SB to request its support and assistance.

2.0 Discussion of Purpose

The President tells the council why the PO has been formed and what the organization intends to do. Detail how many members the PO has, the total area of the application, what will be done with the area (i.e., what will be planted and harvested and other area livelihood activities) and whether there are any illegal fishponds or other activities of concern. Finally, request that the council issues an ordinance endorsing the PO and the proposed application area.

3.0 Submission of Draft Resolution

Submit a draft resolution to the council for its approval or modification.

4.0 Conclusion

Thank the council for its time and ask when it will be able to vote on the ordinance.

passed, it is necessary to obtain a similar resolution from the SB. The PO will have already determined what is needed from the SB and developed a draft resolution (and any ordinances) when the *barangay* council resolution was developed. In addition to the resolution, it is useful to request that the SB send a letter to the DENR transmitting the resolutions and requesting all possible help in the approval of the CBFMA. The PO may want to request from the SB specific ordinances that will strengthen their claim to the area or provide them with additional legal protection in the management of the CBFMA.

It is important to discuss with the barangay council and SB Kagawad whether they will request the resolution and ordinance from the SB or whether it is the PO's responsibility. In cases where the barangay council or the SB Kagawad will be the one to request the activities, this section will not be as important. Instead, the main activity of the PO will be to attend the meeting and answer any questions.

Before a meeting with the SB, the PO should contact the SB *Kagawad*, who can provide valuable information on contacts within the SB to assist in expediting approval of the resolution, the letter and any ordinance. In most instances, the PO asks the Municipal Secretary to schedule a meeting with the SB. Before doing so, however, the PO members should learn from the *Kagawad* who to speak with before the meeting. They should contact at least the: (1) The Municipal Agricultural Officer (MAO); and (2) the Chairman of the SB Environment (or Agriculture/Fisheries) Committee to inform them of the PO's intentions.

Having spoken to these individuals before the meeting, the PO will have supporters during the presentation. The SB presentation is similar to the one before the *barangay* council (see Table 4.4). As in the council meeting, several practice sessions should be conducted in front of PO members, with some taking roles of particular people in the SB.

The SB resolution may take days or weeks to finalize like the *barangay* council resolution. Once finalized, the resolution and any other supporting documentation should be copied for inclusion in the CBFMA application.

Gaining Financial and Other Support from the Municipality

The LGU is often in a position to assist a PO financially or to provide services depending on the kind of project proposed and the priorities of the LGU. The CO (if there is one) should be able to help the PO

Table 4.4. Outline of the *Sangguniang Bayan* presentation.

1.0 Introduction

The PO President tells the council the name of the PO and introduces the officers. If the by-laws and other papers are complete, distribute them to the council.

2.0 Discussion of Purpose

The President tells the council why the organization was formed and what it intends to do. Detail PO membership numbers, the total area of the application and what the PO intends to do with the area (i.e., what will be planted and harvested and other area livelihood activities). Emphasize how much the project will benefit members of the PO, and discuss whether there are any illegal fishponds or other activities of concern. Finally, request the council to issue a resolution approving the PO and the application area.

3.0 Submission of Draft Resolution and Ordinance

Submit a draft resolution and any ordinances to the council for their approval or modification. The President outlines what the PO is hoping for in terms of support and how the resolution and the ordinance will assist the PO.

4.0 Conclusion

Thank the council for its time and ask when it will be able to pass the resolution (and ordinance if any).

determine what type of assistance is needed and what level is necessary to be successful. The following section provides information on the types of support available.

For financial assistance, LGUs provide 20% of their Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) for development projects that include both infrastructure and environment. The LGU may also facilitate access to other fund sources including the Countryside Development Funds (CDFs) provided by congressmen and senators, grants and soft loans from international funding agencies

(Plan International, World Vision, Canadian International Development Agency [CIDA], etc.) and local civic organizations (Rotary, Jaycees, etc.). Further, the LGU often provides access to vehicles, the municipal hall, assistance from the Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO) and other services the PO may be able to tap.

Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA)—Under the Local Government Code, all LGUs are provided yearly with an IRA from the National Government for their expenses. (The amount of IRA depends on the population and land area of the municipality.) Currently, the LGU is mandated to annually allot 20% of its IRA for development projects. However, with budget pressures this percentage may decrease. The CO must assist the PO in developing the best possible proposal.

The following steps must be accomplished for the PO proposal to be considered. (These steps are useful whenever a PO is interested in requesting for funds or other support from any organization.)

1. Decide what project to undertake, preferably in line with the priority of the LGU. To determine the priority projects of the LGU, the PO can delegate a subcommittee to meet with the Municipal Planning and Development Council (MPDC). Then the PO can best see how its project fits in the scope of LGU priorities.
2. With the subcommittee, draft a proposal that targets the major areas of MPDC interest.
3. Subcommittee officers should contact the *Barangay* Captain and the SB Chairman for Environment or Agriculture/Fisheries to discuss the proposal and to seek input. After incorporating their suggestions, ask for the Captain's and Chairman's commitment to support the project proposal.
4. From the SB Secretariat, request inclusion in the next SB meeting agenda to present the PO proposal.
5. Determine who will do the presentation at the SB session. Make sure that the presenter is articulate enough to persuade the body to sup-

port the project. The presenter must be prepared to defend the project budget and to convince the SB that the funds they invest will increase the income of the PO, improve the environment and eventually increase the municipal revenue through the harvest of forest or marine products. PO officers should attend the meeting with one or two members to lend support to the presenter. Make sure that the budget is realistic and that the group provides for a counterpart in terms of labor.

6. Once SB approval is secured, submit the budget to the MPDC for further deliberation.

Soft loans through cooperatives—Some LGUs are now providing soft loans to cooperatives at a minimum interest of 8% per annum which the PO can avail of for viable livelihood projects. The cooperative then delivers the materials to the borrowers who pay back in cash over a given period. For a project like this, it is necessary for the PO to form a cooperative. There are other credit facilities that require cooperative credentials.

Line agencies—Occasionally, line agencies and NGOs have project funds that a mayor can request for a PO. For example, the DENR has reforestation funds that are contracted to farmers'/fishers' associations or individuals for the planting of mangroves. The Department of Agriculture (DA) also has livelihood component projects and some large NGOs are providing grants to qualified POs. Projects of this nature require strong LGU endorsement.

Local and international funding sources—LGUs

A Success Story

Talibon, Bohol is using soft loans of this type with apparent success. An initial budget of P1.5 million was appropriated for 1 year from Talibon's IRA that provided materials/goods to a cooperative serving as conduit for the loans. These loans are used by fishers for equipment, supplies and working capital.

may also assist a PO in obtaining funds from different local and international funding institutions known to provide grants to environmental projects, e.g., Philippine Jaycees, Rotary International, Plan International and World Vision. These organizations will almost always require a formal project proposal. The process outlined in the section on *Internal Revenue Allotment* can be followed and amended.

Logistic support—Aside from the financial

support described above, the LGU may also provide services to a PO, such as the use of heavy equipment or transportation, loan of technical staff or access to building facilities depending on needs.

For all assistance, it is vital that the PO possesses a good track record for delivering what it has promised the LGU. Requesting for support may be done informally by simply asking the *Barangay* Captain or SB member or formally through a letter requesting for assistance.

