

## section 3



# LANDCARE FACILITATORS

## Facilitation — the key role

The stories from the two previous sections highlight the importance of the support provided by organisations such as ICRAF and SEARCA in implementing landcare in the Philippines. This has taken many forms, including provision of technical information and training, development of landcare group processes, and development of linkages with local government and other service providers. A key feature of landcare is the way in which this support is provided – through landcare facilitators working with farmers and other partners at the ‘grass roots’ level in a highly participatory manner.

All agencies participating in the Landcare Program have recognised the importance of the facilitation role. Both the ACIAR and AECI projects as well as ICRAF have directed the bulk of their landcare funds towards supporting facilitators. To provide a direct link with the facilitation expertise from Australian landcare, the ACIAR project has also supported the direct involvement of an Australian landcare facilitator in the Philippines Landcare Program.

The stories in this section are from five landcare facilitators who have played a major role in developing Philippines landcare through projects supported by ACIAR and AECI. However, there are many other landcare facilitators (and facilitators in training), both part-time and full-time, who have made a significant contribution to these projects and support Philippines landcare. It has been a truly international effort, with staff involved from the Philippines, Australia, Spain and Germany. This book recognises and acknowledges their wonderful efforts, although space does not allow us to print all their stories.

*Landcare facilitators  
take part in a joint  
training excursion.*



# 1. PROVIDING FARMING OPTIONS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

By Maria Aurora (Au-Au) Laotoco

**Current location:** Claveria, Misamis Oriental, Northern Mindanao, Philippines

**Occupation:** Landcare facilitator, Claveria municipality in Misamis Oriental province

**Role in landcare:** ICRAF landcare facilitator involved in group facilitation, training and promotion of conservation farming technologies

**Experience:** Before joining ICRAF, worked as the municipal planning and development officer of the Claveria municipality; has experience in land use and physical framework and development planning, agrarian reform and as an agricultural economics and statistics teacher



Ma. Aurora (Au-Au) Laotoco.

## Benefits of landcare for upland farmers in Misamis Oriental

Since landcare started, the landscape has slowly been transformed into a tree-based farming system, especially in the lower part of Claveria. I think this is the most noticeable change. Another improvement has been in the condition of the road. When I was new here, most of the *barangays* were not accessible by transport. But now, with the cooperation of local government units and other agencies, you can see big improvements in the roads.

People also see farming systems being diversified, which will eventually bring benefits to farmers in the region. But achieving economic benefits from these changes is quite slow.

With landcare, farmers have been able to work together to discuss the common problems related to their farms and the resources around them. Then, as a group, they can address the issues. Farmers are very concerned about the soil erosion from their steep sloping lands.

The Claveria Landcare Association is a big network of landcare groups that are working in the *barangays* and villages. People involved in these groups learn a lot from working with the other people in the group. They develop the social skills to deal with other people and they also learn how to manage projects better. Working in a group also reinforces the feeling that they are not alone and that other people out there have similar problems and are willing to support them.

## Building on local knowledge

I have been living in Claveria for 18 years. In 1989 I joined the Department of Agrarian Reform to work on support services, helping farmers develop projects of benefit to them. After this work, I was invited by the Mayor of Claveria, who is now the





*Au-Au talks to barangay captain, Samuel Abrogar.*

Governor of Misamis Oriental, to work as Claveria's municipal planning and development officer.

As a planning officer, I became involved in some landcare activities as I was invited as a resource person to participate in various capacity-building activities. This involvement impressed on me the potential of landcare for making a meaningful difference, so I applied for the job of landcare facilitator to look at taking landcare beyond Claveria to the rest of the province of Misamis Oriental. I am passionate about the nature of the work I am doing now.

## **Taking landcare beyond the municipality**

It was not easy taking landcare from Claveria to other areas that had not heard of it before and that had not experienced working with research organisations and NGOs. Everyone had very high expectations about the program. Some people expected a lot of funding from the project, and when they realised it was not forthcoming, they lost interest. However, most of the communities were very interested to learn about landcare

and adapt it to their own situations. That was inspiration enough to continue with the work. In some communities, the landcare concept of people working together was very acceptable, but there was a need to help communities with technologies beyond NVS or tree-planting.

A number of government officers and NGOs were very open to the landcare concept and landcare became successful in their areas, for example, in the municipalities of Jasaan, Sugbongcogon, Medina, and Kinoguitan. There are also excellent efforts by NGOs in the municipalities of Alubijid, Naawan and Laguindingan.

## **Building community confidence**

When I joined landcare, I saw that many facilitators had a clear agenda of what they wanted people to do. This was based on the high level of awareness amongst facilitators about the pressing problem of erosion in the region. I think it was effective to focus farmers' attention on an issue that they could solve by applying simple technologies like NVS or agroforestry.

It gave them the confidence to solve other, more complex problems likely to confront them in the future.

However, I also believe landcare should focus on finding out the real environmental, social and economic issues that a community is facing. It is also important to find out what the community's previous efforts are, and try to build on these. We need to encourage a community's desire, their own understanding, and their own ways of solving their problems.

### Tips for building community confidence

- Build confidence in landcare by helping people identify problems with relatively simple solutions.
- Find out the specific issues and problems of each community involved in landcare.
- Identify previous community efforts to solve problems and build on these efforts.
- Avoid set prescriptions for solving problems.
- Encourage the community to understand and solve their own problems.

## Landcare Foundation for the Philippines

We need to remember that we are dealing with poor upland communities and local government units that have barely enough resources to provide the activities and services that are mandated by law for them to provide to their constituents.

There are many piecemeal activities and efforts going on with minimal support from NGOs and development organisations. I think there are too many community development activities, projects or programs going on in the Philippines related to conservation farming practice. Landcare is one way of trying to unite all the activities related to natural resource management.

I am quite passionate that we need a certain body to bring all the natural resource management activities together. This should not be a local government unit because it might not have the resources or capacity, and there is also the issue of political factors. ICRAF's mandate for doing research means it is also less able to take on this facilitation role.

An NGO or Landcare Foundation is needed to network all these activities, projects and programs. It could also take a lead in community problem-solving and community development. It is important that such a body has a united agenda for community development that focuses on natural resource management, and that it tries to link environmental improvements with the social and economic condition of our poor upland communities.

After two years of negotiation, it looks as if a Landcare Foundation is now ready to take off and build on what has already been achieved in the past four to five years. ICRAF has provided assistance in establishing the Foundation.

## Landcare needs to recognise the needs of the poor

We need to remember that our poor communities have little to spare. Aside from the time that they are willing to share, they may have little money and materials to participate in the landcare program. Apart from that, there is a whole range of issues related to developing their confidence in participating in landcare for the long term.

I think we really need to be realistic about this because we are dealing with very poor, small farmers and most of them do not even own more than three hectares of land. So they have barely enough resources to be able to survive. I think we need some kind of external assistance to enable the farmers to improve their farming systems but, at the same time, sustain what they have actually already started.

We talked to a number of landcare groups here and many of these groups have indicated that they need some assistance in improving their livelihood, such as livestock production projects. It could be something as simple as providing a pair of goats or some cattle. This doesn't require much money and I think this is one project that farmers are very interested in.

I believe it is still a very big challenge to achieve a sustainable landcare program and movement here in the Philippines. Fortunately, we have a culture of willingness to help others and to come up with a united and common vision for our communities.



*A farmer and village kids from Claveria take an interest in Louise Hateley's Waterwatch activities.*

## Waterwatch in Claveria

### Australian support for a Waterwatch program

In Australia, water quality monitoring through community based Waterwatch programs has become an integral part of Australian landcare. In the Philippines, a similar need and interest developed as the Philippines Landcare Program grew. An opportunity to support the development of Philippines Waterwatch with Australian expertise was facilitated in 2002 when the ACIAR Philippines–Australia Landcare Project arranged for the placement of an Australian Waterwatch volunteer in the Philippines at Claveria, under the Australian Youth Ambassador for Development (AYAD) scheme. Louise Hateley was that volunteer, and this is her story.

I had just completed a Diploma of Conservation Ecology in 1999 when I heard about a Waterwatch position in my local catchment at Ginninderra, near Canberra, Australia. I spent a year as the local coordinator working alongside the Ginninderra landcare coordinator, running workshops with community groups to raise awareness about stormwater runoff, and encouraging and training groups to regularly monitor their local section of the creek.

After this, I assisted Waterwatch at the local government level in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), before going to James Cook University in north Queensland to do a Bachelor of Environmental Science. When I heard about the volunteer position in the Philippines in March 2002, I knew straightaway that I wanted to go.

When I arrived in Claveria, I started by submerging myself in the ICRAF program and Filipino culture. I found out what had been done previously, and started to build relationships with the people from ICRAF and their families.

The next step was to train facilitators and write materials appropriate to some of the communities in the area. That was what I spent most of my time on, as well as taking school groups and landcare groups down to their local creek for some enjoyable, hands-on experiences with Waterwatch.

I can honestly say they were the most enthusiastic and eager to learn group of people I have ever met. It was great working with Ruby Monera and Thelma Paday (their stories follow), who could translate for me and help me to communicate with farmers and students. I don't think I could have done it without them.

Implementing the Waterwatch program took longer than I had anticipated. But, coming from Australia, I didn't appreciate that things would be different and take more time to happen,





*Ruby Monera demonstrating how to conduct a turbidity test on water from a creek in Claveria.*

particularly as a result of the challenges of cross-cultural communication. When I left Claveria for Bohol six months later, because of concern for my safety, I felt that I had only just started to get things off the ground. I was sad to leave my host family and the friends I had made in and around Claveria.

In Bohol I found out about other water quality projects in the area and was able to get involved in these, which was fantastic. I also got to produce a Waterwatch manual, which is helping Waterwatch groups in Claveria, Bohol and other areas.

The highlight for me was the Waterwatch workshop that I organised towards the end of my stay in the Philippines. With ICRAF staff and facilitators, local government officials and NGO

representatives, we spent three days reviewing the manual and doing lots of hand-on activities. Seeing it all come together, being able to spend some time with people from different parts of the country, and to know that I was leaving a useful resource behind, was very rewarding.

I think that the landcare ethic has been embraced really well in the Philippines and I think it will grow even further. Landcare cements community ties and networks. Waterwatch complements landcare, and I think with people like Ruby and Thelma it will be a great success.

### **Waterwatch in the community**

I am Ruby Monera and I have been a landcare volunteer since 1999. After training under Louise Hatelly in late 2002, I took on the facilitation of Waterwatch community landcare groups in Claveria. We are piloting water quality monitoring activities with the Poblacion *barangay*. After six months of monitoring, we will analyse the data and make recommendations for taking Waterwatch to other groups.

The community monitors the physical and biological characteristics of the water such as nitrate and phosphate levels, pH, turbidity, habitat change and any impacts from land use in the area. We do this monitoring on a monthly basis during both the rainy and dry seasons.

So far we have found that the quality of water varies along our three monitoring sites in the Napolog and Hanopolitan creeks. These creeks run from the upper part of Claveria down to the sea. The water quality does seem to be better in the areas that use conservation technologies like NVS.

The *Barangay* Council has been very interested in Waterwatch as they can see the relationship between it and the other activities we are doing in the area. All the canals in the Poblacion area flow into Napolog Creek, so what is done on the land will affect the quality of water in the creek. Some farmers have already suggested planting trees along the creeks to rehabilitate the riparian zone.

Landcare is not only about conservation farming, it is also about the community. People become more socially involved through the landcare approach. I would like to see Waterwatch adopted by all the communities in Claveria as part of their landcare activities.



*Thelma Paday (centre) demonstrates macro-invertebrate testing during a Waterwatch training day.*

## **Waterwatch in schools**

I am Thelma Paday and I have been a landcare volunteer since 1999, assisting with two *barangays* in lower Claveria. I now facilitate landcare in both elementary and secondary schools and am also involved in Waterwatch. I help teachers with subjects like technology and home economics to inform students about soil and water conservation.

In 2002, we started Waterwatch in some schools and we now have five schools that know about the importance of water. Students from these schools go to the creek where we divide them into groups to observe various things about the water. They enjoy the activities, which are simple and easy but teach the importance of caring for water.



*Claveria students involved in Waterwatch activities.*

*Waterwatch and landcare are closely connected, because if we don't care for the land and soil in the upland areas, then the quality of water in the lowlands is affected.*



## 2. BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS WITH UPLAND FARMERS

*By Gerardo (Gigi) Boy*

**Current location:** Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, Central Mindanao, Philippines

**Occupation:** Landcare facilitator, Lantapan municipality in Bukidnon province

**Role in landcare:** ICRAF landcare facilitator involved in group facilitation, training and promotion of conservation farming technologies

**Experience:** Before joining ICRAF, worked as a cropping systems researcher with Environmental Science for Social Change (ESSC), based in Malaybalay City



*Gigi Boy.*

### Landcare provides options for upland farmers

The major benefit of landcare for upland farmers is the increased number of options for farming. Through ICRAF landcare has provided new farming systems. The basket of technologies promoted may not be new, but landcare provides options so that farmers can easily select the technologies that best apply to their situation.

The technologies we are promoting have long-term benefits. It is difficult to see changes overnight from landcare, but we can see already that farms have evolved from single crops to much more diversified farming systems. I can see that farmers now have more crops planted on their fields. To me this means they are more likely to be productive than when they had their fields only planted to one crop, such as corn. This increased productivity is likely to mean families now have more food available, and it is likely to be more diverse and therefore more nutritious. They possibly also have more crops, and even seedlings, that they can sell. This all increases household incomes.

Farmers' awareness about sustainable agriculture has also substantially increased. Instead of just maximising the use of the land for their present needs, they now see beyond today. They are already thinking of their children and their children's children, where they might get wood for house construction or for firewood and so on.

## From Manila to Malaybalay City

My first involvement with landcare came about when Delia Catacutan (ICRAF landcare manager in Lantapan at the time) asked me to meet Dennis Garrity, the (former) Southeast Asian Coordinator of ICRAF. We met in Malaybalay City for an interview in 1999 because they were looking for someone to fill a new position in ICRAF.

I had previously moved from Manila to Malaybalay City to take up the position with ESSC, where I was in charge of data collection for maize and coffee production systems. After my marriage to Karen, we had decided that the big city hassles of Manila were not right for us. We dreamed of a place where we could raise a healthy family connected with nature. And that is what we found in Malaybalay City, in the heart of Bukidnon Province — our own little paradise.

As a landcare facilitator I found myself involved in group facilitation, training, promoting ICRAF's conservation technologies, building the capacity of landcare groups in skills like leadership, conflict resolution, group formation and networking.

I trained other facilitators and farmers about various relevant techniques. This included promoting NVS, establishing contour lines, seedling collection and propagation.



*Gigi talking to a farmer group.*

The first time I was in Bukidnon, it was really hard for me to adapt to the local conditions. I was from Manila and transferring to a city within a rural setting was difficult. The first major obstacle for me was the language — I could not speak the local dialect. At the first training I did with farmers in Lantapan, they commented that my language was lousy! Slowly I improved, which made me feel much more confident, even though they still laugh at me when I get tongue-tied.

## An evolving understanding of landcare

The first definition I had for landcare was really all about the technology. I saw landcare as essentially referring to technology like NVS or to agroforestry. This was how it had been introduced to me by facilitators in Lantapan. But, when I had a chance to go to Australia in my second month with ICRAF, I learned that landcare was not just a technology, and not just about agroforestry, NVS or conservation farming. I found that it's more about the involvement of people who are trying to work out issues or adopt technologies in their local situations, in response to pressing issues related to environment, sustainable agriculture and production. It really broadened my perspective to understand that landcare can be applied in very different biophysical, socioeconomic, cultural and political set ups.

**Gigi's definition of landcare:** Landcare for me now is really an ethic of integrating environmental issues, social skills and support systems into the culture of the Filipinos. It is a combination of knowledge and skills to produce social, economic, and environmental benefits for sustainable development.

My perspectives about landcare have grown so much in the past four years. From applying the technology, I was able to build on the lessons and insights we got from the communities as well. We did this by incorporating the farmers' ideas into the overall landcare agenda.

I look at landcare as something that is reviving the old Filipino 'bayanihan' system, which is based on cooperation and volunteering to do both simple and difficult tasks. It is voluntary and I see the benefits for the farmers being involved without the usual motive of financial or material rewards.

