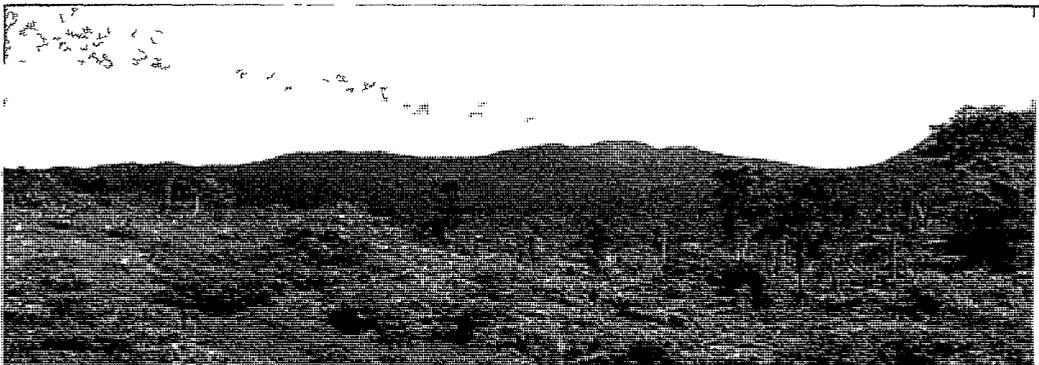


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PLAN International
COMMUNITY BASED FOREST REGENERATION
AND RELATED RESEARCH PROJECT
COMFREP

ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION WORKPLAN
January to December 1999



COMFREP is a collaboration between PLAN International the United States Agency
for International Development and the Isabela State University through the
Cagayan Valley Programme for Environment and Development

PLAN International
COMMUNITY BASED FOREST REGENERATION
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ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION WORKPLAN
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COMMUNITY BASED FOREST REGENERATION AND RELATED RESEARCH PROJECT *COMFREP*

ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION WORKPLAN January to December 1999

BACKGROUND

It has been 18 months since the project began and much has happened in terms of clarifying project concerns and establishing the structures and systems in support of operations. The nature and orientation of the project, that of being exploratory, community-driven, and enterprise based, was not conceptually and operationally understood during the first eight months. During this period, there were extensive discussions on clarifying project directions and activities on the field proceeded without much integration and reflection on the over-all long-term objectives. These experiences in project implementation made it difficult to secure the needed financial and operational support the project needed.

After almost a year of project implementation, the project's Executive Committee, particularly the primary institutions who are directly involve in the project, initiated moves toward re-aligning the project according to the spirit and direction of discussions held 4 years ago. On May 1998, the project was restructured to not only include new personnel but to establish greater clarity and integrity in operational dynamics. The field staff underwent a series of meetings and workshops assessing research and community organizing activities as well as understanding PLAN policies. The succeeding months were primarily spent on stabilizing relations with communities and sustaining institutional linkages.

Slow funds movement, however, became a major concern. Five months after the restructuring and re-orientation efforts, communities have been able to establish their local associations and have identified areas for project use. More importantly, the project pursued a series of discussions with key support persons intensively reviewing operational activities vis-a-vis finance. It was hoped that by focusing on specific project key result areas, it would be easier to determine the administrative structure and financial system to facilitate efficient funds movement.

Hence, there is now a greater understanding of project directions which has lead to a potentially more integrated and focused implementation. The result of the discussions have led to the identification of key result areas, their corresponding activities and budgetary requirements.

OBJECTIVES

The general objectives for the next twelve months will basically cover two major areas of activities namely administration and operations. Activities particular to administration will primarily enable the necessary personnel, structural and systemic support project operation requires. The main objective of project operations for the coming year will be to initiate long-term and sustainable activities in five key result areas: Center of Excellence, Sustained Peoples Organization, Enterprise Development, Grassland Rehabilitation and Forest Resource Stabilization, Networking and Linkaging. Specifically, objectives for each operational key result area for the year are as follows:

Center of Excellence

- 1 To produce and disseminate to counterparts and key institutions two materials documenting project experiences and their implications on the broader forest resource management strategy
- 2 To initiate efforts in establishing a soils and water laboratory and a mapping center in Isabela State University's College of Forestry and Environmental Management (ISU-CFEM)
- 3 To develop strategies for technical and skills transfer to ISU-CFEM faculty and students

Sustained Peoples Organization

- 1 To implement community-initiated projects related to health, education, and sustainable livelihood
- 2 To strengthen the community association's capabilities in implementing and monitoring projects

