

Needs Assessment for Upgrading the Social State of the Community in Sitio Pulot/Bae, Barangay San Antonio, Kalayaan, Laguna, Philippines

Dolores, A.J.S.¹, Cuevas, C.B.¹, Castaneda, J.I.E.¹, Del Mundo, M. F.¹,
Inson, A. M. I.¹, Vista, L.V.¹, and Sanchez, P.A.J.¹

¹ University of the Philippines Los Banos, College, Laguna, Philippines

Abstract: Sitio Pulot/Bae, bounded by the Caliraya man-made lake, is a part of Barangay San Antonio in the town of Kalayaan, province of Laguna in the Philippines. It can be reached by riding a boat for almost an hour from either Cavinti, Laguna or Sitio Magalolon in Barangay San Antonio. The site has no source of electricity and has only one source of water, which is found to be unsafe for drinking. From about 90 households in Sitio Pulot/Bae, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) was done to collect relevant social data. According to the situational analysis, the residential houses were made of wood. In addition, it has one elementary school, and two mini chapels. From the key informant interview done within the area, it is revealed that most of the residents in the area were financially poor and have no stable source of income. The current livelihood activities and/or sources of income of the residents were agriculture, Tilapia fishing, selling of Rattan poles, mini convenience stores, and some illegal practices such as Kaingin (slash-and-burn) for charcoal-making. Focus group discussion was done in order to determine the needs of the community. Prioritization ranking and logical framework were answered and filled out by the residents of the sitio. The result of the issues and concern prioritization of the participants were ranked as follows: livelihood, health center, water, electricity, education, transportation, agricultural fertilizer, spiritual needs, and family planning. Furthermore, livelihood activities were also suggested, as it was the main need identified by the community during the focus group discussion for the situational analysis. The possible projects identified were handicraft production (basket-weaving, and other Rattan-made handicrafts), food production (cassava chips, etc.), aquaculture, fishing, and agricultural crop production. Various activities such as creation of supply chains, livelihood trainings, marketing assistance, and strategy buildings were also recommended.

Keywords: needs assessment, social state

1. INTRODUCTION

Kalayaan is a third-class municipality located in the fourth district of the province of Laguna, Philippines. It is located at approximately 14°21'

north of the equator, 121°34' east of the prime meridian. It is bounded by the municipality of Paete on the north, Lumban on the south, Laguna de Bay on the west, and Mauban, Quezon on the east. The

municipality has a total area of 5,545.81 hectares, and is divided into three *barangays*: San Juan, Longos, and San Antonio. Among the three, San Antonio has the largest total area (3,773.20 ha). Among the places situated in this barangay is sitio Pulot/Bae.

The study aims to assess the needs of the residents within Sitio Pulot/Bae, based on the perception of the population and the current situation of the households and infrastructures within the area.

1.1 Objectives

The main objective of this study is to identify and analyze the general situation of Sitio Pulot/Bae as well as the concerns of the households in the area. Moreover, the study aims to assess the needs of the Sitio and give plausible solutions to address the problems.

1.2. Study Area

Sitio Pulot/Bae, as shown in Figure 1, is situated along the boundary of barangay San Antonio and Barangay San Juan in Kalayaan, Laguna.

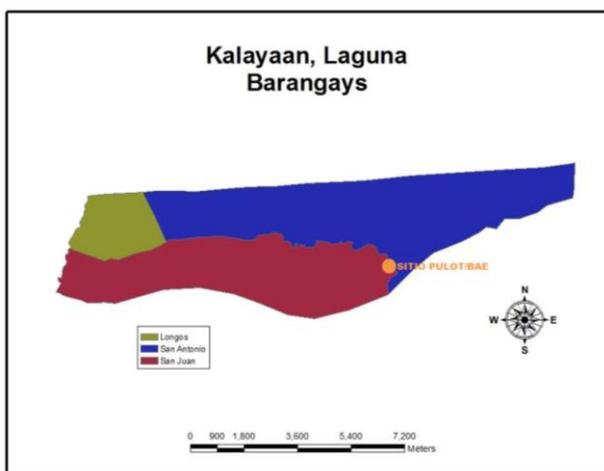


Figure 1. Map of the location of sitio Pulot/Bae

Sitio Pulot/Bae is located within the waters of the man-made Caliraya Lake, and is accessible via boat ride from either Cavinti, Laguna or Sitio Magalolon in Barangay San Antonio. A one-way trip

via boat typically lasts around 45 minutes to one hour. It is not accessible by land transportation since the traverse going to the sitio is a forest area.