*I learned that landcare was not just a technology, and not just about agroforestry, NVS or conservation farming. I found that it's more about the involvement of people who are trying to work out issues or adopt technologies in their local situations, in response to pressing issues related to environment, sustainable agriculture and production.*

## Gaining confidence in partnerships

As a community, we gained confidence in dealing with local governments and partner institutions. This happened by not relying completely on what partners could offer, but by building on the ideas and synergy formed from dealing with different partners.

Given the mandate of ICRAF, the technology aspects are still an important component of the whole approach. However, we do connect landcare groups to other service providers to examine other technology options, livelihood opportunities or projects that might help meet their needs. This could mean considering a change from subsistence to commercial farming. Or it could include training in the social skills needed for sustaining the enthusiasm of the groups involved in landcare.

For example, some groups were interested in growing mushrooms. We connected them to the extension service at Central Mindanao University. We invited some of their staff to Lantapan to do some training. Developing networks and linkages is important for complementing the existing resources of ICRAF and supplementing any skill or knowledge limitations. We worked with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in Davao to provide basic accounting skills to farmers. The aim of this training was to increase farmers' awareness of farming as a business and not just a source of food.

We are also trying to develop a better and more efficient relationship with the mayor. We are really hoping this will blossom and result in more positive interaction and collaboration. The mayor has told us he wants to promote landcare to the seven municipalities that are members of the Protected Area Management Board. This would be great.



*Gigi talks to Pearla Binahon, a landcare member from Lantapan, about new crop opportunities.*

## Key success factors for forming landcare partnerships

- Building self-reliance of the farmers involved in landcare.
- Establishing networks and connections with partners who can provide ideas or training that is useful to the landcare groups.
- Looking for partners who can provide new options that are relevant to local needs.
- Training in social or group skills can be just as important as technical training.
- Building a degree of independence from outside funds.





*Gigi demonstrates agroforestry developments to a mixed audience of farmers and LGU representatives.*

## Taking landcare to new areas

The first thing that people asked when I went to a new area was: “what’s in it for me?” Lantapan has many development projects that give out funds for income-generating activities. However, landcare is really about on-site technology transfer and skills development. There are still people who join landcare thinking they will get some direct financial or material benefits from joining. However, as a landcare facilitator, I think it is important to build relationships of honesty and trust. I try and tell them that landcare is not a funding institution, but will help to provide them with a more sustainable agriculture or a more sustainable environment.

It is also important to understand early on what a community’s needs are. We have to do our basic research so we understand local conditions, instead of just implementing a project without any local knowledge. The next step is to promote open communication so no constraints or issues are likely to emerge because of misunderstandings. We should promote trust and honesty and try very hard to develop relationships with people on the ground, because they are our real partners. Officials come and go but the people on the land are always there.

## Achieving wider participation in landcare

My vision is to expand the areas covered by landcare. We will need to involve more and more entities, agencies and local government units in the program. We need to make them more aware of the benefit of having farmers as major partners in sustainable development rather than local governments implementing programs that are spoon-fed to farmers.

The challenge is to get governments giving their full support to landcare instead of looking at their own political agendas or the next election.

Communities have many resources and local governments should tap into these appropriately. While the local government units are capable enough to support landcare, they may need information, technical skills and institutional skills on how to provide the right support for the community. They will need to work with the community, development agencies, agri-businesses and technical facilitators in partnerships to achieve positive outcomes for all.

With such partnerships in place, I am optimistic that landcare will be a national program in the Philippines within five to 10 years.

### 3. TRAINING PARTNERSHIPS FACILITATE SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE

*By Eldon Ruiz*

<b>Current location:</b>	Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Southern Mindanao, Philippines
<b>Occupation:</b>	Landcare facilitator, <i>Barangay</i> Ned, Lake Sebu municipality, South Cotabato province
<b>Role in landcare:</b>	SEARCA landcare facilitator involved in group facilitation, training and promotion of conservation farming technologies to <i>Barangay</i> Ned landcare groups
<b>Experience:</b>	Before joining landcare, worked for SEARCA-ACIAR as a research assistant in Ned on evaluation and development of different production systems for steep land, and before that in another ACIAR project on the management of acid soils in Bukidnon province



*Eldon Ruiz (left) talking to a farmer.*

#### Benefits of landcare to farmers in Ned

The first benefit of landcare to farmers was that they were able to attend training, which they had requested, on conservation technologies and capacity building. Farmers able to visit Claveria or Lantapan saw different farming systems, giving them ideas for their own farms. Farmers moved from using NVS to planting coffee, fruit and forest trees along the contours and planting high-value annuals in the alleys. This led to farms becoming diversified with multiple sources of income. For some farmers, this now means a daily income from selling vegetables locally rather than waiting five to six months to get an income from a single crop and incurring lots of debt on the way.

Although farmers say that increases in income are not noticeable yet, they believe when trees bear fruit or are harvested for timber, there will be a big difference. Farmers have learnt tree nursery management techniques and are able to produce seedlings on their farms. Excess seedlings are sold to other interested farmers, creating additional income.

Some landcare groups focus on producing high value annual (HVA) crops like capsicum, cabbages, potato or carrots, but still on a small scale. They are experimenting with the marketing side of those commodities and planning for commercial production in the next couple of years. The landcare movement is still young, but the necessary foundation for a better farming future is already in place.

Farmers find they can better take control of their own situations through landcare. For example, as a group they can ask different service providers for assistance with things like providing shovels, scythes, seedling bags, fruit tree seedlings and seeds of fruit and forest trees.





*Ned farmers visit a landcare member's farm in Claveria during a cross-visit.*

## Researcher to landcare facilitator

Before joining landcare in 1999, I was employed by ACIAR as a research assistant on a project evaluating and developing different production systems in the Ned area. Initially, I had no clear idea about what I was meant to do when I started working with landcare. Facilitation is a new role and I knew very little about it. We were supposed to be trained at the start of the project, but due to some changes with the project, the training came a little later. At the start, it was up to me to find approaches on how to do landcare in the field. I found this very difficult, as I had no clear direction of where I was going.

My two previous projects focused on technical research while landcare is more about participatory research and I had no experience in this area. I found the first year very tough with lots of adjustments needed. However, as time went by, I worked through the process with the farmers and other partners, and I slowly made some steps with landcare. Later I attended training about the landcare approach, which really helped. I also attended technical training on topics such as coffee production and durian production, which helped me to feel much more confident about working with farmers.

Landcare gives me a chance to work with many people and increase my capability to deal with them or respond appropriately.

## Responding to farmers' needs

Most of the farmers wanted to find out about the technical aspects of HVA crop production. So I decided to start the landcare activity by providing training on that. High-value annuals include temperate crops, such as potato, cabbages, carrots, capsicum, tomato, cauliflower and broccoli, that grow at higher elevations in the Philippines.

A downside of this training was that some farmers had the perception that landcare was only about vegetable production. This meant we had to re-orientate their thinking through further training. Now they understand that landcare is a process.

One of the lessons I learnt is that we must clearly explain the project's objectives and activities before going to the farmers. This avoids confused messages and wrong perceptions. Setting clear objectives and plans before doing a project is necessary for it to run smoothly.

I think it's very important to listen to the farmers, as I believe we can solve most of their problems this way. Often when we listen to farmers, we find they already have a solution in mind, and they just need someone who will direct them or link them to other service providers who can help them solve their problems.

For example, at the early stage of landcare we were able to contact Nestle Philippines, who provided us with free training on coffee



production. We were able to send five farmers, and in return conducted training seminars for about 150 other interested farmers in Ned. Some of those farmers have already harvested and sold their coffee. One farmer told me he had harvested about five 90 kilogram sacks of coffee beans and sold these for P35 per kilogram. This is great, given that this coffee was only planted on contour strips.

## Building partnerships

We found that partnerships were very important for landcare's success. Through landcare, farmers have made linkages to service providers like the provincial government, municipal government, *barangay* council as well as NGOs that help them sustain their activities.

The Ned Landcare Association was able to get seedling bags and seeds through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Office of the Provincial Agriculture (OPAG). I was able to invite the head of OPAG to visit farms owned by landcare members in Ned. He appreciated it so much that he immediately set up a meeting with me, the Governor and the Ned Landcare Association President. We learnt that the provincial government had a program called the "plant-now-pay-

later" scheme for fruit trees. Through this program, interested farmers could loan fruit tree seedlings payable at the first, second or third fruit harvest. They provided us with 5000 durian seedlings, and so far 1400 have been planted.

The farmers also work with other partners like the local government and the Department of Education to plant trees in the community and around school campuses. Another good linkage is with the Institute of Plant Breeding (IPB). We invited one of their experts in plant breeding to talk to us about using the Open Pollinated Variety (OPV) of corn, and now some landcare members are using this variety.

I helped make linkages between the farmers and different agencies or NGOs who could advise and support us. My aim now is to make the farmers feel more independent by minimising my time with them and encouraging them to devise and implement their own activities.



Farmers helping each other learn. Left: the A-frame method for establishing contours. Right: establishing high-value annual crops.

## 10 tips for new landcare facilitators

1. Find out from others in the field what landcare is all about.
2. Work through the process with local farmers and other interested groups.
3. Identify and participate in any training available, especially in group development and facilitation skills.
4. Take farmers new to landcare to see the process and technologies in action at a place where landcare has been operating for a few years.
5. Listen to farmers, find out their needs, and respond to them.
6. Make it very clear to farmers that landcare is a process and not just a single technology.
7. Work with farmers to identify clear objectives and activities before starting landcare projects.
8. Identify service providers who can link to farmers and meet their identified needs.
9. Encourage activities that give farmers confidence to be self-reliant.
10. Don't intervene too much in group activities, encourage independence.

The *Barangay* Council has provided farmers with some material assistance, but this is not enough to cater to all interested farmers. We need more local support. We were able to lobby for an ordinance that prohibited farmers from tilling steep areas without using conservation practices and conserving the remnant forest. The ordinance was approved, but not fully enforced due to lack of personnel.

Landcare is not part of the national mandate so there is a risk that government units at a lower level won't see the need to support the program. I believe it is important to identify the partners who will make landcare a national program, to institutionalise it. At the local level, we have to sustain group formation, provide appropriate technologies, and continue to build the capacity of the farmer leaders. We need to do this with different partners like the Catholic Church, who actively promote conservation farming to the community, the families within it and local government agencies supporting it.

## Overcoming Ned's isolation

One of the biggest problems that I face implementing landcare is that Ned is an isolated area with activities mostly focused within the *barangay*. This makes it difficult to get involvement from municipal and provincial governments. Although we have invited staff from different government agencies at the municipal and provincial levels to visit Ned, the poor accessibility of the region makes this difficult. Visiting different *sitios* within the *barangay* is also limited; I have to walk, making it very time-consuming. The good news is that the Department of Agrarian Reform is planning a big project to develop the Ned area, which has received funding support from the Asian Development Bank. The planned project includes both infrastructure and agri-livelihood development. It is due to start this year (2004) and continue over the next decade.

## 4. TAKING LANDCARE TO THE VISAYAS

*By Zorina (Zori) Culasero-Arellano*

<b>Current location:</b>	Leyte State University, Baybay, Leyte, Philippines
<b>Occupation:</b>	Formerly, landcare coordinator, Visayas; currently provides technical and administrative assistance to ICRAF
<b>Role in landcare:</b>	AECI landcare coordinator involved in helping facilitators to plan and implement landcare on the Visayas Islands of the Philippines
<b>Experience:</b>	Worked in Palawan as forestry specialist, and during the six months before taking up the AECI job worked as monitoring and evaluation manager for the ACIAR landcare project in Mindanao with Dr Rob Cramb



*Zori Culasero-Arellano (right) talks to a group of landcare members at San Isidro, Bohol.*

### Benefits of landcare to the Visayas

Although we don't have clear economic data about farm yields, and how conservation technologies help improve farmers' livelihoods, we can already see some improvements in soil condition. When you ask the farmers, they also see a difference from the time they first applied the technologies. I don't think they would apply the technologies if they didn't see any benefit from them. They can see the difference in soil condition and sometimes some improvement in their production.

I don't think farmers will see major increases in their production for a long time. In the first year of applying the NVS technology, there were small decreases in yields because of the areas being used for the NVS. However, in the longer term this is likely to be compensated by the economic benefits from trees or other crops that farmers plant along the contour.



## Testing landcare in the Visayas

The AECI landcare program in the Visayas was designed to test the applicability of the technologies developed in Mindanao to the islands of Visayas, particularly in Bohol and Leyte.

The technologies particularly tested were NVS and minimum tillage. However, we didn't just introduce technologies, we also looked at the farmers' existing technologies to see whether this could be improved or changed to meet conservation needs.

To help implement landcare in the Visayas, we developed relationships with strategic partners in Leyte and Bohol who are members of the Conservation Farming in Tropical Uplands (CFTU) network. CFTU member organisations include academic, non-government and other research organisations. We developed

and implemented research activities with the concerned agencies and in some cases they helped us facilitate activities with the farmers. There were also times when we provided technical assistance to the partner organisations.

One of the problems that facilitators initially had in the Visayas in implementing the landcare program was the perception of farmers that landcare was just another project. They were concerned there would be initial support and involvement by different organisations, but once the project was completed, the organisations would leave and the thrust of the project would be lost.

The Visayas has a traditional labour system where farmers try to work together to attain certain goals. Landcare fitted in well with this concept and we used this to involve farmers directly in the project. We involved farmers from the planning to the implementation of various activities based on what they said they needed, rather than what we thought they needed. This helped to solve the initial perception problems. The exciting thing is that since the project has finished, farmers appear to be continuing landcare activities.



*The islands of the Visayas showing the location of Bohol and Leyte.*



*The location of landcare activities on Bohol and Leyte.*

## Farmer-to-farmer extension

Landcare is a real farmer-to-farmer means of approaching extension, which helps to strengthen a landcare group. The formation of a Farmer Trainers' Group, a group of selected farmers who were trained to serve as local facilitators, helps ensure the continuity of sharing knowledge among the farmers and will help landcare to continue to prosper in the Visayas.

## The vision for landcare

My vision for the landcare program in the Philippines is for more farmers and more local government units all over the Philippines to be involved. This means not only doing soil conservation farming, but also addressing other issues of the environment that might affect our land. I think we need to work together and we need to make people more aware of what is happening in our environment. This means implementing effective information and education campaigns about our environment.



I particularly hope that local government units take up the landcare program seriously and include it in their regular activities. This means allocating a budget to sustain the program. I also hope that it will spread all over the country and not only in the areas where ICRAF and SEARCA have been working.

It is very rewarding to be involved in something that is helping to change the landscape and the lives of people, especially at the grassroots level. If I am no longer formally employed in the landcare program after this project ends, I still hope I can apply it in different ways and help restore our environment.



*NVS at San Isidro in Bohol.*

*The impact of NVS clearly demonstrated at San Isidro, Bohol. In the foreground, unprotected slopes are heavily eroded and degraded. In the background, slopes protected by NVS are stable and productive.*

## Helping to scale up landcare in the Visayas, By Geramil Cordero

I was a research field worker helping Sam Koffa on tree domestication research when the landcare program came to Lantapan. I worked as a landcare volunteer in Lantapan for a year before getting involved in the new project to scale up landcare in the Visayas.

The first thing I did as a landcare facilitator in the municipality of San Isidro province of Bohol was to explain landcare to the local government. They responded by providing us with transport to meet the communities and they also provided venues and food during meetings. Local government support was useful in gaining farmers' trust. Before going to the community, I asked the mayor's permission and advice to ensure security.

Landcare has really helped farmers improve their farms in Bohol. They can now see some real improvements on their lands. For example, there is land that was not farmed for 20 years because it had lost productivity due to soil erosion. Through landcare, we encouraged them to try NVS and now 47 farmers are working on this once abandoned land.

Most officers of one of the landcare groups in San Isidro in Bohol are also officials of the barangay, so they are informed about government projects. These officials became more active with landcare and wanted to improve the condition of the community. Through their concerted efforts, along with other members



*Geramil Cordero (left) with farmers at San Isidro, Bohol.*

of the landcare group, they were able to obtain financial assistance of P100 000 from the Congressman and municipal local government for road improvements, seeds and fertiliser.

Through landcare, the local government now has some projects on environmental rehabilitation and conservation. The local government units worked through groups because they believed that would be more effective than working on projects with individuals. The continuous support of the local government will keep landcare going in this community. Even if our project ends, the landcare groups will continue to sustain their activities and raise their own funds because they have developed a partnership with local government.