Enterprise Development

- 1 To sustain the community's capital build-up efforts
- 2 To facilitate market scanning activities with communities
- 3 To identify potential enterprise or product that will provide immediate return
- 4 To identify potential enterprise or product for long-term returns
- 5 To strengthen the communities' capabilities in enterprise development and small business activities

Grassland Rehabilitation and Forest Resource Stabilization

- 1 To provide enabling mechanisms for communities to protect the forest and monitor activities in forest areas
- 2 To conduct an appraisal and inventory of resources in project sites
- 3 To establish in communities soil and water research areas
- 4 To conduct regular soil and water studies
- 5 To establish forest plantations in project sites based on market analysis
- 6 To establish on-site nurseries
- 7 To develop initial community resource management plan for project sites

Networking and Linkaging

- 1 To sustain involvement and participation in various forums where enterprise development, grassland rehabilitation and forest resource management strategies are discussed
- 2 To sustain working relations with agencies and institutions critical to the project's enterprise development and policy study efforts

ACTIVITIES

Due to the difficulty in establishing a coherent and integrative understanding of project objectives and directions during the initial stages of implementation, there was a significant amount of backlog in terms of expected outputs. The effort during the last six months of 1998 was to ensure the project's social base and stabilize its working relations with communities. As a result, communities are taking the initiative in pursuing research and development activities. Hence, project activities for this year will mainly try to fulfill unaccomplished expectations as well as compliment community initiatives. Specifically, activities are planned and categorized according to major activity sets.

Administration

- 1 Personnel support (recruitment of new staff)
- 2 Acquiring the services of selected technical specialists
- 3 Development and establishment of appropriate funds movement system
- 4 Establishment of efficient and effective accountability mechanism

Center of Excellence

- 1 Production of 2 publications
- 2 Establishment of Mapping Center
- 3 Establishment of Soil and Water Laboratory

Sustained People's Organization

- 1 Implementation of community-managed/proposed projects
- 2 Bunkhouse construction
- 3 Deputation Workshop/Training
- 4 Leadership Training
- 5 Workshop on Enterprise Building and Small Business
- 6 Orientation on new Community Managed Projects (CMP) policies
- 7 Sustaining community scholars

Enterprise Development

- 1 Market scanning
- 2 Community capital build-up
- 3 Cross-visits
- 4 Product Flow Mapping

- 5 Plantation establishment
- 6 Identification of initial community enterprise
- 7 Marketing of initial community enterprise
- 8 Evaluation of enterprise development activities

Grassland and Forest Resource Stabilization

- 1 Establishment of soil and water monitoring stations
- 2 Soil and water studies (trimester April, August, December)
- 3 Development of Initial Community Resource Management Plan
- 4 Implementation of CRMP
- 5 Project site survey and delineation
- 6 Nursery establishment
- 7 Resource Inventory
- 8 Establishment of Plantation

Networking and Linkaging

- 1 Meetings with local government units and officials
- 2 Establishing contacts with academic institutions (UP Los Baños, VISCA, NVC, etc)
- 3 Establishing and sustaining working relations with NGOs (ESSC, PBSP, FRPDI, etc)
- 4 Establishing working relations with local business groups
- 5 Attendance and participation in conferences

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 1999

The project proposes to allot approximately PhP 20,738,280 00 for administrative and operational activities. This will specifically comprise the following main project components and their corresponding major categories:

Personnel		2,608,280	(12.6%)
Salaries	1,975,000		
Technical specialists	250,000		
Consultants	383,280		
Project activities		13,570,000	(65.4%)
Center of Excellence	2,700,000		
Enterprise Development	3,570,000		
Sustained People's Organization	1,600,000		
Forest/Grassland Rehabilitation	5,400,000		
Networking/Linkaging	300,000		
Equipment		3,560,000	(17.2%)
Mapping center	620,000		
Soil and water Laboratory	2,940,000		
Maintenance		1,000,000	(4.8%)

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In the original project document benchmarks and expected outputs have been identified from which the project can gauge its progress. Recently, these benchmarks and outputs have been understood based on recent developments in project re-focus. Nevertheless, these benchmarks and outputs remain as the basis for reviewing project operations and from which appropriate decisions may be made as well as the undertaking of proper responsive activities. This is further underscored by the project's interest in undertaking a process and experimental approach in enabling communities to manage their resources. Therefore, monitoring and evaluation will provide occasions for drawing out lessons and insights that may have broader applicability to related projects and the institutes it is working with.

For the project, there are potentially three main levels in evaluation and monitoring namely Program Level, Project Level, and Clientele Level. These three levels cover the broad dynamics of project implementation and operations.

