

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Legal Name: *Socorro Empowered Peoples Cooperative*

Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement): *Socioeconomic and Environment Development of Bucas Grande Watershed*

Implementation Partners for This Project:

1. *Municipal Government of Socorro;*
2. *Department of Environment and Natural Resources;*
3. *LEAF Foundation, Inc.*

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): *February 1, 2006-September 30, 2007*

Date of Report (month/year): *November 30, 2007*

II. OPENING REMARKS

The 12,445 hectare Bucas Grande Island, where the lone town of Socorro is located, used to have lush forest cover in the 1970's. However, after the super typhoon "Luis" wrought havoc to the island in 1964, a forest fire which lasted for six months occurred which had razed the forest cover to the ground leaving the northern half of the island bald and devoured of any forest cover. As patches of the denuded part of the island had shown forest regeneration, another super typhoon "Nintang" struck the island in 1984. Subsequently, a forest fire occurred which again had ravaged the regenerated forest cover. To date, the forest cover of the target barangays Riza, Navarro and Taruc, where the Calangogan Watershed is located is in a sad state as only slow growing iron wood "magkono" and other indigenous tree and shrub species abound. God is just so good to the island as water still flow in the Calangogan Watershed despite its poor forest

cover. The reforestation of the area was one of the interventions of the Socorro Island Sustainable Development Sub-Project (SISRDP) under the Community-Based Resource Management Project (CBRMP).

The rehabilitation of the Bucas Grande Watershed is the urgent call of the time. However, systematic interventions cannot be made in the area unless there is a Watershed Management and Development Plan, hence, this project.

The project entitled: “ **Socioeconomic and Environment Development of Bucas Grande Watershed**” was implemented with the vision that by the year 2016, Bucas Grande Watershed is an Aesthetic, Rehabilitated, Well-managed area and Provide Sustainable Supply of Quality Water to the Citizenry of Socorro coupled with environmental concern and economic upliftment in collaborations with all sectors in the community. It is aimed that the Bucas Grande Watershed shall provide a sustainable and quality water to the inhabitants of Poblacion Socorro and generate revenues for environmental and livelihood interventions.

III. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

1. What were the initial objectives of this project?

There were four (4) objectives that were initially envisioned by this project whose attainment of the objectives with corresponding deliverables are discussed above. These objectives and expected outputs which were as follows:

1. Baseline information on the socio-demographic and economic profile of forest dwellers/occupants;
2. Extend of forest cover and biodiversity density of flora and fauna species;
3. Stakeholders agreed for co-management arrangement as part of the approval of the watershed management and development plan;
4. A capacity building plan in support to co-management of the watershed.

2. Did the objective of your project change during implementation? If so, please explain why and how.

There was no change in the objectives except for some attainment of the 4th objective which is the approval and adoption of the plan by its stakeholders. The Plan adoption will still take series of consultation for the refinement and agreement of the priority projects depending on the availability of funds and resources. The generation of information were attained according to the expected deliverables .

3. How was your project successful in achieving the expected objectives?

The attainment of the objectives were triggered by the strong partnership with the LGU and the community with the LEAF Foundation as partner NGO to implement the programs. The strong support of the local government unit of the Municipality of Socorro through the Leadership of Mayor Mamerto D. Galanida enhanced cooperation and participation among its stakeholders. Moreover, the availability of experts by LEAF in the field of biological and socio-economic assessment enhanced the conduct of the activities. Finally, the strong support of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in all the activities of the project was a big contributory factor in the successful implementation of the project.

The following are the outputs generated from the project together with its deliverables :

1. Baseline information on the socio-demographic and economic profile of forest dwellers/occupants

Deliverable: Socio-demographic and economic analysis report

The Phase 1 of the project was on Program Advocacy and Environmental Awareness. A series of courtesy calls and lobbying with SB's of the municipality of Socorro and consultation meetings with the community starting October 25-29, 2006 was conducted to advocate the project and increase awareness of the objectives of the projects.

Part of the Phase 2 aside from the advocacy activities, the socio-economic assessment was conducted in the 3 communities such as Barangay Taruc, Barangay Rizal and Barangay Navarro, Socorro Suirgao del Norte. These barangays are near to the Bucas Grande Watershed which are expected to influence the environmental condition of the watershed. There were 185 households interviewed and the result showed the existing socio-economic condition of the community as well as the degree of utilization of its resources with corresponding issues and problems. There was a separate proceedings / report and result of the assessment was integrated into the Bucas Grande Watershed Management Plan.