*A typical river scene in Bohol.*





## 5. BUILDING GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS IN LANDCARE

*By John Muir*

<b>Current location:</b>	Maleny, Sunshine Coast Hinterland, South-east Queensland, Australia
<b>Occupation:</b>	Landcare facilitator, Barung Landcare Inc, Maleny
<b>Role in landcare:</b>	Coordinator for Barung Landcare Maleny (1995–99), and then landcare project facilitator with the ACIAR Philippines–Australia landcare project (1999–2004)
<b>Experience:</b>	Has qualifications in agriculture and rural development; previously worked for 10 years as a district extension agronomist with NSW Agriculture with a two-year secondment to an AusAID-funded Integrated Rural Development Project in Cambodia with Australian Catholic Relief (1992–94)



*John Muir.*

### Landcare changes lives and landscapes in the Philippines

I feel very privileged to have been part of a participatory action research landcare process. In areas where landcare has been working for several years, you can now look at hills that were once planted with only one crop, but are now contoured with established trees and shrubs. You are now more likely to see patchworks of complex farming systems with root crops, ground cover, fodder grass, windbreak shelter belts and fruit trees. Common land is also being revegetated and protected communally. The Filipinos can now grow more diverse crops, with less erosion and increased production per hectare. The livelihoods of the landscapes and people are becoming more resilient.



*John Muir with three of the Philippines senior landcare facilitators – from left, Eldon Ruiz (Ned), Ma. Aurora Laotoco (Claveria), and Gigi Boy (Lantapan).*

## Barung Landcare

After life-changing experiences in Cambodia, I was fortunate enough to move to Maleny, near Brisbane in 1995, where I became the Barung landcare coordinator. Barung Landcare Incorporated is a natural resource management community group that started 15 years ago and was one of the first such groups formed in Queensland. Given that more than 90% of the natural rainforest was cleared from this sub-tropical mountainous region, revegetation remains an ongoing focus of activity. To help support this activity, Barung Landcare worked with the community and all levels of government, to implement revegetation projects, and develop a community-based, commercial, native rainforest nursery and an information and education resource centre.

### Barung Landcare Logo

The logo for Barung Landcare was designed 15 years ago as a germinating Quandong seed *Elaeocarpus grandis*, with a map of the world (that showed the Philippines). Now Barung



Landcare is working in partnership with the Philippines. This logo represents us acting both locally and globally. 'Barung' is a local Aboriginal name of an extinct local kangaroo that used to live in the now depleted rainforests of the area.



Philippines landcare facilitators visit the Barung Landcare Nursery and Resource Centre at Maleny in south-east Queensland.

Since forming in 1988, Barung has grown into one of the largest landcare groups in Australia, with more than 600 financial members and an annual budget of more than A\$500 000. Less than half of this comes from government funding. We generate funds from nursery sales and an annual three-day native timber/furniture wood Expo (attended by 10 000 paying visitors). As a result of being a more independent landcare group, we can follow our own agendas, rather than just meeting the project objectives of external funding sources or government.

Barung has several paid professional staff: a coordinator, a nursery manager, an assistant administrator and a revegetation field worker. Other revegetation and specific project staff are brought in as required. The energy from these people and our community volunteers comes together and generates focused activities. Things happen, that is, grassroots people addressing local issues together.

One of the keys to our success is that we have always had a practice of welcoming everyone and making them feel comfortable. This means we get farmers, government people, hippies, and unemployed people from 'work-for-the-dole' projects. We get very conservative landholders right through to retired business people. We have always tried to make ourselves open to anyone who has even a little interest in the environment, revegetation, conservation or sustainable farming.

It can be hard for landcare groups even to manage all their many local activities, let alone think about developing global connections. They are often just too busy. In the Maleny community, Barung is very fortunate in that we can delegate responsibility to 'Grey Power' — those semi-retired professional people who have an environmental ethic and spare time. They are more able to be on a management committee or executive. They often have their own international contacts and can more easily juggle both global and local issues. Landcare is something most people want to be part of in Maleny — it's the biggest thing in town.



*Gigi Boy (foreground) participating in a landcare-organised community tree plant at Maleny.*



*Australian and Filipino team members working together.*

## Five key success factors for Barung Landcare

1. Accepting and valuing different people participating in landcare.
2. Demand for and delivery of local information.
3. High local enthusiasm and involvement.
4. Use of both paid and volunteer help.
5. A degree of independence from outside funds and programs.
6. Great networks and local knowledge.

## Making connections

In 1998, ACIAR was looking for a partner to work with the Queensland Department of Primary Industries in developing a project to help build and evaluate landcare in the Philippines and in selected intensive horticultural industries in south-east Queensland. It just happened that I was in the right place at the right time, as this was also a high priority for Barung. So we negotiated with DPI to develop a partnership for this project.

Everyone is connected, whether it is here or in the Philippines. We have similar problems and issues at different scales and contexts. Barung has been able to take on the challenge of working globally. It has broadened our horizons and shown us that we can all help each other.

The ACIAR project leader, Noel Vock, has been able to build and manage a great team of people with many different skills. We know how different they are, as we carried out a review of people's roles and responsibilities about halfway through the project.

Our Filipino colleagues now see us as friends and they stay in our houses when they are here, and when we go over there we do the same. It's more like a family than a project. It has been a huge leap of faith, trust and friendship from all of us over the past five years and we have all benefited from it.

When they tell me "John, you are *bogoy*", it means we can be one-on-one with each other. It's all based on friendship, respect and personal relationships. Without that, you are just someone else walking in and out of people's lives, with a project document and a chequebook, and that is definitely not what landcare is about. Landcare is people care. In fact, I believe the landcare approach will bring a lot to international development.

As a westerner, it's easy to get frustrated with the speed at which some things happen in the Philippines. The time it takes to transport anything and the inevitable delays can be wearing in the heat. Things happen at their own pace. This means slowing down and taking time — which helps you to think longer and reflect better, resulting in better decision-making in the long term.



## Empowering communities

I suppose this project could have had a typical top-down technical research focus. But ACIAR really went out on a limb to see if a more grassroots participatory and integrated approach like landcare could work on the ground.

The best thing about this partnership was having a landcare group, such as Barung, connected to the local groups in the Philippines and the team members. It wasn't just a consultant-working top down, it was actually about people walking and talking together. They could come here to Maleny and see landcare in action and talk to people at the grassroots level.

I have found that if you let people do things themselves and take a back seat, you are more likely to be successful. In our training sessions, we did not tell the local Filipino facilitators how to do their work. Instead, we worked as mentors, taking an interest in their work and offering support and encouragement. This turned into a process where we were learning from each other.

Our Filipino colleagues are such good natural facilitators that they are the ones addressing all the conferences, the training workshops and the seminars about the project. They are driving the process now. It's quite rewarding to find that you can step back and put yourself out of a job.

## Putting landcare into context

The Filipinos who visited us in Australia said the landcare connection was always better in Maleny where the landscape was similar to their own tropical rainforest and steep volcanic hills, compared to other parts of Australia. Certainly, the farming scales are different between the two countries. However, when they visited us, we took them to visit the smaller-scale organic farms like those found at the nearby 'Crystal Waters' international permaculture village community. Such permaculture farming is more like the small one-hectare self-sufficiency style of farming familiar to them. Now they are training themselves in permaculture farming techniques. The similar geography and landscape of this part of south-east Queensland and the Mindanao area of the Philippines provides a strong connecting force.



*During a visit to Crystal Waters permaculture village near Maleny, the Filipino landcare facilitators participate in a dig to examine soil health.*

It is hard for us to go into villages by ourselves and make any real comments because it is likely to be out of context. It is better to work through the local people and facilitators. It is very humbling to see farmers walk five miles to attend a landcare meeting, and then feed us with their own produce, when they are living a subsistence life themselves.

We learnt a lot from the local facilitators we worked with in the Philippines. We brought back more, I am sure, than we took over there. And we don't call it 'train the trainer' anymore. We call it 'trainers training each other'. We are all sharing our experiences, expertise and world views at a local level.

We look together at the need for appropriate technologies in the right place, rather than just going out there and doing things that we think are good for people.

We did several landcare facilitation training workshops with the technical landcare team in the Philippines. From this and their own knowledge, they developed their own Filipino landcare trainers' manual, something we didn't even have in Australia at the time.

I didn't train the farmers involved in landcare. The facilitators we worked with trained farmer facilitators. Farmers are now out training other farmers, and so it just keeps going on. It is very apparent that the whole dynamics of peoples' skills, knowledge and attitudes are changing.

There are often a lot of presumptions made at the beginning of projects. This project initially proposed certain development strategies based on the perceived stage of development of landcare at each site. But these were not always accurate. You can never believe the book that says “this is what landcare is going to be like”. You have to be continuously reviewing and improving what you are doing for a reality check. That is action learning or action research.

We saw some landcare groups form and then fail. It is relatively easy to form a group but it is much harder to keep it going. We found it important to focus initial efforts more on the process of how to run a group rather than on the technical things that needed to be done. It is always a fine balance for facilitators between group processes and technical content — this is what makes a good landcare facilitator, being able to pick the right mix, depending on the situation.

## Tips for effective global landcare partnerships

- Establish or use existing connections to make things happen — do not reinvent the wheel.
- Clearly define the objectives of landcare and the roles and skills of team members at the start of the project.
- Focus initial training efforts on group facilitation skills rather than just technologies.
- Develop relationships of mutual trust and true partnerships based on collaboration and cooperation.
- Fit in with the local culture and be patient — let things happen at their pace.
- Involve and encourage volunteers who have the time, energy, enthusiasm and will power.
- Support grassroots efforts.
- Encourage self-reliance and long-term sustainability of effort.
- Make connections across countries with people from similar landscapes and similar issues.
- Work at the local level with local people.
- Learn from each other — trainers training each other.
- Continually review and reassess progress within the local context.

## Benefits to Barung Landcare (and wider internationally)

Going to the Philippines made us remember what Australian landcare was like over its 15-year history. It reminded us of our own landcare roots. When people are complaining in Australia about what they haven’t got, we can now say: “The people we work with in the Philippines have even less.”

Working globally as well as locally we are now much more aware of the value of Barung as an established community resource, with its people, knowledge, networks, experience and on-ground works. We all live on this planet together, and we are all trying to survive and improve it in our own ways.

More than 80% of Australia’s population know what landcare is and more than 40% of farmers are involved in it. South Africa and New Zealand also have landcare programs now, while India, America and other countries (including other organisations and United Nations agencies) are also looking at landcare to see whether it’s appropriate to their situations.

Sharing landcare with our new Filipino friends, has given Barung the opportunity to share this wealth of experience, to help our friends by pointing out some of the shortcuts and pitfalls, and has broadened our own view of the benefits of our own achievements and relevance internationally.

## The future

Landcare in the Philippines is still evolving, and who knows what it will grow into in the future. More than half of the country’s 85 million people depend on the land for a living, and it is a challenging country with lots of problems. Much of the landcare ethic already exists and the ‘people power’ is there, but is the timing right? The answer to this is possibly ‘yes’, given the present local community action, civil society, and international funding programs. A Landcare Trust Fund of over US\$200 000 has been initiated. However, landcare still depends on individual people working together, in the right places, making the right connections and decisions, with creative results on the ground.





## section 4



# LANDCARE INVOLVES GOVERNMENTS

Government involvement is vital for the success and long-term sustainability of landcare. This is particularly true at the local government unit (LGU) level. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, most of the services provided to rural communities, including those relevant to agricultural development and natural resource management, have now been devolved from the national government level to the local government level. Secondly, research and development agencies that were involved in the early development of landcare in the Philippines — such as ACIAR, ICRAF, SEARCA and AECI — cannot continue to lead its development indefinitely.

Where landcare is considered an appropriate approach for engaging with rural communities, local governments must ultimately take a major responsibility, along with the communities themselves, for developing and sustaining it.

This can be difficult given the general lack of resources, the remoteness of some communities, political instability, or uncertainty about the real benefits of a new approach.

Similarly, at the provincial government and national government agency levels, there are challenges in the integration of landcare into higher level programs and services across the agricultural, agrarian reform and environment/natural resources sectors.

Many of the other stories in this book highlight the need for serious government participation in landcare. The following chapters in this section tell some of the stories of the pioneering efforts in landcare from the *barangay*, municipal, provincial and national government perspectives.



*Increased tree cover and carefully managed cultivation with NVS are changing the landscape.*

# 1. MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORTING LANDCARE

*By Mayor Narciso Rubio*

<b>Current location:</b>	Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, Central Mindanao, Philippines
<b>Occupation:</b>	Mayor, Lantapan municipality in Bukidnon province; municipality has a population of almost 44,000 people
<b>Role in landcare:</b>	Observer and supporter of landcare
<b>Experience:</b>	Mayor Rubio is a certified lawyer, and was Mayor of Lantapan from 1972 until 1986 before going into private life as a farmer. He became mayor again in 1998 and is currently aiming for a third consecutive term.



*Mayor Narciso Rubio with his wife, Dr Felicidad Cabacuñgan.*

## Benefits of landcare

Personally, I have seen the effects of landcare, especially in sloping areas. After maybe three or four years, the land has formed terraces already and the topsoil is still there. The natural vegetative strips (NVS) help stop soil erosion, but eventually I would like these strips to be planted with perennials or forage grasses or a combination.

One of the benefits of landcare is that it is affordable. You just maintain the NVS, which any farmer can afford. The most important thing is that it minimises soil erosion. Once a terrace has been created, it is also easier to plough. From what I hear, the topsoil takes thousands of years to form, so it is important to adopt these practices, given that 60% of our lands are sloping, gently rolling areas.



*A typical landscape of the Lantapan municipality.*





*A sign on the outskirts of Lantapan proudly displays Lantapan's landcare links.*

## Importance of landcare to Lantapan

The population in Lantapan is growing very quickly. About half our people are farmers who mostly work the upland areas. Vegetables grow here, mostly in poor areas. We also produce sugarcane and bananas for export. Bananas are exported to Japan and to the Middle East. We have two big corporations here, the Mt Kitanglad Agriventures Inc. (MKVI) and DOLE Philippines. We are happy that they are environmentally-friendly companies. For example, the flat areas of the land they leased from farmers are devoted to planting bananas, the riparian areas are planted with trees, and grasses are kept to hold the soil and minimise soil erosion.



*Bananas being processed at the MKVI plantation in Alanib, Lantapan.*

Landcare does not cover a very big area yet in Lantapan. Nevertheless, it's still a really big help. We will be having a series of seminars here with community leaders to somehow bridge the gap between research and the grassroots level, so that landcare can be further applied. I have already provided for this sort of activity in my budget for this year.

Landcare is also relevant to the people in the lower areas. If siltation is severe, this will shorten the life of dams. Considering that these tributaries lead to the Mindanao Sea and Saranggani Bay in Cotabato, this will also affect the fish populations in these areas. So erosion will cause a chain reaction in the lowlands and result in the rivers drying up.

People in the lowlands need water so they should also adopt landcare. Perhaps the water users should give a percentage of their proceeds to environmental protection.

### Mayor Rubio's definition of landcare:

Landcare is improving the system of agriculture through the use of contour farming. It is not only the concern of the farmer; it should be the concern of everybody. Perhaps even the church and schools should teach landcare. When we own a land title, strictly speaking, it is not owned by us, we are just stewards. I think we have reached the critical stage, such that if we do nothing now, maybe we are already at the point of no return. So landcare is very important.

### Partnerships for landcare

It is important that we link with the companies in the municipality because environmental conservation cannot be done alone. It has to be participatory and collaborative. We also have to establish effective linkages with other government and private agencies to be more effective.

We are the direct supervisors of the *barangays* under the local government rule. Landcare is one of the issues we discuss. We look at distributing fruit or timber trees through a partnership approach with them. The municipality is like the father and they are supposed to be like our children. Whatever problems they cannot solve themselves, they bring to us. We may then also go to the governor or congressman.

### Benefits of landcare to a municipality

- Technologies are easy for farmers to implement.
- Influences development in the municipality; eg when a large corporation comes in to set up a banana plantation.
- Involves the whole community.
- Provides mechanisms for distributing timber and fruit trees and animals as part of municipality programs.
- Can be included in municipal plans, such as a watershed development plan.
- Municipal activities (eg nurseries) can be linked to skills development of farmers.
- Protects soil, water and forest resources.