Program Level the monitoring and evaluation activities at this level will basically look into the project from the perspective of partner institutes and agencies. At this level, the project's Executive Committee, as an advisory body, and ISU-CFEM/CVPED as the primary actors in the development of the center of excellence, may examine the project based on key project interests. Monitoring and evaluation must also be initiated from PLAN and USAID particularly those which concern operations and financial support. Monitoring and evaluation may be based on the Semi-Annual Program Report and the Technical Progress Reports that the project submits. Minutes of previous Executive Committee meetings and oral reports from project management on administrative and operations concerns are also basis for monitoring and evaluation.

Project level the project may be examined at this level through regular staff meetings where updates on administrative concerns and field operations are provided. During this occasion, project personnel identifies current and potential constraints, devise means and ways for responding to these issues and develop a schedule of activities and outputs. Minutes of previous project staff meetings, monthly reports from field staff and oral reports from other project personnel become the basis for monitoring and evaluation.

Clientele Level the main proponent of the monitoring and evaluation at this level is the community. Together with project field staff, communities will develop the criteria and indicators for examining the contribution, impact, and over-all relations of the project with the community. Regular field visits by project management and some members of the project's Executive Committee and scheduled dialogue with community members may be the venue for such exchanges.

Summary Table of Project Monitoring and Evaluation Activity

LEVELS	BODY	AREAS	BASIS	SCHEDULE
Program	Executive Committee	Over-all operations and administration of the project, networking, project directions	Semi-annual Program Report and Technical Progress Report, oral reports from project management, minutes of previous Execom meeting	Semi-Annual (if possible) or when deemed necessary
	ISU-CFEM/CVPED	Center of Excellence, Research	Semi-annual Program Report and Technical Progress Report	Semi-annual
	PLAN/USAID (external auditors and consultants)	Operations and Finances	Semi-annual Program Report and Technical Progress Report, consultants reports and recommendations, financial reports	Annual or when deemed necessary
Project	Project administrative personnel and field staff	Research, field operations, administration, community organizing	CDS Monthly reports, oral reports, minutes of previous staff meeting	Monthly or when deemed necessary
Clientele	Community	Community organizing, contribution and impact, research, enterprise, relations and dynamics	Site visits from Execom members and/or project management, dialogue with community	Annual or when deemed necessary

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Funds movement

From September 1997 (actual start of project operations) to November 1998, funds movement amounted to only ₱ 4,044,248 00 (US\$ 101,864 00), approximately 10% of the project's total project budget or only about 20% of the total budget set for the first 18 months. Of the total expenditure 48.5% was spent on staffing requirements, 19.2% on equipment, 23.5% on maintenance and other operational costs, and only 9.0% on project field activities. One reason why project funds have not been moved as expected is because the social base from where project activities must be initiated, has not been established. Another cause for the current pace in funds movement is the continuous learning process the project has been experiencing especially in terms of determining direction and strengthening its organizational capabilities. However, the project has been able to establish the capabilities of communities to initiate and implement project activities. It is important at this stage to ensure that community initiatives are supported and sustained. Movement of funds for the coming period will have to be able to be more active and responsive. Hence, efforts will be directed towards looking into the proper structural, procedural, and personnel support mechanisms.

Project accountability

The present organizational structure of the project was developed primarily to not only ensure effective project implementation but to also operationalize greater

collaboration between key institutions. Key to these objectives is the position of the Project Manager. The Project Manager is the link between Isabela State University and the other partners especially concerning project implementation. The position thus requires the person to not only facilitate proper working relations but to take greater responsibility in the administrative and operational implementation of the project. In essence, it is with the Project Manager that various project directions are integrated. However, there seems to be a relative lack of clarity in responsibilities and confusion regarding project accountability due to limitations within the organizational structure and some aspects of the collaboration. Basically, what needs to be addressed is how Isabela State University can gain greater responsibility for the project. Efforts in the coming period will try to explore ways into articulating the role and responsibilities of the Project Manager.