The sitio falls under the Type I of the Philippine climate category. It has two pronounced seasons: dry and wet. The sitio experiences relatively high level of precipitation from June to November, with the rainfall peaking at July. Moreover, the average temperature is relatively lower from December to February, while April is the hottest month within a year.

2. METHODOLOGY

To understand and analyze the situation and concerns of the stakeholders in sitio Pulot/Bae, situational analysis was conducted. Situational analysis is a systematic collection and evaluation of study findings and other information in order to identify and understand issues to be addressed and find out the best course of action to be taken (United Nations Women, n.d.). Primary data (key informant interview (KII), household survey, focus group discussion (FGD), field observation, personal communications), and secondary data were gathered for the analysis of general situation of the study site. The framework of the methodology is shown in Figure 2.

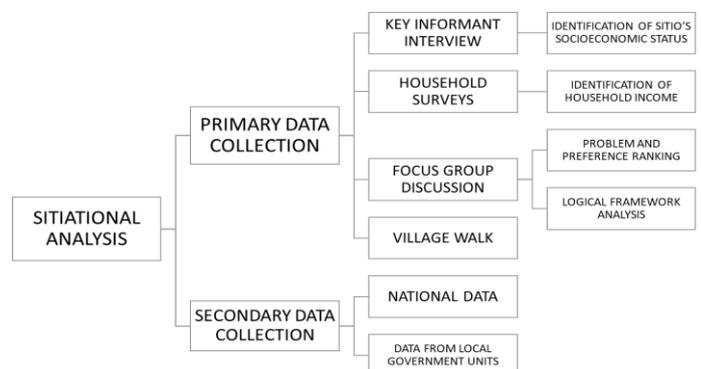


Figure 2. Framework for situational analysis

2.1 Primary Data Collection

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) was done using the following tools: key informant interview (KII), household survey, focus group discussion (FGD), and village walk.

2.1.1 Key Informant Interview (KII)

Key informant interview is done by conducting in-depth interviews with people selected for their first-hand knowledge about the community.

The KII of the study was conducted with Mrs. Emilia Villaluz, wife of Sitio leader Loreto Villaluz as the key informant due to the unavailability of Mr. Villaluz during the study.

2.1.2 Household Survey

For the survey, one representative from selected households were interviewed. The survey was done to identify sources of income of the households, concerns and issues in the community such as water source and supply, health, and health facilities. There were 24 respondents for the survey.

2.1.3 Focus Group Discussion

Focus group discussion (FGD) is a rapid assessment, semi-structured data gathering method and a type of in-depth interview accomplished in a group of participants which are purposively selected to discuss issues and concerns based on a list of key themes drawn up by the researcher or facilitator. The focus of the analysis is the interaction inside the group (Kumar 1987; Freitas *et al.*, 1998).

FGD of the study was conducted on April 2, 2017. Twenty participants were present for the discussion.

The results from FGD were further processed using Problem and Preference Ranking, and Logical Framework Analysis. For Problem and Preference

Ranking, specific concerns were ranked based on the importance of addressing such needs, as perceived by the participants (Pretty, 1995). Afterwards, Logical Framework Approach (LFA) was used. LFA is an analytical tool for objective oriented project planning and management (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, 1999).

2.1.4 Village Walk

Village walk is a PRA tool for describing and showing the location and distribution of resources, features, landscape, and main land uses along a given transect (Flora and Fauna International, 2013).

Physical features such as establishments, vegetation, animals, soil, water, and livelihood in Sitio Pulot/Bae were identified during the village walk for the study.