### Providing incentives to participate in landcare

Our municipality has livelihood programs and those adopting the landcare concept will be given priority in these programs. For example, we have an animal dispersal program to assist farmers obtain animals like cows that could be used for ploughing crops. But we would require them to maintain their NVS in order to receive these benefits.

With the new nursery we will be developing root crop planting materials but farmers will not receive them unless they adopt landcare farming practices.

We are also looking at providing infrastructure support such as better roads and water systems for those farmers who adopt the system. I think this will lead to a unity of purpose for those living here.

Another incentive might be to give public recognition to landcare farmers during our Foundation Day celebrations through a contest for prizes.

Little by little, landcare has to be inculcated in the people. I think they are already aware of environmental degradation. One of the pillars of sustainable development is environmental conservation. For example, the agri-based industries here will die a natural death unless they take care of the forests from which we get water.

## Watershed development plan

As a municipality we are building landcare into our watershed development plan. The plan in Lantapan is part of the overall objectives of the Bukidnon Watershed Protection and Development Council, which prescribes measures to preserve the watershed resources of the province. The province is divided into seven major watershed clusters consisting of four or five municipalities, which, in turn, develop their respective plans for watershed protection and development. The plans are developed to address environmental issues and challenges related to watershed management within the political boundaries of each locality.



Mayor Rubio with some of the participants in a forum to build landcare into local government plans.

## The future of landcare in Lantapan

People must be educated and ultimately make landcare their way of life. The knowledge should be internalised and the experience handed down to the next generation.

I will be looking to spread our experiences with landcare to other municipalities. I could do this at a meeting of the Provincial Watershed Development Council.

We will intensify our education and communication about landcare. We have to maintain communication to be serious about it. We aim to have model farms in every *barangay*.

We are developing a nursery here. The school will lease the land to us in return for the trees they want to plant. The multi-purpose nursery will be planted with root crops, herbals, ornamentals and forage grasses. We will distribute plants free to farmers, and each plant will come with a package of technology about how to care for it.

We will also encourage the *barangays* or even the *purok* or *sitios* to put up nurseries. Aside from being a distribution centre, the municipal nursery will be a model for the *barangays* or maybe even other municipalities.

There is a Chinese proverb that says: "If you give a man a fish, you feed him for one day, but if you teach him how to fish, you feed him for the rest of his life". Applying this to our nursery concept, we will be maintaining parent trees and teaching the farmers how to care for their own trees. We will expand this landcare concept to involve everybody.

Non-government organisations, like AGRI AQUA, are also engaged in environmental concerns. We will accept anybody who cares to help us but for now we have to really depend on our own resources.

I am toying with the idea of allocating P8 million of our infrastructure development funds towards environmental projects. This, together with whatever else we can receive from other sources, will go a long way to spreading landcare in Lantapan and beyond.



## 2. BARANGAY COMMUNITY BENEFITS FROM LANDCARE

*By Samuel Abrogar*

**Current location:** Claveria, Misamis Oriental, Northern Mindanao, Philippines

**Occupation:** *Barangay* Captain, *Barangay* Madaguig, Claveria municipality in Misamis Oriental province; also has a six-hectare farm that is contoured with timber trees, banana and other crops

**Role in landcare:** Chairman of Claveria Landcare Association

**Experience:** A *barangay* captain since 1997. Also has experience as a local facilitator and community para-legal officer on legal issues affecting local governance and land tenure.



*Samuel Abrogar.*

### Landcare helps overcome malnutrition

My *barangay* has only 167 households and about 60 of them have adopted the landcare approach. They are practising the NVS system of farming and have planted different trees on their farms. For example, there are 33 farmers living in Tungol *sitio*, and almost all are practising NVS.

Some of our farmers live along river banks, and trees are already growing there so they do not need to contour their farms, but most of the farmers who till sloping areas have adopted the landcare technology.

There was a big problem of malnutrition in my *barangay*. When we analysed the problem, we discovered that the farmers weren't earning enough income from their farms to buy enough food for their families.



Samuel Abrogar's farm at Sitio Tungol.



A farm at Sitio Tungol showing trees and maize production.

I hoped that by introducing the landcare technology, I could lift farmers' incomes. Based on my observations since landcare started in my *barangay* in 1998, most of our farmers have now increased their incomes a little. They started using NVS then changed to a small agroforestry system and if you take a look at it now, we can see changes and improvements on their farms.

My *barangay* was a pasture area before landcare and most of the grasses were cogon grass. After we adopted landcare, we transformed the *barangay* into an agroforestry area. With landcare, there is cooperation between the farmers and the *barangay* officials.

When we researched the causes of malnutrition here, we found that many households did not have a toilet and did not clean around their houses. Many did not eat vegetables or have a backyard vegetable garden. After adopting landcare, we also focused on having a clean environment. We spent time on activities like cleaning the whole *barangay*, beautifying our own surroundings, and cleaning our houses every morning. There were members of the community who used to be in and out of hospital with illness, but now that's all gone.

Before landcare, people did not seem to mind if their areas were dirty, they did not know what was causing their sickness. Landcare was used to 'piggyback' an information drive about health care. We have charts in our meeting places to monitor the number of contours that have been ploughed, and charts to monitor people's health.

MEMBERS		NO. OF TREE PLANTING			
		SHAWAN	SHAWAN	SHAWAN	SHAWAN
1. BOYSSAN	M				
2. NARBERG	T				
3. JEAR P	H				
4. ECRANUN	P				
5. NUPAYTON	P				
6. PADRELLAS	P				
7. CONJUT	P				
8. DUNG	P				
9. SANTAN	P				
10. EROD	P				
11. TUNING	P				
12. NALYAN	P				
13. EXAMENON	P				
14. PESSEH	P				
15. APILLANO	P				
16. GALINDEA	P				
17. SANACEN	P				
18. NODAN	P				
19. SALCEDA	P				
20. LIM TAO	P				
21. NODAN-AN	P				
22. NODAN	P				
23. NODAN	P				
24. ECRANEN	P				
25. SALISE	P				

CLCA: THE CHARTER PRESIDE: ENOENISA NODON  
SAPRI: CAPTAN ARROGAN MARGALEND SWITAN

Landcare monitoring board at Sitio Tungol in Claveria.

Sixty percent of my people are indigenous people with their own traditions and beliefs, which can hinder landcare. Even if I say they must plant trees, if they believe that planting trees is a curse to them, they will not do it. However, after imposing the ordinance, people noticed that although many trees had grown, they were still alive.

Landcare helped our people work together for sustainable farming and also changed their attitudes and behaviour.



## Support from the *barangay*

Landcare activity in Claveria needs support from local officials. Together, the *barangay* captains are the policy-making body and implement laws regarding activities of the *barangays*.

For example, we made an ordinance about sloping areas and the need for contour farming. If farmers are tilling sloping land, they need to implement contour farming, otherwise they will not be given support from the local government. If they ask for a *barangay* clearance (permission to apply for a job or to travel to another place), and they have not adopted soil and water conservation, the *barangay* captain will not issue the clearance to that farmer.

If landcare is to spread throughout the Philippines, the role of the *barangay* captain needs to be recognised, as the captains are the 'fathers' of their communities. If the *barangay* captain does not accept the landcare approach, then it is not easy for it to penetrate to other members of the community.

## Making landcare easier for farmers

While most of our farmers have now accepted the technology, there are still some farmers who have problems adopting landcare because they don't have enough resources. As a *barangay* captain, I am looking for partners who could help or give support to such farmers.

Often our farmers do not have enough funds to live on or to develop their areas. Farmers who have planted trees are not yet earning an income from them. These farmers are likely to need assistance so they can keep on with their activities. They may need goats or livestock to help them.

Some of the farmers in other *barangays* find it hard to adopt landcare if they don't own their own land. As chairman of Claveria Landcare Association, I am encouraging other *barangays* to work with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment to release that land to the farmers.



Goats have been provided to the farmers of Sitio Tungol, Claveria.





*Landcare has helped beautify the gardens in Sitio Tungol, Claveria.*

I am hoping the experiences I have had in my *barangay* will help or inspire other *barangays* to adopt landcare. My vision for landcare is that what we have done now will benefit the next generation. To achieve this will require a commitment from our leaders. There are three partners working together: the local government unit; the technology experts, like the ICRAF staff who serve as an agent of success; and the community. These three determine the success of landcare.

## Benefits of landcare to *barangays*

- Increased income for farmers.
- More trees available for multiple uses.
- Cooperation between farmers and *barangay* officials.
- People with backyard vegetable gardens, providing household food.
- Clean houses and surroundings.
- Linked to health care, it decreases illnesses and malnutrition.
- Provides an avenue for supporting poorer farmers.
- *Barangay* officials can help farmers to own their land, through a greater influence with other government agencies.
- Improved care of soil, water and forests.

### 3. TAKING LANDCARE BEYOND THE SITIO

*By Igmedio Villamor*

**Current location:** *Barangay Ned, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Southern Mindanao, Philippines*

**Occupation:** Councillor of *Barangay Ned*; Chairman of council's committee of agriculture

**Role in landcare:** Vice President, Ned Landcare Association, farmer facilitator for two years

**Experience:** Adopter of soil conservation practices, planted fruit and forest trees on his contoured farm; planted 100 hills of rambutan trees which are already bearing fruits



*Igmedio Villamor.*



*Landscape of Sitio Kibang.*

#### Spreading the concept of landcare

After setting up a demonstration area, we found we had good crops, which we were able to sell. Since this time, adoption of conservation practices can be seen in *sitios* Kibang, Tafal, Kinubing, New Tupi and Tubog. This includes contouring of the land with legume hedgerows, NVS, and planting of fruit trees and coffee.

Farmers planted coffee and durian seedlings with the help of the landcare project. They also planted fruit and forest trees from the seedlings produced by the group nursery we established.

Through landcare we developed a feeling of being extension workers concerned for others. That is why we go to other *sitios* and organise landcare groups there. We want this program to spread because we want other farmers to benefit.



Our group also participated in the Mindanao Baptist Rural Life Centre's (MBRLC) 'Botika sa Binhi' (drugstore from seeds) program, where we provided limited free medicine to members and sold medicines to the wider community at an affordable price.

## Moving to smaller groups

After initially organising a landcare group in Tafal, we decided to separate it into three new groups. We did this because the original group was big and the members lived a long way away from each other.

At the start, the three groups had their own activities and selected their own officers. I was elected as president of the Tafal Purok 4 Landcare group. Unfortunately, the other two groups became inactive and disbanded not long after they formed.



*A meeting of members of the Ned Landcare Association.*

In our group, attendance at meetings is high because members live near each other. We can easily inform and convene the members during *dagyaw* or group work and dissemination of information is fast. Our group conducts monthly meetings on the first Tuesday of every month. Recently our activities declined but the group is still intact and most of our members have already adopted conservation practices.

## Taking landcare to other *sitios*

In July 2003, I was elected as a *Barangay* Kagawad (councillor) to chair the agriculture committee. I tried to bring everything I learned from landcare to the council. The *barangay* council has adopted a municipal ordinance protecting the watershed area of Ned. We are going to plant trees on the steep sloping areas, so I think landcare can be the people's organisation that will implement this ordinance. They can help the farmers by providing technical assistance.

We are planning to establish a *barangay* tree nursery as a source of planting materials for the farmers. We are going to raise fruit and forest trees. We have also conducted seminars on livestock and poultry management in four *sitios*. The farmers who attended the seminars were able to get the pigs and poultry provided by the council.

I think landcare will continue to educate farmers about conservation and the local government will continue to provide assistance. However, this will be minimal as my budget is only P40,000 for one year. It is important that another institution also provides financial assistance or material inputs such as tree seeds and seedlings or support for training. Ned is a big area, and the *barangay* cannot handle all the expenses for development.



*A landcare group nursery in Sitio Tafal.*



Without additional assistance, development in this *barangay* will be very slow. We are sending a resolution to the municipal and provincial offices, but they still cannot cope with everything that farmers need.

To spread landcare further, we must have a technician who can visit farmers with a member of *barangay* council so that farmers here in Ned will adopt conservation farming. About 20% of the farmers in Ned already know about conservation farming, but I think if there is someone who can continue to encourage them, that proportion will grow to 50% or more. As I have observed before, there is a gradual increase in adoption when a farmer facilitator is involved in visits to a *sitio*.

### Tips for gaining local government involvement in landcare

- Get involvement and support at the start of landcare activities.
- Organise visits for local government officials to other regions with farmers who have adopted landcare technologies.
- Train councillors and municipal agricultural offices in landcare technologies and group skills.
- Involve local governments as equal partners in landcare initiatives.
- Invite local government representatives to speak at landcare group meetings and seminars.
- Get local government assistance to coordinate meetings and training activities.
- Use landcare to build on and add value to existing local government activities.
- Work with local government to develop and implement ordinances for promoting landcare activities.
- Partner with local governments to distribute seeds, seedlings and livestock to landcare groups.

### Jimmy Lanzaote, Ned *Barangay* Captain



Jimmy Lanzaote.

I really like the landcare project because it gives benefits to the farmers in Barangay Ned. The farmers have been able to learn contour farming to prevent soil erosion and landslides, which is very important in our mountainous area during the rainy season. Landcare members are able to plant fruit and forest trees and establish contours with legume hedgerows, which are also used as forage for livestock like *carabao*, horses and goats.

I estimate that about 30% of our total population has benefited from landcare so far. In some *sitios*, about half the farmers are involved in landcare or have benefited from it. Based on what I have heard from the first farmers who adopted landcare, it really does improve their living.

Our barangay has a budget of P40,000 for farming activities through the agriculture committee headed by Kagawad Villamor. This could be used to help landcare projects. For example, in 2000 we gave about 15,000 seedling bags to landcare groups. We can provide support for seedling bags, fruit tree seedlings, and seminars.

We can increase awareness and membership of landcare even further through monthly seminars in each *sitio*. This will reach a lot of farmers who will gradually adopt landcare's conservation practices.

## 4. LANDCARE SPREADS TO MALITBOG

*By Judith Saguinhon*

**Current location:** Malitbog, Claveria, Northern Mindanao, Philippines

**Occupation:** Municipal Agricultural Officer

**Role in landcare:** Involved in promoting and organising landcare activities



*Judith Saguinhon.*

### Increasing adoption of landcare

Before the landcare program started in Malitbog, soil and water conservation were already part of what we were trying to do at the Municipal Agriculture Office. There was the SALT program (Sloping Agricultural Land Technology) that introduced soil and water conservation, but there was low adoption among farmers.

Landcare started here after several Malitbog municipal officials participated in a visit to Claveria in 1997. After this, several ICRAF staff visited here and demonstrated how to establish contours using NVS. Then ICRAF provided a landcare facilitator who helped us to organise landcare groups. These groups visited Claveria and then planned what to do in their own groups.

The landcare facilitator joined us on our visits to the barangays where we conducted a participatory process to find out what problems the farmers had. With ICRAF's assistance we were able to help the farmers address their problems as well as issues such as lack of mobility and the farmers' wait-and-see attitudes.

Since that time, soil erosion has decreased as people started to build contours.



*Farm contoured with NVS in Malitbog.*

We found that it was better for farmers to actually see a model farm rather than just seeing a picture of one. When they came back to their own farms, they implemented what they had learned.

## Landcare for managing water as well as the land

At the Municipal Agricultural Office, we now coordinate and support all landcare activities. I am one of the members of the Board of Trustees of the Landcare Foundation and contribute ideas and assistance.

My initial understanding of landcare was that it is just focused on the land. Later I realised that protection should be given to the entire watershed. If you adopt landcare, you help protect the entire watershed in the municipality and you help solve a global problem. Landcare groups take part in strengthening the watershed management plan.

I hope that the level of awareness will be raised so that people will have concern for environmental protection and watershed management, including landcare.



*People involved in water monitoring activities.*

## Partnership needed for landcare's future

To continue doing these things we need a partner, such as ICRAF. For example, we need to participate in training so we are aware of new methods. We also need to attend workshops.

Landcare should be part of the local government program with funding to implement it. It will be sustained if the local government unit is supportive. However, one of the challenges we face is to keep local officials supportive of the program. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources and other government offices with natural resource management concerns also need to be involved.

I want landcare to re-green Malitbog's mountains. To do so, we need to encourage people to support and preserve natural resources. There should be a reward system for those who adopt proper measures that help protect the environment. We need to strengthen the groups and empower them, because they are not fully empowered yet.