Aside from the primary data conducted from the socio-economic assessment,, secondary data were also collected from the Municipal and Provincial profiles to supplement the data.

2. Extent of forest cover and biodiversity density of flora and fauna species

Deliverable : Biodiversity inventory report of the flora and fauna

The Phase 2 of the project was on Resource Assessment considering the physical and the biological conditions of the watershed. Rapid Rural Assessment/Participatory Rural Assessment was conducted using a community-based approach. A Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) Forum and Resource Mapping Workshop was conducted on November 28-29, 2006 participated in by the stakeholders of the project. Several resource maps within the Bucas Grande Watershed were produced based on the indigenous knowledge of the participants such as Soil Map, Land Use Map, Slope Map, Ecotourism Map, Mineral Resource Map Forest Land Use Map, Biodiversity Map. Moreover, these maps were validated and plotted into a resource map using the Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

On the other hand, Physical and Biological Resource Assessment was conducted by a Team of technical experts commissioned by LEAF Foundation. Inventory of the flora and fauna was conducted based on the standard operating procedures. The different flora and fauna were identified in their local name and scientific names and

matched in the given literature on list of flora and fauna of the Philippines. There was a separate resource assessment report and the data generated were analyzed and integrated into the watershed management plan as issues and concerns in terms of biological conditions. The physical conditions were assessed in terms of land use, land area, land tenure, geological, topography and climatic conditions of the watershed.

3. Stakeholders agreed for co-management arrangement as part of the approval of the watershed management and development plan .

The Bucas Grande Watershed Management Council was organized last November 10, 2006. The Municipal Mayor, Hon. Mamerto D. Galanida, issued Executive Order No 6, "Creating the Socorro Municipal Watershed Management Council, Prescribing Its Composition and Functions." The Council would serve as the arm in the establishment of a co-management arrangement with proper authority on the management of the resources within the watershed.

4. A capacity building plan in support to co-management of the watershed

In order to have an integrated and participatory approach to development in the watershed, a Training Workshop on Sustainable Watershed Management Planning was conducted on December 1-3, 2006. Strategic Planning Workshop was facilitated by Environmental Consultant Engr. Nilo H. Calomot and integrated the different issues, concerns and problems of the watershed through SWOT Analysis. Results in the SWOT Analysis were used in the formulation of the Vision-Mission and Goals for Bucas Grande Watershed as well as the different projects that will be implemented in partnership with the People's Organizations and other stakeholders within the watershed with SOEMCO spearheading the undertaking.

Based on the different assessments and the secondary data the Bucas Grande Watershed Management and Development plan was formulated and validated. The first draft of the Plan was already presented for validation and now on its final draft with the consultant. The Plan will still undergo a process of further validation and presentation with the proper forum in the Municipality of Socorro and finality of it will

be the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement among its stakeholders once everything is refined. A separate approved Plan will be provided.

4. Did your team experience any disappointments or failures during implementation? If so, please explain and comment on how the team addressed these disappointments and/or failures.

The Team did not experience so much experiences on disappointment and failures during its implementation except for some apprehensions of the upland farmers tilling within the watershed on their tenurial status during the initial stage. The project management explained the issues and were resolved through partnership agreement on the project implementation. The issue were also resolved through the assistance of SOEMCO and the LGU to settle the matters during the series of advocacy and consultation meetings. As explained above, the strong support by the LGU resolved simple conflicts in project implementation. It was through open communication, coupled with strong Community Organizing, overcome such conflicts and disappointments.

5. Describe any positive or negative lessons learned from this project that would be useful to share with other organizations interested in implementing a similar project.

The positive lessons learned from the implementation of the project is the strong partnership building established between the LGU, the People's Organization and NGO implementing the project. The strong support together with active participation of the stakeholders enhanced the generation of information and the formulation of the plan. Beside participation, the type of project implemented is the demand of the time considering water as the scarce resource today. The people believe that this is a priority project considering the need for water resource, thus, the community are motivated to actively participate. Projects of this kind are really relevant to the need of time.

6. Describe any follow-up activities related to this project.

a. Arrangement with LGU Socorro

In the year 2005, the proponent had made representations with the municipal officials of Socorro, Surigao del Norte and offered that it shall find ways and means to improve, by way of reforestation, the critical Calangogan Watershed Area and install a sustainable water supply system.