2.2 Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data were obtained through the help of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and Sangguniang Barangay of San Antonio, Kalayaan, Laguna. Data obtained include a brief profile of the municipality, Barangay Development Plan (BDP), and Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP).

The secondary data were used to validate the findings based from the primary data.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Key Informant Interview (KII)

Key informant interview (KII) is qualitative, and descriptive information for decision-making. It is done by conducting in-depth interviews with people selected for their first-hand knowledge about the community (USAID Center for Development and Information Evaluation, 1996).

From the key informant interview done in the area, it is revealed that most of the residents in the

area were financially poor and have no stable source of income. The current livelihood activities and/or sources of income of the residents were agriculture, Tilapia fishing, selling of Rattan poles, mini convenience stores, and some illegal practices such as Kaingin (slash-and-burn) for charcoal-making.

3.2 Household survey

Results of the survey showed that the households in the area have an annual income of below PHP 100,000 (USD 2,000) as shown in Figure 3. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the minimum income needed to meet the basic food needs and satisfy the nutritional requirements necessary for economically and socially desirable physical activities is referred to as food threshold. On the other hand, the required minimum income to meet the basic food and non-food requirements such as clothing, housing, transportation, health, and education expenses is the poverty threshold (National Anti-Poverty Commission, n.d.).

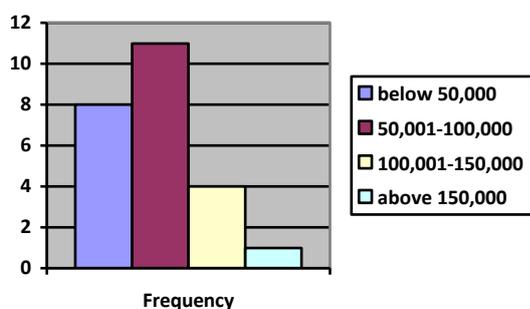


Figure 3. Household Income

According to the press release of PSA in 2015, on average, every month, a family of five needed at least PhP 6,329 to meet the basic food needs (food threshold) and at least PhP 9,064, on average, every month to meet both basic food and non-food needs (poverty threshold) (Balamban and Addawe, 2016). With this, the total annual poverty threshold was at PhP 108,768 for a family of five. Nineteen out of the

24 respondents have families who live under the poverty threshold.

Sources of income of the community mainly include charcoal making and farming.

Houses in the community are made of wood and/or bamboo. Results of the survey also revealed that only a number of houses have access to private comfort rooms, some share with other houses while others have none.

Issues on water source and supply were also identified during the household survey. The community's source of water are the lake and a well, domestic uses for the former while drinking for the latter. The main concern for the water source and supply is drought. However, there were times that the supply of water was contaminated with human wastes which can be attributed to the lack of access to comfort rooms of some families. Additionally, one of the characteristics of poor families according to the PSA is the lack of sanitary toilet which refers to flush toilet (either owned or shared) and closed pit type of toilet facility.

There were no recorded water borne diseases during the survey, however, major health problems in the area include bronchitis, stomachache, and flu. Health centers in Brgy. San Antonio and in Sitio Magalolon were the health facilities identified. However, these facilities have a lack of supply of needed medicines.

The main development issue of the residents was livelihood followed by health, education and lastly the calamity.

3.3 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

FGD is a popular qualitative tool applied in PRA. It is a good way to gather together people from similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest. The moderator or group facilitator introduces topics for discussion to the group of participants and also helps the group to participate in

a lively and natural discussion.

Allowing the participants to agree or disagree with each other provides an insight on how a group thinks about an issue, about the range of opinions and ideas, and inconsistencies and differences existing in a community in terms of their beliefs, experiences, and practices (Viji and Benedict, 2014).

FGD can be useful in providing an insight into different opinions among different parties involved in the change process, thus enabling the process to be managed more smoothly. It is also a good method to employ prior to designing questionnaires (Overseas Development Institute, n.d.).

The FGD was done at Sitio Pulot/Bae Elementary School, as shown in Figure 4. In this study, FGD provided the group with an opportunity to brainstorm the community problems besetting the locale and rank the problem in the order of priority using the Problem/Preference Ranking. Afterwards, the community identified concrete and doable activities to address the problem using Logical Framework Analysis.