# 5. LANDCARE BENEFITS NED FARMERS

*By Celso Caro, Municipal Agrarian Reform Officer*

**Current location:** *Barangay Ned, Lake Sebu, Southern Mindanao, Philippines*

**Occupation:** *Municipal agrarian reform officer with the Department of Agrarian Reform*

**Role in landcare:** *Supporter, partner, involved in training*

**Experience:** *Certified agricultural engineer who has worked in Ned for 22 years*



*Celso Caro.*

## Landcare helps farmers focus on conservation in Ned

Before landcare, we tried to put some effort into soil conservation, but this was a sideline to our main program, so we were very thankful when landcare brought a focus on conservation to Ned.

The landcare program is making farming more sustainable and protecting the environment of *Barangay Ned*. It is not only helping us to achieve our goals, but is also achieving the goals of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment for reforestation and restoring ecological balance.

Previous reforestation projects failed because they tried to plant only forest trees without considering farmers' economic viability. Landcare is an art as well as a science. It must consider farmers' economic needs; farmers know that if they plant the right kinds of trees, they will get a bigger income in the long run.

*Durian trees planted on the contour lines with corn in the alleys.*



There are plenty of farmers who tell me that the farming system of landcare is much better and that their incomes have increased or that they are now able to keep farms that they otherwise would have sold.

Landcare is a big help not only for increasing farmers' incomes but also for protecting the water so it is clean for drinking.

Before landcare, it was usually only the men who worked on the farms, but now wives and children join in farm activities. The children take care of the nurseries while the wife is helping her husband with farm work. This is because the farm looks so much nicer that the wife wants to be at home involved in the business instead of visiting neighbours and gossiping.

The landcare project has had a big impact on *Barangay* Ned with the adoption of conservation practices. Now you can see fruit trees in the contour lines, high-value annuals in the alleys, fish ponds and rice paddies near creeks. All of these activities have increased farmers' incomes.

Most farmers who have participated in landcare also become farmer trainers little by little. Every time they have visitors, they explain what they are doing and why they are doing it, and after a time they are confident about giving lectures to bigger groups of people.

Nobody used to think that Ned, given its remoteness and isolation, could be as developed as it has become with landcare. But the partnerships between the various organisations involved in landcare have helped make this happen. I am looking forward to the farmers living in Ned becoming prosperous in a place that is like a paradise.

The farmers now know that farming is not only about cash crops, about food and about clothing, but that farming is also about helping to maintain the environment. This improves their living conditions and is better for the whole family. Landcare combines all these aspects of farming into one concept.

## Expansion of landcare

I think the landcare project will be expanded to the Agrarian Reform Community and will also spread further throughout the province of South Cotabato and to other provinces in the Philippines.

The Agrarian Reform Community (ARC) is a program of the Department of Agrarian Reform to develop a community/settlement area. It provides basic services like infrastructure, farmer training and technical support. Ned is considered a special ARC because of its size and remoteness.

We have to find ways to support this program so that it is implemented throughout the whole Philippines. For example, here in *Barangay* Ned, we have the peoples' organisation that could help landcare. We could also get legislative support for landcare if our landcare association was to make a resolution through the municipal council, which would then go to the provincial legislative body. Fortunately, our government officials today seem to want to rehabilitate our environment.

## Training

Landcare leaders need to unite, rather than compete, with other organisations and community leaders. We need more advanced training on leadership. The Department of Agrarian Reform has a program called continuous education, which includes training farmer leaders. We consider a farmer to be a leader if he or she has attended five training sessions. Our farmers are lining up for such training. Most of them are members of BONITA (Barrio Ned

*Celso Caro providing permaculture training to farmers at Ned.*





Integrated Trainers Association), and many are also leaders of landcare groups. BONITA was established to conduct training on environmental awareness and protection and the socio-economic benefits of such activities.

When BONITA conducts training, they try to integrate it with the landcare program to look at transforming farms into sustainable management. BONITA could be an effective tool for spreading landcare across the entire province of South Cotabato.

## BONITA — a farmers' training association

BONITA started in 1993 during the time of the Ned Agro-industrial Development Project (NAIDP), a joint project of SEARCA and the Department of Agrarian Reform. Started as the Barangay Health Workers Group it was later renamed BONITA. It was composed of women and farmer trainers. The health workers were trained in health and sanitation while the farmer workers were trained in agricultural technologies. It was decided to integrate these activities into one group so that trainers could help people interested in different topics or issues. BONITA has done a lot of training in Barangay Ned on topics such as health, sanitation and soil conservation.

When landcare started, I could not explain the concept to farmers or even to myself. What is landcare about? What is its purpose? Looking back, I can see that, even though it took longer, it was good that we were able to give the project its own meaning. Now we need another project to sustain the definition of landcare that we found appropriate. The new project should not be site-specific but should start in the Province of South Cotabato and then spread to the entire island of Mindanao. With our experiences we can easily guide farmers who have no idea or have never heard about landcare. We should be able to convince them to adopt landcare because we have learnt how to implement it.



*NVS on fields at Ned.*



## 6. LANDCARE BUILDS COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP IN LANTAPAN

*By Cecile Egnar, Bukidnon Environment and Natural Resources Office*

**Current location:** Malaybalay City, Lantapan, Bukidnon, Central Mindanao, Philippines

**Occupation:** Head of Planning and Research Division of Bukidnon Environment and Natural Resources Office (BENRO), and facilitator of the Bukidnon Watershed Protection and Development Council (BWPDC)

**Role in landcare:** Member of Kaamulan Landcare Group, which is made up of professionals representing local government units, NGOs, research and development organisations, business, private organisations and many other institutions

**Experience:** Formulates provincial plans, programs, project proposals and policies



*Cecile Egnar.*



*Cecile Egnar presents an overview of the Bukidnon watershed program to a group in Lantapan.*

### Landcare builds community participation

I first learnt about landcare in 2001 when ICRAF was very active in our area and very much involved in the Bukidnon Watershed Protection and Development Council.

There are many technologies involved in landcare, such as soil and water conservation, forest rehabilitation, agroforestry and water quality monitoring. Landcare has made a big contribution to our province over the past five years with a number of model sites in Lantapan for farmers and others to visit.

There are several programs in our province focusing on soil and water conservation methods, but landcare is different in that it has gained a sense of ownership from the community that the other programs have not. Landcare has a grassroots, bottom-up approach to its activities, which is unique.

With such an approach, landcare is very important for technology dissemination, training, education, research and development, and capacity-building.

## The importance of partners

Landcare needs a lot of partners to make it work — national government agencies, non-government agencies, local government units and, most importantly, the community.

Local governments are beginning to understand their role in environmental rehabilitation through the watershed management program. They have prepared a forest land use plan, which was included in their comprehensive land use plans. This was a very big step. They have also prepared watershed, municipal and city watershed plans, some of which have included landcare activities. They have allocated budgets for environmental and natural resource management projects.

It is very important that local government units and agencies like the Department of Environment and Natural Resources support landcare through financial assistance and policy incentives.

## The future

Ten years from now, I would like to see landcare as a way of life for people in Bukidnon and for the whole nation. If landcare is strengthened in our province, it will be a showcase for other provinces, so that landcare can be incorporated into national policies.

In the Philippines we have the mayor's league, a body of local chief executives, who can influence the national government to adopt the landcare program.

I don't think a change in mayors or government officials with political elections will affect support for environmental management projects like landcare. There is so much support for these activities that I think they will continue, regardless of who is in power. For example, the watershed management project was developed by the previous administration but is still growing strongly under the current one.

Many leaders are aware of what we are doing in the environment. We can sit down with new leaders and provide substantial data to show the benefits of what we are doing.

I want my children to grow up in an environment they can enjoy. It takes a lot of sacrifice and commitment to save the environment. We need our leaders to champion this cause, and we need the people to work together to help our environment for the next generation.



*Children in Bukidnon at the end of the maize harvest.*

## Links between landcare and community-based forest management

### **Belen Daba, Chief of the Protected Area and Wildlife Division of Department of Environment and Natural Resources**

I started working with landcare when the Agroforestry Support Program for Empowering Upland Communities (ASPECTS) project was launched in Claveria, involving different sectors such as academics, other government agencies and local government units.

This project offered training and focused on agroforestry. It started by looking at how we plan agroforestry, implement the plan and then replicate it into surrounding areas. ICRAF was one of the members of the organisation, and through this I met Jun Mercado. We discussed caring for our land and improving productivity.

The beneficiaries from our program were provided with land tenure through the community-based forest management agreement, so we had to help them generate income out of the land from agroforestry and other farming. I decided to link with the Claveria Landcare Association to help make this happen.

### **Community-based forest management agreement**

This agreement is awarded to an upland community giving the community rights and responsibilities to manage a forest land or public land sustainably. It has a term of 25 years and is renewable for another 25 years.

The ICRAF facilitators helped to train our farmers in agroforestry and natural vegetative strips. We were able to attend training in Claveria and have our farmers visit some

of the farms there. They were impressed by seeing those developed farms and tried to model their farms on what they had seen in Claveria.

**Belen's definition of landcare:** Landcare means caring for the land in the best way you can so it will produce good yields without exhausting resources like soil fertility. I think landcare is about technology. The front liners are farmers and they are the ones who really need the technology.

We now have a memorandum of agreement between the Claveria Landcare Association and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Landcare provides training as technical support to farmers through two phases: one is training new landholders and the second is the village forester training.

We need to protect all our land, whether it is in the protected area or outside it. We insist on the 80–20 rule, 80% of land can be developed for agricultural purposes and 20% should be protected, which might mean planting trees for conservation.

I try to pass on the knowledge I have gained about landcare technologies to farmers. If all the people in the uplands adopt this approach, I think we will have food security and a beautiful landscape.

Landcare faces many challenges. One is the dislocation of farmers through multinational companies setting up operations and aiming for high yields rather than caring for the land. I think that for landcare, it is very hard to push through a program if the government does not back it up. But it is important that whatever resources we have now are available to be shared with the succeeding generation. Landcare can help achieve that.



## Links between landcare and community-based forest management

### **Conrado Sescon, Head of the Environment and Natural Resources Office (ENRO) of the Provincial Government of Misamis Oriental, Cagayan de Oro City.**

The program that ENRO is implementing focuses on forest management and development. ENRO's participation with the landcare program started in 2000 in collaboration with ICRAF. ENRO's activities complement landcare through the forest management program that includes nursery management and the distribution of forest tree seedlings, including fruit tree seedlings.

We have 10 technical people working on the environment and natural resources program. We are employing an extra two people to help implement landcare activities. These people will be involved in the community, helping to organise groups and develop the community-based forest management agreements and issue Certificates of Stewardship Contracts (CEC). CECs give individual farmers a contract for 25 years to manage the trees on their property. They encourage farmers to develop the area assigned to them.

There is a great future for landcare through our partnership with the program. ENRO is now planning to implement the landcare approach, using our people and focusing on conservation technologies to be promoted by the Landcare Foundation.

### **Tips for involving national government agencies in landcare**

- Develop a partnership approach with regional representatives.
- Work with agency representatives to gain legislative support for landcare.
- Involve regional agency representatives in local training programs and link in with whatever training programs they already have in place or are planning.
- Use regional agency representatives to help guide landcare processes.
- Link to and add value to national government agencies' initiatives and programs that are relevant to landcare, particularly technology dissemination, education, research, development and capacity building initiatives.
- Promote benefits of using landcare to develop policy and financial incentives for increasing farmer adoption of landcare.
- Demonstrate benefits of landcare for achieving the objectives of national government agencies.
- Look at ways to share resources between landcare programs and agency initiatives for cost-effective development and implementation of activities.

## section 5



# LANDCARE INVOLVES THE BROADER COMMUNITY

The previous sections of this book have highlighted the involvement in landcare of the early implementing agencies, as well as the farmers, landcare facilitators and government agencies. Landcare, however, being broad and community-based, obviously has support and involvement from a wide range of community organisations. These range from non-government organisations (NGOs) to the church and schools, and even private agribusiness. Through these groups landcare reaches many people. These groups also give landcare a strength and resilience through times when support from other major players may fluctuate. In the following chapters, various community partners tell their landcare stories.



*Landcarers of  
the future.*



# 1. UPLAND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (UDP) AND LANDCARE IN SOUTHERN MINDANAO

By Benhur Vilorio

**Current location:** Davao City, Southern Mindanao, Philippines

**Occupation:** Sustainable agriculture coordinator of European Union funded Upland Development Program

**Role in landcare:** Supporter, partner, involved in training

**Experience:** Has a Bachelor of Science degree in inland fisheries from the University of Philippines and a Masters degree in rural extension development from the University of Southern Mindanao; previously worked with Southern Mindanao Agriculture Project and as manager of the Catanduanes Agricultural Support Program before joining UDP



Benhur Vilorio.

## Upland Development Program

The Upland Development Program focuses on the promotion of sustainable agriculture technologies to the marginal communities in the uplands of Southern Mindanao. UDP is working in six provinces in Southern Mindanao including: South Cotabato, Davao del Sur, Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental and Sarangani. We implement our projects in participatory partnerships with the local government units of these areas. Funds come mostly from the European Union but we also get support from local government units through staff salaries and personnel support. We involve the local community so the projects and activities can continue after UDP projects finish. We work with *barangay*, municipal and provincial governments. At the *barangay* level, we have institutionalised small groups of farmers known as *barangay* extension workers.

## Landcare provides simple solutions

I personally got to know landcare when I visited Australia a decade ago and saw a program initiated by groups, families or communities to address their own degradation issues.

In late 2000, we were invited by ICRAF to visit landcare sites in Claveria and Lantapan. At first our managers were hesitant, but we justified our visit on the basis that landcare was using techniques that were less expensive or labour-intensive than establishing hedgerows or other similar technologies. My initial impression of landcare was that it was about implementing alternative soil and water conservation measures to deal with persistent problems of land degradation. Natural vegetative strips (NVS) are easy to establish compared to other technologies and also more palatable to farmers.

Visiting the landcare sites was an eye-opener for our managers. They saw inexpensive and simple technologies that could address our soil and water degradation concerns. This started the ball rolling. After a while, UDP made some formal agreements with ICRAF to form a partnership that involved hosting field tours for farmers and technicians.

*Visiting the landcare sites was an eye-opener for our managers. They saw inexpensive and simple technologies that could address our soil and water degradation concerns.*



UDP staff from southern Mindanao visiting a landcare site in Lantapan.

## Landcare equals community participation

The big thing about landcare can be summed up in two words: community participation. Voluntary community participation is definitely the main ingredient of landcare's success. The initiative comes from the farmers rather than from agencies.

If landcare processes can be institutionalised at the *barangay* level, it will lead to more sustainable upland community development. One of the initiatives of the UDP is to help produce *barangay* development plans.

In our partnership with ICRAF to support landcare, we learnt a lot. A highlight is always bringing farmers to look at landcare sites. When they return home, they immediately implement what they have seen. The strong point of landcare is that it has been institutionalised at the farmer level. The farmers are developing their own initiatives and research into agroforestry and soil and water conservation. The UDP activities, on the other hand, tend to be driven by the requirements of the project or the funding. Perhaps if we had adopted the landcare approach earlier, we could have reinforced our community development processes.



Landcare activities in South Cotabato — above: a farmer establishing NVS in Ned using the cows-back method; below: a landcare group meeting.



The major strength of landcare as implemented by ICRAF is that it has already activated farmer groups and communities. They are able to lobby for support from the local government and feel more empowered by being part of landcare. We have not yet achieved this in UDP, although we are moving in that direction as we realise that the farmers are our major partners.

Landcare really encourages farmer participation when farmers can make their own decisions and at the same time communicate openly about their issues in the implementation of landcare.

Before partnering with ICRAF, our basic focus was on the technical aspects of soil and water conservation. But with the link to landcare, we have gained a 'social dimension' to community development and empowerment. Landcare has very effective farmer-training groups — farmers who are capable of doing their own programs and activities.

## Spreading landcare

I am one of the advocates within UDP for replicating landcare in our projects. I am also advocating that landcare resource centres be set up in our project areas. Local governments would be a major partner in these centres. We are also looking beyond regional level initiatives to influence national natural resource management projects.