After a series of negotiations, the Municipal Officials had agreed in principle to transfer ownership of the existing dilapidated Socorro Water System to the proponent Socorro Empowered Peoples Cooperative (SOEMCO) and grant franchise to the Cooperative to operate and manage a Water Supply System in the municipality.

The proponent then availed a grant from CEPF for the formulation of the Municipal Watershed Management and Development Plan.

As an offshoot of the arrangement, the Local Chief Executive of the town lobbied successfully with the Department of Public Works and Highways to allocate the amount of P 1.2 Million for the construction of distribution lines in Barangay Taruc, which to date, is already fully completed.

Finally, on January 8, 2007, the Sangguniang Bayan of Socorro adopted and approved Municipal Ordinance No. 07-001 Re: **“TRANSFERRING OF THE SOCORRO MUNICIPAL WATERWORKS SYSTEM OWNED BY THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT OF SOCORRO TO THE JURISDICTION AND OWNERSHIP OF THE SOCORRO EMPOWERED PEOPLE’S COOPERATIVE (SOEMCO)”**. Moreover, on the same date, Municipal Ordinance No. 07-002 Re: **“GRANTING THE SOCORRO EMPOWERED PEOPLE’S COOPERATIVE (SOEMCO) A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN A WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SOCORRO, SURIGAO DEL NORTE”** was adopted and approved. The twin ordinances were promptly signed by the Municipal Mayor on the following day.

It is worthy to mention that the Socorro Empowered Peoples Cooperative had passed a resolution expressing its commitment to set aside from its collection from the

member-water concessionaires the amount of P 0.50 per cubic meter as Watershed Management Fund.

b. Technical Cooperation with the Surigao Metropolitan Water District

A component of the Watershed Management and Development Plan would be a Level II Water System Plan. Towards this end, the proponent had coordinated and was able to gain the full support of the General Manager of the Surigao Metropolitan Water District in the preparation of the Water System Design and Detailed Engineering. The said water system design was utilized by the personnel of the Department of Public Works and Highways in the installation of distribution pipes in Barangay Taruc which is one of the service area of this project.

c. Funding Support from the Peace and Equity Foundation, Inc.

The proponent was also able to negotiate with the Peace and Equity Foundation, Inc. which committed to provide funding support for the materials acquisition cost of the Level II Water Supply System Project.

The Project Proposal worth P 12.0 Million was submitted to the Peace and Equity Foundation. The Mindanao Regional Manager of the Peace and Equity Foundation conducted an on-site inspection and validation. Subsequently, he endorsed the project to the central office of the foundation in Manila with a reduced project cost of P 7.8 Million. During the national screening conducted by the foundation last October 22, 2007, the approval of the project was deferred pending submission by SOEMCO of a full-blown Project Feasibility Study.

7. Please provide any additional information to assist CEPF in understanding any other aspects of your completed project.

The Bucas Grande Watershed consists of endemic species and unique features which is different from the mainland. As declared as NIPAS, there is a need to conduct in depth study on its flora and fauna in relation to the physical characteristics especially the soil. The unique ecosystem structure of the island is

very good venue for more research and development program for Biodiversity Conservation.

IV. ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
SOEMCO	A	P 299,500.00	
LEAF	A	P 200,500.00	
LGU SOCORRO	C	P 500,000.00	For counterpart fund for Water Supply System
Peace and Equity Foundation	C	P 7,800,000.00	For the Water Supply System to be released upon submission of Project Feasibility Study.

***Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:**

- A** *Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)*
- B** *Complementary funding (Other donors contribute to partner organizations that are working on a project linked with this CEPF project)*
- C** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF project.)*
- D** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

V. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Strengthening of the Bucas Grande Watershed Management Council -**
The project will be the capacity building and resource sourcing and mobilization

of the council which entails the packaging and negotiation of project proposals to donor agencies.

- 2. Implement watershed rehabilitation and protection programs** – This will entail the tree planting of denuded area by establishment a gene pool forest for natural rehabilitation.
- 3. Monitoring and Evaluation of Flora and fauna.** –A continued Research and development on the inventory of flora and fauna to assess the impact of the different interventions conducted within the watershed
1. Continue to strengthen partnership building and cooperation between local government units, the peoples organizations. national government agencies and non-government organizations, local and international, to sustain the momentum gained in from the project implementation..

VI. INFORMATION SHARING

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned and results. One way we do this is by making programmatic project documents available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and by marketing these in our newsletter and other communications.

These documents are accessed frequently by other CEPF grantees, potential partners, and the wider conservation community.

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