Figure 4. Focus Group Discussion at Sitio Pulot/Bae Elementary School.

During the FGD, the participants were asked to assess nine problems within the sitio. Problem/Preference Ranking was done to the enumerated problems, as shown in Table 1. Each problem was given a weighted score based on the importance of addressing the needs as perceived by the residents of Sitio Pulot/Bae during the FGD. It

was found out that lack of livelihood was emphasized as the main concern the community. Other concerns include the lack of health center facilities, lack of source for clean water, and electricity. On the other hand, family planning, occasional masses, and fertilizer for agriculture are the least prioritized concerns of the community.

Table 1. Problem and Preference Ranking.

<i>Priority Issues/Concerns</i>	<i>Total Score</i>	<i>Ranking</i>
Livelihood (Economic)	8	1 st
Transportation (infra: farm to market road)	3	6 th
Electricity	5	4 th
Family planning (Social: Health)	0	9 th
Health Center (Social: Health)	7	2 nd
Teachers (Social: Education)	4	5 th
Lack of mass (Social: Spiritual)	1	8 th
Lack of water	6	3 rd
Fertilizer (Agriculture)	2	7 th

Through the use of brainstorming, ranking technique and the logical framework approach, participants in the FGD identified the problem by a consensus, devised planned activities, and determined inputs.

The participants in the FGD then, through the logical framework matrix, turned problems (cause-effect) into objectives (means-end) and suggested feasible activities within the time frame and budget. Table 2 shows that the main goal of the people in Sitio Pulot/Bae is to alleviate the level of poverty. People are motivated to be involved in livelihood programs to increase their income. They aim for an enhanced knowledge and skills in areas of their interest such as handicrafts production, food

production, and agricultural production to name a few. People request for series of capability training and hands on seminar from the government and other concerned agencies.

Table 2. Logical framework matrix of the study.

	<i>Project Summary</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Means of Verification</i>	<i>Risks/Assumptions</i>
Goal	To alleviate the level of poverty	Increased number of livelihood programs in Sitio Pulot/Bae	Status comparison of before and during livelihood program	Decrease in poverty level means increase in the quality of living of residents/households in Sitio Pulot-Bae
		Increased number of residents involved in livelihood programs in Sitio Pulot/Bae		
		Additional income		
Outcome	Increased Sitio/barangay level of employment rate	Number of women, men, youth, and elders involved in livelihood programs	Barangay records	Residents of Sitio or barangay are motivated to work
	Improved household income levels	Rate of income	Financial record; comparison of income before and during operation of livelihood programs	
	Attainment of barangay/municipal vision on economic empowerment	Emergence of livelihood programs	Barangay/municipal reports and/or records	
	Increased assistance/services from LGUs (barangay, municipal, provincial level); NGOs; POs; NGAs (DA, DOLE, TESDA, etc.)	Financial, technical (skills in production and in marketing as well), material assistance (Municipal, Provincial, TESDA, DOLE, DA)	Reports/records from agencies or offices concerned	LGUs, NGAs, POs, CSOs are willing to extend assistance to less privileged individuals

(Cont.) Table 2. Logical framework matrix of the study.

	<i>Project Summary</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Means of Verification</i>	<i>Risks/Assumptions</i>
Outputs	At least 20% increase in the number of households involved in the livelihood programs	Increase employment rate	Barangay records	
	Enhanced knowledge, skills, and capability of households in different livelihood programs in the Sitio	Rate and quality of production; passed the quality and quantitative standards	Output reports	Increased knowledge and skills in particular livelihood programs will assure increase in the quality and of productions leading to high income
	Additional 3-5 alternative livelihood programs	List of alternative livelihood programs (handicrafts, food production, aquaculture, fishing, agriculture crop production, etc.)	Livelihood programs (plans and reports)	
	Livelihood capacity trainings	Number of trainings	Training reports	

(Cont.) Table 2. Logical framework matrix of the study.