There are a number of local government units in places like Laak in Compostela Valley, Malalag in Davao del Sur, Malungon in Saranggani, and Tampakan and Tupi in South Cotabato. In these places, we see significant impacts from projects and from the partnership with ICRAF.

Budget constraints might stop some of this progress. Many of the local governments we are working with belong to the poorer provinces in the region. The second obstacle to the spread of landcare could be the participation of leaders. Changes in leadership occur at every election and this changes programs and priorities. Hopefully, UDP and the increasing consciousness about landcare will keep such pressing issues as sustainable agriculture and environment at the forefront of all leaders' minds. We are trying very hard to develop a culture towards resource management, hoping that this will be integrated in the programs or projects of our political leaders.

To make this happen, we are starting at the village level to develop communities that can lobby their officials and come up with resolutions for landcare and sustainable natural resource management. Secondly, at the municipal level, we are encouraging the incorporation of such resolutions into their respective five-year and annual development plans.

## The importance of landcare

Our environment nourishes us all. If we destroy it, we are also ultimately destroying ourselves. We have to act before it is too late. Mindanao has not yet reached the environmental dilemma that currently faces Cebu — water shortages, denuded mountains and degraded land. In Mindanao, our resources are still quite abundant but degradation is creeping in fast. Forest denudation, loss of biodiversity and single cropping systems are affecting some of our most fragile ecosystems in the uplands.

Both UDP and landcare are sharing and teaching farmers about proper agricultural technologies for attaining additional income for the farmers and also helping our environment to heal itself. We know that with the present population explosion, people will eventually be occupying our fragile upland ecosystems. We should be taking care of our natural endowments to provide a better future for the next generation.



## 2. LANDCARE OFFERS A NEW APPROACH FOR NGO DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

*By Terry Tuason*

<b>Current location:</b>	Davao City, Davao del Norte, southern Mindanao, Philippines
<b>Occupation:</b>	Farmer project manager, Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
<b>Role in landcare:</b>	Support and promote the landcare approach and organise visits to landcare sites
<b>Experience:</b>	Has a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture with a major in agronomy and Masters in Participatory Development; has worked for CRS since 2001, before that, he worked as an agricultural consultant and Deputy Director of the Kapwa Upliftment Foundation Inc.

### Landcare provides a community focus

I first heard about the landcare approach when I visited Lantapan and Claveria in the late 1990s. It seemed to me then that we were already doing something similar, but not calling it landcare. For me, landcare is about a group of people (farmers or other sectors) really working as a group in an Integrated Area Development, which focuses on addressing environmental rehabilitation and natural resource management as a collaborative effort.

I liked the way landcare was adopted at the *barangay* level, where the community made its own policy (bottom-up approach) in terms of what they wanted in their own community. They first started on conservation farming because they want to increase their production by addressing the main problem of low



*Terry Tuason (second from right) and Paul Hicks (CRS Mindanao manager, second from left) with farmer landcare members.*



*CRS project managers receive hands-on training in the techniques for establishing contour lines.*

production due to severe soil erosion. It was all about people working together for their common good.

In 2001, our project began to support development efforts in four upland communities in different parts of southern Mindanao. We supported a four-month participatory rural appraisal to identify problems and develop plans for improving the social, economic, and environmental conditions in the project area. We encouraged our partners in this project to visit Claveria and Lantapan to see the landcare approach. I would certainly recommend landcare to other NGO partners as an approach that should be considered in any community-based natural resource management project.

## Landcare makes development projects more relevant

Many NGOs have so-called community development works. However, these are often fairly limited. The technologies are based on the experiences from other areas or organisations, without studying the appropriateness of these technologies to a particular area. Each technology is generally site-specific, meaning it won't always work in different locations, often due to social aspects.

However, landcare offers a combination of research and extension. The extension is based on research (on-farm trials) and farmers are involved with the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the whole process of research and development. Putting the farmer in the role of the researcher means the farmer knows what he's doing and that it is based on facts and data. The results are more easily shared with other farmers because they share the same problems, speak the same language, and often have similar aspirations in life.

**Terry's definition of landcare:** Landcare is sustainable land use management, which addresses conservation farming with the main objective of putting money in the pockets of farmers. It has an ultimate goal of addressing a resource issue such as watershed management, taking care of the existing trees by assisting natural regeneration, riverbank stabilisation or land rehabilitation. It is based on people working together as a group to address common natural resource management issues.



*Silt traps in an erosion trial being conducted on a landcare member's farm.*

## Approach more important than name

There are many challenges to the expansion of landcare. One is the use of the name itself. If people sometimes call landcare by another name but it has the same meaning, I don't think it matters. However, I think we need a common understanding of our goals and vision.

I do not want to be too ambitious, but I would be happy if, within the next three years, there is one *barangay* that is managing its own resources in a sustainable way — a situation in which the community is happy, and there are forest reserves, a good income, and the *barangay* and council are functioning well.

I think it's too ambitious to get municipal-wide support initially, so we should start from a small *barangay* or a sub-village where everybody knows what he or she is doing. If you have a good *barangay*, you have a good municipality, and if you have a good municipality, you will have a good province. This will take time, but I think this is the way to spread the landcare concept. Let the farmers be the main actors for any development, and the development organisations have the supporting parts.

## Another link between landcare and NGOs

Ramon Ramirez is the Sustainable Integrated Area Development Officer with the Balay Mindanaw Foundation Inc. in Claveria.

In Claveria, we started with one *barangay*, Patrocinio, way back in 1987 and after three years expanded into five focus *barangays*. After another year or two, we expanded to 11 *barangays* and now we are working with 16.

When people in the community identify a particular issue, we work with them to strengthen their activities. This could be planning local development, for example. After they make their plan, we help them with matters like funding proposals. We also identify those agencies, like ICRAF, that could possibly be involved in the project. We help them to monitor and evaluate their projects and provide leadership training for community and organisational leaders.

As local agricultural officers cannot hope to cover the whole municipality, we train farmers to be able to help other farmers with soil conservation, animal health and so on. We aim to strengthen the whole community so that after about five years we can phase out our activities as the community becomes more independent.

### Balay Mindanaw

Balay Mindanaw is a non-government organisation whose major program is sustainable integrated area development. Governance is a big component of this program and we work on local government planning with the community to identify priority areas. The *Barangay* Development Council, which represents the farmers, community groups and locally elected officials, is a key partner in our program. They are involved in developing livelihoods, infrastructure, agriculture, and the capacity of the community to participate in things like landcare.

There was no direct partnership established between Balay Mindanaw and landcare. The partnership was built through the different *barangays*. We helped in strengthening and supporting people's organisations including landcare in every *barangay*. In some priority *barangays*, the landcare groups managed the projects and involved us.

Landcare benefited the community through its livelihood programs and approach to conservation farming. Collaboration between our organisations was good because it meant a sharing of resources.

**Ramon's definition of Landcare:** Landcare is a group of people who have common vision in protecting the environment, controlling soil erosion and practising agroforestry.

Landcare has evolved over time. At first, it was only about technology, but now there is technology transfer from farmer to farmer. And it is a vehicle and venue for people participating in development. Landcare should not stop with the technology or research. We need to look at other aspects. Landcare will be strengthened with good leadership and partnerships with other organisations. Landcare needs to take a political stand on issues affecting people's livelihoods. They will only have a weak voice if they continue to operate at the local or *barangay* levels of government. If we want to sustain the program, people should invest in taking landcare to the municipal level.

I hope that landcare will spread to other municipalities as it matures as an organisation. Landcare can help with technologies, livelihood programs, securing land tenure for the land-poor farmers and strengthening the partnership with government units.

### Mutual benefits from landcare partnerships with non-government organisations

- Joint promotion of simple, inexpensive technologies to farmers.
- Provides links with community participants in landcare.
- Joint promotion of activities to local governments and community leaders.
- Provides broader links to community development programs.
- Joint opportunities to incorporate activities into municipal and local government plans.
- Opportunities to combine research and extension efforts.
- Landcare can build on existing development projects.
- NGOs can use landcare for more rapid information and technology dissemination.
- Can each support community and farmer training activities.
- NGOs can help landcare to develop, implement and manage projects.



### 3. CONNECTING THE SPIRITUAL WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

*By Father Carlito Clase*

<b>Current location:</b>	St Ignasius de Loyola Parish, Esperanza, Agusan del Sur, Mindanao
<b>Occupation:</b>	Spiritual Director of the Province of Agusan del Sur
<b>Role in landcare:</b>	Involved in the Basic Ecclesiastical Community, or in our local language, the ' <i>Gagmay Kristohohanong Katilingban</i> ', a holistic approach for bringing people closer to God
<b>Experience:</b>	Has been working in the region for the past five years, focusing on agricultural activities during the last three years. Before then, he was the assistant parish priest for the municipality of Sibagat in Agusan del Sur with a focus on literacy and agricultural programs.



*Father Carlito Clase (left) with Lantapan landcare facilitator, Gigi Boy.*

#### Early landcare beginnings

As it's only a short time since we visited landcare in Lantapan (June 2003), there has not been much adoption of landcare yet. However, some farmers have already adopted technologies like contour ploughing. Many of the farmers have planted lemon grass in the strips instead of just the natural vegetation. Now they tell me that they have contracts within the municipality for this lemon grass, selling bunches for a peso each. Others used the '*balabag*' method of selling their lemon grass to restaurants specialising in roast chicken.

Some farmers are using felled timber, branches and whatever they can find to control erosion. Others have planted a variety of crops in the alleys such as peanuts, mongo, okra or any available short-term crops they can get hold of. This increases the diversity



*The location of Esperanza in the province of Agusan del Sur.*



*Father Clase shows Ned landcare facilitator, Eldon Ruiz, the livestock facility for the Pag-laum 'Noah's Ark' project.*

of crops on their farms and protects them against market fluctuations and also against pests and diseases.

They have incorporated long-term crops, such as indigenous or existing trees whose roots are able to provide enough hold to control erosion, onto their farms. Many indigenous people have planted sugarcane in the contours and they are now processing this to produce their own sugar.

## The Pag-laum Project

We have many spiritually inclined people in our community, but we observed that they did not apply this to their daily existence. Our goal was to connect their spirituality to the physical aspects of their daily lives.

We believe that people can really be closer to God if they have a secure livelihood, full stomachs and a well-fed family. This is where the Pag-laum Project, from the Spanish word meaning 'hope', began. PAG-LAUM is an acronym where:

- P stands for Poverty;
- A for Alleviation;
- G for Good governance;
- L for Livelihood;
- A for Agroforestry;
- U for Unity; and
- M for the Masses.

We try to involve all peoples and sectors of society within Esperanza in this program, regardless of whether they are Catholic or not. Seventy to 80% of our population are indigenous people from the Manobo, Banwaon and Higaonon tribes.

One of the big issues we have in this region is regular floods, and when this happens people go to the parish for food, medicine and other help. Floods may be caused by logging activities in the area.

Much of our locality is still lush with native forests and blessed with abundant natural resources. This is the main reason why I started this project, to conserve and protect what is left of our environment and prevent some of the floods from happening.

The Higaonon people live in the very heart of this forest, that they call their 'Holy Land', or their Sinacungan. It is a place of prayer to their Gods. According to Amba Manhubyanan, their Supreme Datu (or Chief), the management of the forests and the mountains is their responsibility, which is a gift from their God Libre. The Datu plays a major role in managing these ancestral lands, and no longer allows the entry of logging companies into the area since they are seen to bring so much hardship to the tribe.

Datu Amba and I discussed how we could help the tribe to continue sustainable practices and still have enough food to eat. This was the driving force that inspired us to do what we are now doing.

I found it quite easy to get assistance for flood victims from the various government agencies in the province. The local government unit first responded to our call for assistance. The Diocese of Butuan was another source of support by promoting our requests to the National Secretariat for Social Action (NASA). Relief goods, medicine, food and clothing were sent to flood victims. Our project started as a relief process providing things that flood victims needed.

Later, when Paul Hicks of Catholic Relief Services (CRS) visited the area, we looked at expanding our project beyond providing relief. The Bishop suggested that Esperanza serve as a model area for the other parishes as it covers both Agusan del Sur and Agusan del Norte provinces. These areas have the same issues and both have a focus on indigenous communities.

The first thing we did was to identify people's real needs and look at the characteristics of the area. Our strategy was then to divide the Parish into zones based on particular chapels. These were further broken down into *Gagmay Kristohanong Katilingban* or small Christian communities, which were again divided into family groupings at the *sitio* level. This strategy resulted in faster dissemination of religious teachings as well as of ways to deal with other issues and problems.

With this set-up, the small communities realised the importance of working together, which helped stop the 'dole-out' mentality that was prevalent with flood relief. It also strengthened the communities' resolve of working through communal activities and assisting each other. We call this 'lay empowerment'. We supported this by providing mechanisms wherein people could realise their own potential, rely on their own initiatives and look first at the resources they already have.

## Connecting with landcare

Landcare certainly created quite a stir with the farmers who visited Lantapan in June 2003. The trip served as an 'eye and heart opener'. They saw the landcare initiatives in Lantapan and realised that they could adapt these for use in their own setting.

Since I was not able to join the farmers on this visit, they shared with me what they saw and learnt. In particular, they learnt various methods and technologies for minimising or stopping soil erosion on sloping land. I felt that they became more confident when they shared what they saw with me and their neighbouring farmers. I was inspired with what I heard from them and am looking forward to implementing the technologies here.

I feel that we can very well duplicate landcare in Esperanza. Considering that we still have an abundance of natural resources to protect, conserve and manage, the lessons from landcare are also applicable here.

There are several NGOs or agencies that focus on the sustainable management of natural resources in our diocese. But if I analyse their strategies, they just seem to 'unload' on to us knowledge and technologies from outside the area. These are alien and out of context with the communities here.



*Farmers from Esperanza visiting Lantapan.*

In comparison, landcare motivates and encourages the local community to rely on the resources existing within its own area first and to look at its own strengths. Farmers are involved in doing their own research and participate in research conducted by ICRAF. This inspired our farmers.

## Working in partnerships

CRS has provided us with the institutional and technical support for addressing food security, sustainable agricultural technologies and environmental management strategies. We have links with Tabang Mindanao, an NGO operating in the province, which has project officers based in the parish who focus on technology transfer initiatives. We are also linked with the National Secretariat for Social Action (NASA), through the Bishop. We are getting support from the various municipal and provincial level governments, and now we are also looking to the national government for possible support.



*Indigenous people in the forest.*



We have a number of issues concerning the entry of investors in the area involved in mining and commercial tree plantations. The church was instrumental in preventing such commercial operations from coming into the area and causing detrimental environmental impacts. Together with the Supreme Datu (Chief) of the tribe and the indigenous community, we were able to unite with the local government units and prevent such projects.

There is still an abundance of native flora and fauna in our areas and we are looking for true partnerships with local government to protect our environment and engage in development projects that won't destroy it. The local government officials listened and respected our voice and the voice of the people.

In Esperanza the local governments have carried out most of their promises. I am proactive with local governments and sit down with them during meetings. My constant presence is a reminder to them of their promises. I usually start with small projects that they can easily act upon and not with the big ones, which I know would be difficult for them budget-wise. I like to think I am 'conditioning' them and preparing them for bigger and more expensive projects in the days to come.

In our province, I have a strong partnership with Father Peter Walpole who is involved in the Environmental Science for Social Change (ESSC) group and has a good relationship with the governor. We have agreed that he will work at the provincial level with the governor to provide technical support for our activities.

We are also hoping to link formally with ICRAF and landcare. We think they could really assist us, as we are more or less beginners in landcare. It is good to know that I am not alone in this arena and that there are others who have the same vision of attaining a well-balanced environment, and in protecting and conserving what's left of it. We as Christians and as children of God should act as one civilized society in this gargantuan task of protecting and managing our environment.

## Other links between landcare and the church

### Pastor Rey Manggon

Pastor Rey Manggon is a Community Developer with Mindanao Baptist Rural Life Center and is also in charge of the Baptist Church's tree planting activities.

I first heard the word 'landcare' in 1999, when the program started here in Ned. We were promoting SALT (Sloping Agricultural Land Technology) at the time, but were happy that another institution was also promoting conservation practices on the sloping lands here in Ned. Landcare technology and SALT are almost the same. The natural vegetative strips (NVS) are another form of contour-farming with the purpose of conserving the soil, just as legume hedgerows do.