Counterpart clarification

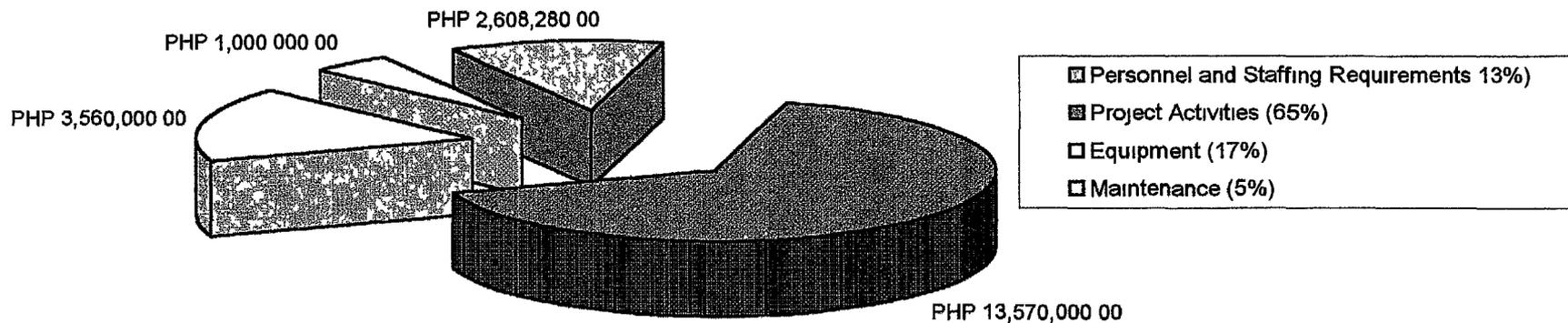
One of the challenges presented by the project is the involvement of various institutions involved in social development and forest resource management. It was originally thought that the project would serve as the venue and opportunity for institutions willing to learn and explore non-traditional ways of doing participatory research, social development, and forest resource management. The project has so far been able to establish the proper working dynamics. However, in order to proceed more effectively, working relations among the project's different institutional counterparts must be strengthened. In light of what the project has been able to achieve and what directions it has proposed, greater dialogue and articulation of institutional commitment, especially in terms of financial and operational support, must be pursued. For the coming period, venue for discussing institutional concerns will be initiated.

Project extension

COMFREP was originally designed as a three-year project mainly to equip Isabela State University in developing and applying innovative socially based scientific research that will be the basis for determining appropriate regeneration and other forest management strategies. Unfortunately, the demands of the project, the maturity it requires, and the critical reflection it necessitates, requires a longer period of implementation. This is especially crucial given the backlog and unaccomplished expectations that resulted in the project's initial stages of implementation, a learning process. Hence, it is appropriate that the project extend for another year at no extra cost. It has been determined that there is much work and adjustments for the project to actually take root and stabilize itself in order that objectives are accomplished. Over all, the events of the past 18 months have been a learning experience. The failures have not only disclosed the limitations and difficulties of the project but have more importantly opened up new challenges. There is now a deeper appreciation of the process such that a sense of learning, openness towards evolution and the acknowledgment of culture in science and development are facilitated.

**COMMUNITY BASED FOREST REGENERATION
AND RELATED RESEARCH PROJECT
COMFREP**

Proposed Budget Distribution for 1999



Major Project Activities



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TENTATIVE PROJECT WORKPLAN
JANUARY TO DECEMBER 1999

Key Result Area		Major Activities	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	BUDGET
ADMINISTRATION		Recruitment of new staff													
		Acquiring the services of selected technical specialists/consultants													Salaries 1 975 000
		Development and establishment of appropriate funds movement system													Technical specialists 250 000
		Establishment of efficient and effective accountability mechanism													Consultants 383 280
														Maintenance 1 000 000	
OPERATIONS	Center of Excellence	Production of 2 publications													6 260 000 (includes equipment for mapping center and soil and water laboratory)
		Establishment of Mapping Center													
		Establishment of Soil and Water Laboratory													
	Sustained Peoples Organization	Implementation of community managed/proposed projects													1 600 000
		Orientation on new Community Managed Projects (CMP) policies													
		Reviewing scholarship program													
		Bunkhouse construction													
		Deputation Workshop/Training													
		Leadership Training													
	Enterprise Development	Workshop on Enterprise Building and Small Business													3 570 000
		Market scanning													
		Community capital build up													
		Cross-visits													
		Product Flow Mapping													
		Plantation establishment													
		Identification of initial community enterprise													
	Grassland and Forest Resource Stabilization	Marketing of initial community enterprise													5 400 000
		Evaluation of enterprise development activities													
		Establishment of soil and water monitoring stations													
		Soil and water studies													
Development of Initial Community Resource Management Plan															
Networking and Linkaging	Implementation of CRMP													300 000	
	Project site survey and delineation														
	Nursery establishment														
	Resource Inventory														
		Meetings with key persons agencies and institutions participation in conferences and workshops on enterprise development and forest resource management													

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