	<i>Project Summary</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Means of Verification</i>	<i>Risks/Assumptions</i>
Activities	Orientations and seminars (fishing, agricultural crop production, tree planting, aquaculture)	Number and titles of trainings conducted	Training reports	
	Trainings/workshops on product	Number of participants	Training attendance	
	NGAs, private organizations, civic organizations, seeds distribution, and field demonstration	Number of external assistance	Post-activity report	
	Provision of fishing tools (nets, boats, etc.)	Number and list of equipment	Sponsor report	
	Training on handicrafts production, food production, aquaculture, fishing, agricultural crop production, etc.	Titles of trainings conducted	Post-activity report	
	Microfinance orientation and seminar	List and number of participants and numbers	Microfinance report	
	Field trip / study tour	Number of participants, titles of trips conducted	Post-activity report	

3.4 Village walk

Village walk is a PRA tool for describing and showing the location and distribution of resources, features, landscape, and main land uses along a given transect (Flora and Fauna International, 2013). This is useful for the following: (a) Identifying and explaining the cause and effect relationships among topography, soils, natural vegetation, cultivation, and other production activities and human settlement patterns; (b) identifying major problems and possibilities as perceived by different groups in relation to features or areas along the transect, including climate change related hazards; (c) an entry point for discussing how things used to be and / or how people envisage they will or should be in the future; (d) monitoring changes over a period of time, including during the course of a project; and (e) in the context of ecosystem services valuation this tool can inform an understanding of how communities use and value biodiversity and ecosystem services, and the location of key resources in relation to different social groups within a community. The village walk done in sitio Pulot/Bae is shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Village walk in sitio Pulot/Bae.

The physical features of Sitio Pulot/Bae identified during the village walk were as follows:

3.4.1 Establishments: simple houses made of various materials (wood, plastic,

concrete), a school for elementary grade, a chapel, and a basketball court. A comfort room is available only to a number of houses.

3.4.2 Vegetation: (Backyard and plantation), Mangium, pineapple, and cassava.

3.4.3 Animals: native pigs, chicken, carabaos, birds, dogs, and ducks.

3.4.4 Soil: Clay and reddish in color in most of the area.

3.4.5 Water: Lake water is greenish and turbid. Water from the lake is used for domestic purposes such as washing the laundry, washing the dishes, taking a bath, and other basic needs. Spring water on the other hand is clear and is used drinking.

3.4.6 Livelihood: Handicrafts production, *sari-sari* stores, Kaingin, small-scale/backyard farming, fishing, etc.

3.5 Possible actions

Based on the results of the study, it was found out that the main concern of the residents within the sitio is livelihood. Since the area is isolated, the residents rely on the resources available within the sitio for their source of revenue. With that, the Local Government Unit of Kalayaan may focus on strengthening existing businesses, as well as expanding the livelihood programs within the sitio.

In general, through the assessment of the social situation in Pulot/Bae, the Local Government Units (LGUs) could help prioritize projects and programs that could benefit the community in the area. In addition, the LGUs could recommend sustainable projects for the community.

In a similar study conducted by Suiter (2016), participatory approach was used to assess the needs of seven communities of Dominican bateyes. Priorities were ranked based on importance and

feasibility. The results of the study became the basis of the action planning by the funding agency.

4. CONCLUSION

The study analyzed the general situation of Sitio Pulot/Bae and concerns of the households in the area. Results of the situational analysis revealed that most of the residents in the area were financially poor with no stable source of income, and most live in houses made of wood. The result of the issues and concern prioritization of the interviewed participants were ranked as follows: livelihood, health center, water, electricity, education, transportation, agricultural fertilizer, spiritual needs, and family planning. The results of the study may be used by the municipal government of Kalayaan to formulate programs that could benefit the community.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The main concern of the community as identified in the study is the livelihood activities. The possible projects identified were handicraft production (basket-weaving, and other Rattan-made handicrafts), food production (cassava chips), aquaculture, fishing, and agricultural crop production. Various activities such as creation of supply chains, livelihood trainings, marketing assistance, and strategy buildings were also recommended.

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