### Mindanao Baptist Rural Life Center (MBRLC)

MBRLC is based in Bansalan, Davao del Sur in the southern Philippines and is very active in promoting conservation farming systems for upland farmers. MBRLC developed the Sloping Agricultural Land Technology (SALT), and promoted it throughout the Philippines. The centre is also involved in helping the indigenous people of the uplands.



*Rey Manggon,  
Mindanao Baptist Rural  
Life Center (MBRLC).*

Landcare and MBRLC have a very good partnership. We helped landcare members lay out their contours, and we provided seedling bags and seeds of forest trees to landcare group nurseries. We also ran training on poultry and livestock production as requested by some landcare groups and provided technical assistance with things like establishing legume hedgerows.

Many farmers have improved their living because they have adopted conservation technologies. Landcare is an effective tool for increasing adoption because it uses farmers to tell other farmers. Our project benefited from such a group approach. We also benefited from the techniques introduced by landcare, like high-value annual crop production. Likewise, landcare groups benefited from our contributions to their projects through training, advice and seeds.

Landcare needs to continue its activities to reach more farmers. And MBRLC and landcare need to maintain good communication and the linkages between their projects. Landcare is needed by a lot of people, especially those without farming know-how. Many farmers are short-sighted with their needs and do not look to the future. Landcare can help them, and especially the tribal groups.

### **Father Roger Caalim**

When I heard about landcare, it was very clear what it meant because care of the land is really close to our hearts. In the Catholic Church we believe in caring for the land. At the Archdiocese level, we have a social action program that looks at caring for the land so that it is profitable and useful for farmers and the next generation. In our congregation, we have a program of justice and peace that includes maintaining the integrity of creation. There is a good link between landcare and these programs. Landcare has the technology that we need.

As the pastor of this parish, I would like landcare to extend its activities from Ned to the entire parish of Gapok Langgal Mission area to reach more farmers. Our leaders want to work to further promote the program.

The soil is fast eroding in those areas where there is no landcare. It is important that we educate our farmers because many of them are exhausting the land with their current activities.

They need training. Our church has a farming and livelihood ministry to help farmers in our parish. There have been some good responses from the farmers to this ministry, but they are not easily convinced unless they can see real benefits. What landcare has done in various sitios in Ned could provide such proof.

Landcare should do well as it is about giving a better future to the people. If farmers lose all the wealth of the land, they cannot produce corn or vegetables or rice. There is no life. That is how important I think landcare is.



*Father Roger Caalim, the Parish priest of Gapok Langgal Mission, celebrating mass at Gapok Church.*

## Billy Paglinawan

I became involved in landcare because I saw it was a good program. The first activity I participated in was training in Claveria about land and water conservation, grafting and reforestation.

Before landcare started, there were no trees and our water source was going dry. With landcare we received training, organised a nursery and collected seeds of endangered tree species. We have about 60 members in two churches.



*Billy Paglinawan, Pastor of Advent Christian Church at Mindgat, Malitbog, Bukindon.*

We focus our landcare activities on nursery management. Our purpose is not only to plant timber and fruit trees but also to give tree seedlings to the members. We have planted rambutans, lanzones and mangosteens. All members must manage their nurseries because they need to plant a quarter of a hectare on their farms with trees.

Landcare in Church is not just about members, but about the whole community. We have a program on watershed development and water source preservation. Whenever there is illegal cutting of trees going on in the area, we report it to the *barangay*. There is a penalty for cutting down trees in the *barangay*. Firstly, the cut trees are confiscated and then the people who have cut the trees are brought before the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

This year, we plan to continue to help in tree planting. We will put markers on big trees so that people will know not to cut them because they are part of the church's project.

It is good to see the ICRAF facilitator regularly as he inspires us to continue our efforts. The local government unit of Malitbog, through Mayor Dela Rosa, has also helped us and supports our efforts.

We are encouraging other churches in the nearby *barangays* like the Evangelical and Baptist churches to get involved in landcare. We are also considering running workshops about soil and water conservation, nursery management and seed collection for three other churches that are not currently involved in landcare.

I would like to thank ICRAF and landcare for all the information and technologies that have helped us and our community.

## Church and landcare partner for mutual benefits

- Provides links between spiritual and physical needs.
- Links landcare to the wider community.
- Church parishes provide an opportunity for spreading landcare more widely.
- Landcare can inspire church members.
- Church leaders can help champion landcare to local government leaders.
- The landcare ethic can bring church members "closer to God".
- Both have a similar objective — to produce a brighter future for the people.



## 4. TAKING LANDCARE TO THE SCHOOLS

*By Rubylyn Canda*

**Current location:** *Barangay Kibangay, Bukidnon, Central Mindanao, Philippines*

**Occupation:** Technology and home economics teacher at Xavier de Kibangay High School

**Role in landcare:** Integrating landcare into the Xavier de Kibangay High School

**Experience:** Bachelor of Science majoring in education from Cagayan de Oro College; previously worked at the San Herminigildo Agro-Industrial School in *Barangay Alanib* and Bukidnon National High School in Malaybalay City



*Rubylyn Canda.*



*The grounds of Xavier de Kibangay High School, planted with trees from the school landcare program.*

### Students understand the importance of the environment

Landcare has provided our students with a deeper understanding of the environment, its importance, protection and management. All of our students since 2000 have experienced landcare and I hope they will implement what they have learned when they take over their parents' land.

There have been improvements in the school grounds since landcare. Students have learnt to separate biodegradable waste from other wastes and compost it. They have also planted hundreds of seedlings around the school, which are now growing well. The growing trees provide shade during hot days and also serve as windbreaks. The first trees we planted have already been harvested and used in the construction of the school canteen.

## Making landcare part of the curriculum

In the first year, landcare is presented in terms of backyard gardening and then actual tree-planting activities. In the second year, it involves the establishment of the FAITH Garden (Food Always In The Home). The third year is focused on ornamental gardening and the fourth year involves students in nursery establishment and seedling propagation.

We were and continue to be assisted by ICRAF facilitators to build landcare into the curriculum. Before landcare, we had some simple gardening and beautification activities, but they were not part of the curriculum. They were just one of the extra-curricular activities children could do for the school. Our activities on environmental protection, nurseries and contours started with the entry of landcare into the school program.

The school's administration reacted positively to landcare as it imparted both theoretical and practical knowledge to the students. We also looked at the school becoming a laboratory for learning, not only for the students but for the community and visitors as well.

*Rubylyn (right) and students at Xavier de Kibangay High School engaged in landcare activities.*



There are still many topics that could be included in our landcare program, but we realised that since this is an action learning process, it may take some time to develop the curriculum further. We are feeling our way through it and we modify the program as the need arises with new ideas.

## Taking landcare beyond the school room

We hope that eventually we can run seminars and training events for the parents as well as the students. If we could have our way, such events would be run on their farms since students have limited school hours to learn everything. In this way, landcare could reach more of the community.

Some parents have been influenced by the students and have adopted landcare technologies. Others are not yet fully convinced. We need to continue the program in the school and at the same time increase landcare's presence in the communities with the parents by doing practical hands-on activities on their farms.

We could call for parents and teachers to join together to participate in training and seminars at the school. Then we could suggest that they gather in small groups on individual farms for more hands-on training activities in sustainable agriculture and environmental management.

**Rubylyn's definition of landcare:** For me landcare is about the protection of the environment, targeting people who do not pay attention to caring for it. Many people are engaged in destructive and abusive practices that do nothing to care for the environment.

## Future of landcare in the school

To become independent of ICRAF's assistance, we would need to go to more extensive seminars and training in the topics included in the curriculum. This would eventually prepare us to take over and become independent in sustaining the program in the school. We would like facilitators to spend more time in honing our knowledge and that of our students in landcare, perhaps even over the weekends.

Material support is not enough to sustain the program. There should always be "learning by doing". Theoretical knowledge should be backed up by hands-on practical learning activities.

These activities are more important to the students and others as they “get their hands dirty” and experience the activities themselves.

Through landcare, we envision that the children will become proactive in caring for the environment and one day adopting landcare on their own farms.



*More student landcare activities: vegetable production (above) and tree planting for beautification (below).*



## The benefits of integrating landcare into school programs

- Educates future generations about the benefits of conservation technologies.
- Provides the school with trees for shade and for use in constructing new school buildings.
- Adds a practical hands-on element to the curriculum.
- Can demonstrate landcare and conservation practices to the wider community.



## Other links between landcare and schools

### Sister Irene Cecile Torres

We are not experts in the field of landcare or agriculture. We feel we are very fortunate that landcare is here in Lantapan so we are able to partner with them. We believe we have the same goals and the same direction towards caring for all creation. We believe caring is the community's responsibility because creation is a gift to all and at the same time is the responsibility of all.

During the first year of our partnership with landcare, we were trying to identify the content that we would be teaching the students. We tried to do a general gardening module in that year and the next year we focused on ornamental plant propagation. In the third year we looked at vegetable gardening and in the fourth year we focused on nursery management and seedling propagation.

When implementing landcare in the school we wanted to apply the principle of learning by doing. Our students now have a different way of looking and caring for the environment. At the institutional level, landcare has helped us streamline our approaches to learning. When we started with landcare, we depended heavily on the landcare facilitators. However, now we are looking forward to being technically capable of teaching landcare modules by ourselves, and will hopefully also go out to extend this learning to the whole community. We long to be able to give training and seminars ourselves to the wider community.



*Sister Irene Cecille Torres, Principal of Xavier de Kibangay High School.*



*Sister Irene hosts visitors from South Cotabato interested in the landcare in schools program.*

Landcare has the potential to transform society. But people must learn within themselves, not from some external force. Once students have learnt the principles they will take them with them when they leave the school. One of the first students to be involved in the landcare initiative was Rhondee Yanga, who learnt to plant and care for tree seedlings when he was still in elementary grade. Now he is one of the model farmers in his village, and has harvested trees to help build his own house.

### Joselita Molina

Landcare started here in Mat-I National High School in Claveria in 2000. The first activity was to produce seedlings, after which we learnt how to raise them — from the propagation of seeds to caring for the seedlings until they were ready for transplanting.

We have now planted more than 600 trees around the school to help control soil erosion on our hilly land and to act as a windbreak against the strong seasonal winds that occur in December.

The teachers and school principal support our activities. Whenever there is a landcare activity, they are always willing to assist with seminars, training, field trips and visits to landcare sites.

Landcare has a great future here. Landcare in our school has helped the people who wanted to plant timber trees and fruit trees as they now have somewhere to go for planting material.

In our regular subjects, we integrate the advantages of planting trees and the importance of having trees in our environment. We integrate landcare with other topics so students understand its usefulness.

We are planning to eventually develop a commercial nursery. But for now we have a small nursery where we raise seedlings for farmers and students. These seedlings are important for producing trees as a source of building materials and for planting along the river to control water flow.

## 5. BETTER BANANAS FROM LANDCARE TECHNIQUES

*By Ric Abejuela*

**Current location:** Sitio Patag, Barangay Alanib, Lantapan, Central Mindanao, Philippines

**Occupation:** President of the Mt Kitanglad Agri-Ventures Inc (MKAVI) banana company

**Role in landcare:** Has used landcare practices in banana plantation; involved in community landcare initiatives

**Experience:** Bachelor of Science (in Agriculture) from the University of the Philippines; has been involved in the banana industry in Davao City and Misamis Oriental for about 38 years; also involved in vegetable production, poultry, dairy, and shrimps



*Ric Abejuela.*

### Producing the best export bananas

I am from Bukidnon, so when I was asked to set up a banana farm here at a high elevation with boulders and stones, I was coming back to my home country. But before I agreed to move out of retirement for the third time, I asked a British consultant if we could grow bananas here, and he said that we could. After just two years, we were exporting bananas to Japan and there was a high demand for our bananas, which were sweeter, had a better aroma and a longer shelf life than other bananas.

### Using landcare techniques to grow bananas

When we first came here, there were a lot of negative perceptions from the community. People were saying that the company had come to grab the land or to destroy it. But, I am from here. Why would I destroy the land where I belong?

I used to have a very small farm in Davao where even the cogon or imperata grass would hardly grow. I applied a number of principles to my farm. The first rule I applied was no burning. The second was to put in contours and the third was mulching. Instead of burning the grass, I brought in rice hulls, corn cobs and coconut husks and spread these over my farm. These practices paid off in terms of both production and quality of produce. I have been involved in doing this type of 'landcare' activity for a very long time.

We grow our bananas here in Lantapan using the best possible environmental standards. We do this because I don't want to lose the soil that is producing the bananas and I don't want to lose the water in the soil. When we harvest our bananas we use the stems and leaves of the banana plants as mulch to help retain the water in the soil. We try not to waste anything.

We established contour lines on the slopes. Where the ravines were very deep and we could not plough the land and plant bananas, we planted trees. Right from the start, I told our people that we needed to preserve the soil by planting trees. Sometimes my colleagues asked why we were 'wasting' money planting trees, and I told them that trees hold the soil in place. While we can't avoid erosion completely, this has paid off and we have kept most of our topsoil. The birds and monkeys are also coming back.



*Workers harvesting bananas at MKAVI.*

When we first came here five years ago, the soil was very poor and could hardly grow any corn unless a lot of fertiliser or chicken dung was added. I had an expert come in and look at the soil. He found that it was clayey on top, which would seem good for holding water, but that less than two feet down it was very porous. This meant that if we added fertiliser to the base of plants, it would all be washed away in heavy rain. This is why we decided to put in drip irrigation that also supplied our banana trees with fertilisers. Mulching and drip irrigation mean the water and fertiliser can be applied slowly and are less likely to be washed away. We are able to provide our bananas with the exact water and fertilisers they need so they don't have that hungry or thirsty look.

We also plant legumes between some of the rows of banana trees to help provide the soil with more nutrients. We compost organic matter and use chicken dung to fertilise our soil. We apply about 35 tonnes of organic matter a hectare to our soil each year.

We try not to use chemicals to get rid of pests and diseases. We prohibit people from shooting birds and monkeys, as these animals can help control pests. We had a problem with the scanning beetle, which can do a lot of damage to the banana



*Legumes are planted between the rows of bananas to help with soil fertility.*



plants. At first we employed children to come in and pick them up one by one. They were happy to get some money and we were happy to reduce the beetle population. Then we found out that the African bull frogs eat these beetles, so we cultured these frogs and released them into critical areas.

We control the nematodes in the soil by cutting back our banana plants each year and replanting. This minimises the destructive soil organisms, like nematodes, by starving them and exposing them to sunlight.

### **Award recognises ecologically sound production processes**

MKAVI received a special citation — the 2002 Golden Shell Award for Ecologically-Sound Production Processes. The Golden Shell Awards follow a strict selection process designed to weed out companies that do not meet its stringent standards. Overall efficiency in export, particularly total quality management, manufacturing, research and development, product quality, marketing and financial viability are considered.



*A worker at MKAVI checks the plantation's irrigation control system.*

## Sharing the benefits with the community

We pay people who work here very well. We pay the people we rent the land from the highest amount per hectare in the province, more than the other companies renting land for sugarcane, corn or pineapple production.

We try to get involved with community meetings and do not restrict people from visiting our operations. So what if people copy what we do? That's for the benefit of our people and it is for the benefit of our country.

People here in the community are beginning to open their eyes. It has taken five years or more, but people are really beginning to change. They see what we are doing and they copy it.



*Ric Abejuela in the MKAVI nursery.*

The people who come and look at what we are doing see ravines that were once barren and now are planted. We are growing the best kind of bananas possible for export. Landcare and plantation development need to go hand in hand. As a Filipino, I have to share my knowledge with our people. We need to teach other innovations like landcare.

**Ric's definition of landcare:** Landcare starts with 'the guy upstairs'. God gave us this land to take care of for our people. We have to conserve the land and keep it fertile so the next generation can benefit. That's how I look at it.

## MKAVI's community development projects

- Vegetable farm for workers and local community.
- Fish farm.
- Free dental and medical clinics provided to employees.
- Herbal gardens.
- Joint nutrition enhancement program with the local government unit.
- Landowners' welfare program.
- Sponsorship programs for different community projects (eg financial support for the construction of Lantapan Landcare Association's central office and nursery).

## section 6



# LANDCARE LOOKS TO THE FUTURE



This book captures many examples of how people, settlements and landscapes have changed as a result of landcare. However, getting hard data on these changes is difficult. This is important as the success of the Landcare Program will ultimately be judged not by individual stories, but by its success in improving farms and farmers' sustainability at broader community levels. Monitoring changes and evaluating impacts of the Landcare Program was the focus of a major study of Philippines Landcare, conducted at the three main landcare sites of Claveria, Lantapan and Ned, from July to December 2002.

The study was undertaken as part of the Philippines–Australia Landcare Project, funded by ACIAR and supervised by Rob Cramb from Australia and Zorina Culasero-Arellano from the Philippines. The study was the first major evaluation of landcare in the Philippines, and one of the most comprehensive studies of landcare done anywhere in the world. Rob's individual story follows and Zorina's story appears in Section Three. Results of the study appear in the boxes throughout Rob's story.

*Landscapes in the Philippines, such as these fields in Claveria, have changed as a result of landcare.*



# 1. EVALUATING LANDCARE

*By Rob Cramb*

<b>Current location:</b>	Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
<b>Occupation:</b>	Researcher, University of Queensland
<b>Role in landcare:</b>	Involved in monitoring and evaluating landcare in the Philippines
<b>Experience:</b>	Degrees in agricultural science and economics; has worked on agricultural development and land resource management in various parts of Southeast Asia



*Rob Cramb (far left) with facilitators during a session to plan monitoring and evaluation processes.*

## Landcare brings adoption

There is no doubt that something significant has been happening at the landcare sites in Mindanao that has been difficult to achieve elsewhere in the Philippines. I was involved in earlier ACIAR research that examined projects all over the Philippines where there had been attempts to introduce soil conservation, especially contour hedgerows. And there were very few examples of widespread adoption beyond the project boundaries or after the project period.

While the landcare sites are still pilot projects in some sense, there has been a rapid increase in adoption of simple conservation measures, rapid formation of landcare groups, the generation of new activities, and evolution of new ideas and practices. Although this is still only happening on a minority of farms in any given municipality, it represents quite a high proportion of farmers and a significant area of the steeply sloping part of the landscape. This has rarely been encountered elsewhere in the Philippines, although there have been one or two other examples of projects, not called landcare, that have adopted similar principles and approaches, with similar success.

I think the key to it has been the practical technologies offered, the farmer-to-farmer orientated nature of the training provided, and the close follow-up by dedicated landcare facilitators. What we found is that farmers are very aware of soil erosion and land degradation, but are lacking simple practices they can adopt to deal with these issues. They might have even seen contour practices, but until you are actually trained in putting in a contour, there is a barrier to adoption. Training is the single most important factor explaining adoption. This training involved farmer adopters demonstrating what they had already done on their farms.





*Farms contoured with NVS.*



It was important for farmers to visit other farmers, sometimes in other municipalities, to see what they had done. This was then followed by short-term, one or two-day practical hands-on-training with a group of farmers who could then go back and help each other implement what they had learned. It was the contact with other farmers, the training and the facilitation that led to adoption, and to the formation of landcare groups that could help members to implement practices such as contour farming and develop plant nurseries.

*Farmers training each other — one of the keys to landcare's success in the Philippines.*



## Adoption of conservation technologies

*By Rob Cramb and Zorina Culasero-Arellano, Landcare Evaluation Reports 1–4, 2004*

- The landcare program followed a similar pattern at the three sites. It trained farmers in soil conservation (especially NVS) and agroforestry, with a high degree of involvement of farmer-adopters in the training process, and it also worked towards the formation of landcare groups, linked in a landcare association.
- At all three sites (Claveria, Lantapan and Ned) both the adoption of the new techniques and the formation of landcare groups proceeded rapidly. This was partly due to the legacy of programs undertaken by ICRAF, SEARCA or other agencies before the ACIAR Landcare Project began.
- Between one- and two-thirds of farmers at each site were adopters of soil conservation technologies, affecting from 15 to 25% of the total farm area at the site.
- There was clear evidence that adoption had a significant impact on reducing soil erosion. The impact on farm incomes was less clear-cut and was likely to be primarily a function of the changed cropping practices implemented on the contoured farms, for example the planting of perennials with greater commercial value. The catchment-wide impacts remain to be investigated but are likely to prove significant.
- The rapid adoption was primarily due to the practical, farmer-based training provided, giving farmers the knowledge and skills they needed to implement a technology they considered useful. There was also evidence that many farmers learned the technology directly from neighbours who had previously undergone training. The personal follow-up provided by landcare facilitators was also very important.
- Adoption was positively associated with larger farms, more farm workers in the household, steeper slopes, full or part-ownership, full-time farming, maize farming (compared to farming tomato, potato, etc.), and landcare group membership. Factors such as age, education, gender, ethnicity, and place of origin were not generally important in explaining adoption.
- While adoption was positively associated with membership in a landcare group, landcare membership in itself was neither necessary nor sufficient to induce adoption. Many adopters were not landcare members, and not all landcare members were adopters.



## Making evaluation work

I was involved in only a small component of the ACIAR project when it first started in 1999. We were monitoring and doing some evaluation, and the facilitators were keeping their own records, but we did not have the resources to initiate targeted surveys, or really think through all the data. We agreed that we needed something towards the end of the project that would be much more concentrated and intense, and ACIAR provided extra money for a six-month study at the end of 2002.

I now had half of my time allocated to this, and I worked with the facilitators and Zorina Culasero-Arellano to look at what data we had and what we still needed. We planned surveys and focus groups and I visited the Philippines three times during the six months. To work very closely with the Filipinos over that period was very exciting and we really worked well as a team.

I had my own ideas on surveys and other sorts of evaluation, but we sat around the table and made all those decisions collectively. To involve the facilitators and to see their potential as researchers as well as facilitators was very instructive to me. It became an action research project where we are all learning from each other.

*Cattle breeding is a new livelihood opportunity being pursued by the Lantapan Landcare Association.*



A key lesson from the monitoring and evaluation was not to collect too much data, particularly routine data that are difficult to use, but to carefully target the data collected to meet the needs of action research. Some data are useful for the groups themselves, some for the facilitators, and some for answering larger questions about what makes landcare work in different settings.

## Differences between Filipino and Australian landcare

I think there are important differences between landcare in Australia and the Philippines. With landcare in Australia, the focus has been very much on forming community landcare groups and then allowing them to develop their own agendas and to access resources. Australian landcare has been about overcoming an individualistic approach to farming by landholders who are geographically dispersed. It has built on an extension approach that goes back some decades, with farm walks and other group extension activities. Landcare groups in Australia could access financial resources from the government, including funds to employ a facilitator. This facilitator needed to be skilled in working with groups and government rather than having technical expertise.

In the Philippines, superficially it's the same, in that landcare groups have been formed and facilitators are active. But local landcare groups have not had the barriers of distance or a lack of community interaction typical in rural Australia. Local Filipino communities easily form into landcare groups as they are already functioning as primary social groups.

Landcare facilitators still needed skills in how to relate to farmer groups and how to help them with their organisation, particularly once groups had formed. But the primary interest of the Filipino farmers was in the technical expertise of the facilitators, their links to good applied research organisations and their ability to access further information.

A distinctive feature of landcare groups in the Philippines is that they formed into municipal landcare associations, which don't exist in Australia. This meant they had some voice with local governments. It linked quite isolated groups of farmers and others into a wider network that they didn't have before. The Filipino culture emphasises close-knit networks and kinship in local communities, but those networks fall away very quickly

once you get beyond that local community. Across a *barangay* and especially across a municipality, it is unlikely that local communities are aware of who is out there, what they are thinking and what they are doing. The landcare associations created something new in that sense. Such an association doesn't have a rationale without the individual landcare groups, but the groups only really exist because the association has links to ICRAF or SEARCA, to the facilitators, to local government, and to technical expertise beyond this.

*Water monitoring landcare meeting in Lantapan.*



## Landcare needs continued support

Landcare in the Philippines is still supported by the ACIAR project, ICRAF, SEARCA and AECL, but clearly that is not going to continue for more than a few years. ICRAF has indicated its intention to pull back from active involvement in extension to return to its focus on research and move on to other fields. Given that the value of landcare to the farmers is not so much that it linked them to each other, but that it linked them to a wider network, we should not be expecting them to become self-sufficient entities. That is not why they formed in the first place. They formed because of these new linkages with outside agencies, and perhaps because of a general deficiency in these remote upland areas of government services such as agricultural extension and applied research.

Local governments have limited resources to provide what farmers need. ICRAF, SEARCA and other agencies have been welcomed because they are filling this gap. So I don't see that the landcare groups and associations can survive by themselves, let alone continue to be replicated in other municipalities. I think what is needed is an organisation to take on some of the functions that ICRAF and other agencies have been providing. It has to be beyond the municipal level, because it has to deal with a range of municipalities and different provinces.

It also has to be outside government, because although it will work and cooperate with government, we have seen that local government is subject to short-term political cycles. There can

## Landcare groups in the Philippines

*By Rob Cramb and Zorina Culasero-Arellano,  
Landcare Evaluation Reports 1–4, 2004*

Farmers joined landcare groups primarily to access training, technical advice and assistance (for example, with planting materials), and to be part of a wider landcare association, linking them to people beyond their immediate community.

While soil conservation was a primary focus of landcare activities, farmers were more interested in accessing new livelihood opportunities, principally through planting fruit and timber species on their contoured farms. Linking adoption of conservation measures to these new opportunities was an effective strategy. The commitment and skills (technical and organisational) of the landcare facilitators at each site were crucial to the success of the landcare program.

Some landcare groups developed their own agendas, identifying new needs and organising activities to meet those needs, for example purchasing fertiliser for members, establishing a small drugstore or helping to form other groups. However, most groups became less active once members had contoured their farms or established a landcare nursery. Nevertheless, because group members were close neighbours or kin, they could readily re-activate the group if there was a perceived need. Some groups disbanded because of internal conflicts or external changes, such as the extensive leasing of land to banana plantations in Lantapan.

The personal qualities of the group leaders were a key factor in maintaining and expanding the group's activities, along with the degree of contact and support from landcare facilitators, including farmer-facilitators in Ned. The landcare associations, working on behalf of the local groups and in conjunction with the landcare facilitators, were influential in organising training and accessing outside resources, for example from local and provincial governments.

be times when government is very supportive of landcare, for example when a mayor takes it on and runs with it, but with a change of personnel, not only will landcare be forgotten, it will be actively opposed because it was associated with the previous incumbent.

Once landcare gets to provincial governments and beyond, it's getting too far removed from the local focus. However, you can't expect local governments or municipal landcare associations to continue to scale it up to other areas beyond their municipal boundaries.

The conclusion we have come to, based on what we have seen over these three or four years, is that we need a landcare foundation or a landcare agency. This would be made up of professional people, including the landcare facilitators, who would seek funding for their activities from various sources within the Philippines and beyond. They would be able to sell their services to government and non-government projects, which have funding and are looking for people with good technical and facilitation skills.

This landcare agency would link facilitators into an organisation that would continue to support the landcare associations and the farmer training groups. It would help them organise and link with other projects that are looking for training. This could be turned into an income generating process for the farmer trainers. It could also obtain funding for its activities from international aid organisations such as AusAID or the Ford Foundation.

The landcare agency could bring farmers together from various provinces. They could organise a landcare conference, train new facilitators and build on everything that has been learned so far. I don't see a long-term future for landcare without something like that happening, given the withdrawal of the international agencies and the vulnerable status of the landcare groups and associations.

I am reasonably confident about the future of landcare, given the establishment of such a landcare agency. I think there is a need for it and the people who will be involved are up to the task. There are several issues to consider: the initial set up, how to make up the board, accountability, and coordinating activities over widespread sites. I think it has a good chance, but it is by no means a straightforward success story.

## Importance of ongoing support for landcare

*By Rob Cramb and Zorina Culasero-Arellano, Landcare Evaluation Reports 1-4, 2004*

The support of local government units (LGUs) at the *barangay* and municipal levels that was evident in Claveria was not found to the same degree at the other two sites, where there was either apathy or antipathy towards the landcare program. This did not appear to have hindered landcare activities and may in fact have encouraged farmer leaders to organise. However, the presence of a strong facilitating institution (ICRAF or SEARCA) was essential, offsetting the immediate need for partnership with LGUs. This suggests the need for a landcare agency of some sort to sustain landcare activities in the long term.

Efforts to extend the landcare program to other municipalities in Misamis Oriental and Bukidnon showed that, with support from the core sites (Claveria and Lantapan), rapid adoption of NVS technology could be achieved, with or without the formation of landcare groups, but that support from the municipal government was highly variable and generally weak, partly for political reasons and partly due to lack of human and other resources. This adds further support to the conclusion that there needs to be a landcare agency providing on-going support to landcare associations, and to local government units and other agencies interested in implementing a landcare approach.

*A sign outside the headquarters of the Lantapan Landcare Association shows the increasing ownership of landcare.*





## 2. CONCLUSION — LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

### Landcare builds momentum

This book has told, through personal stories, the individual enthusiasm for landcare that exists in the Philippines. There are now many active and dynamic landcare groups among the 400 or more groups that started since the beginning of the landcare program. These groups are carrying out a wide range of activities and providing a variety of services to their local communities at *sitio*, *barangay* and municipal levels.

Active and successful landcare associations have formed in Claveria, Lantapan and Ned. For example, the Lantapan Landcare Association is currently establishing a small office, information centre, nursery, distribution facility and live-in training centre.



*Landcare activities.*



Farmer training groups are operating in many areas to provide direct farmer-to-farmer training, something which has proved to be one of the keys for improving adoption of conservation technologies. There is now a band of well-trained facilitators, landcare interns or volunteers, farmer facilitators and some local government personnel involved in landcare activities.

Various excellent training resources, such as books, pamphlets, a facilitator training manual, Waterwatch manual, CDs and slide sets, have been developed to support those involved in landcare. Innovative communication activities, such as the landcare radio program in Lantapan, have also been implemented.

A landcare trust fund was established in 1999 with a grant of \$US200 000 from the Spanish government through the AECI project to provide perpetual small grants to landcare groups. More than 45 local government units, national government agencies and non-government organisations are supporting landcare activities through direct funding, assistance with livelihood projects, landcare materials and the implementation of landcare ordinances. People from all sectors of the community are getting involved.

## Broader support for the future of landcare

Landcare principles and processes have been taken beyond the initial program. For example, the European Union-funded upland development project for southern Mindanao, and the western Mindanao development project (funded by the International Foundation for Agricultural Development) are both applying landcare processes to their activities. Also integrating landcare into its activities is the small farm agribusiness development project (funded by the US Department of Agriculture and managed by Catholic Relief Services), which operates in western, southern and eastern Mindanao

Landcare networks are also being used to research and facilitate innovative new concepts. For example, ICRAF's RUPES (Rewarding Upland Poor for Environmental Services) program is analysing processes such as landcare for their potential to channel resources to the upland poor for environmental services such as watershed protection, biodiversity conservation and landscape amenity.

The Spanish Government, via its AECI agency, continues to provide support to the Philippines Landcare program through funding for additional project work, the ongoing Landcare Trust Fund and the new Landcare Foundation of the Philippines Inc. The Landcare Foundation is of particular interest. Formed in late 2003 to build on the Landcare Trust Fund, it has established a corporate entity with a Board of Trustees (some of whom have provided their stories for this book) and an aim to build landcare throughout the region. It has instituted four main programs for building institutional capacity, supporting sustainable livelihoods, generating and mobilising resources, and promoting landcare to the mainstream government and non-government agencies. Although largely drawing on the primary landcare resources of the Claveria and Lantapan areas, it has the potential to fulfil many of the functions of the landcare agency that Rob Cramb alluded to in the previous story.

Collaborating with the Landcare Foundation to build a robust landcare agency that can maintain and expand landcare activities throughout at least the southern Philippines will be the focus of a new project to be co-funded by ACIAR and AusAID in 2004 to 2007. The project will study the desired features of such an agency, establish it and test its performance in sustaining and scaling up landcare. It will also continue to support existing landcare institutions and activities, and build new landcare programs in other priority sites in Mindanao and the Visayas.

Given landcare's success, there is some confidence in its ability to deliver improved living standards and social institutions, and help communities to provide better environmental stewardship.

Many of the stories in this book have confirmed this, although they acknowledge the challenges that lie ahead. The future for landcare will not be easy or assured. However, the stories have also indicated the huge enthusiasm and diversity of opportunities and support that will help make this a little easier. We hope your stories can join with ours to spread landcare processes for the benefit of people and places in the Philippines and around the world.



*The future beneficiaries of landcare.*





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