



Faces and phases of participation: a local experience on coastal resources management in Southern Philippines

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Abstract. The social dimension of coastal resources management (CRM) is highly critical for its success. Community-based CRM has become a common approach but a deeper understanding on the dynamics of community participation in various localized settings is important. Hence, this study described and assessed the existing local management initiatives on coastal resources in Bucas Grande Island, Socorro, Surigao del Norte, Philippines. It is descriptive and exploratory utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. It employed survey among 341 respondents and 20 Key Informant Interviews (KKIs). The municipality had an opportunity to avail of a World Bank-funded project on CRM with natural resources management, livelihood and community organizing components. The Local Government Unit (LGU) initiated the project and People's Organizations (POs) participated in its implementation. However, there is a relatively low level of community participation in these activities, particularly in the conceptualization and monitoring and evaluation stages. Socioeconomic, political and cultural dimensions are affecting such participation and consequently, the sustainability of CRM initiatives.

Key Words: coastal resources management, community participation, local government unit, People's Organizations, projects' non-sustainability.

Introduction. It has been a major contention that social dimension of coastal resources management (CRM) is very crucial. Thus, despite the rich experiences in the establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Community-based resources management (CBRM) programs, there is still a profound need to expand research efforts at understanding the human dimensions of coastal management (White et al 2002). Weinstein et al (2007) believed that societal values drive the successful implementation of MPA and CBRM initiatives. Understanding of social influences of environmental change and the mechanism of synchronizing human behavior with environmental and social priorities is therefore necessary. Studies have shown that while political, economic, and social systems comprise the human dimensions of coastal management, natural resource values originate only in the social system (Weinstein et al 2007).

Thus, it is interesting to examine the dynamics of the various local players on CRM. For one, a local government is expected to initiate the protection, conservation and/or development of the resources within its jurisdiction. Local government units (LGUs) opt to mobilize its constituents towards an effective and sustainable resource management. Likewise, the local constituents have to engage and participate in different CRM programs. It is anchored on the idea that the locality (both local leaders and constituents) is more knowledgeable (than any external entities) on the value of these resources.

In the Philippines, various efforts to mobilize communities for coastal resources management have been initiated. In fact, community-based resources management (CBRM) approach had already been popularized in the country in 1970s (Alcala 1998). While there are CBRM areas that were successful, a number of these also failed. Alcala (1998) identified

certain features of successful CBRM namely: a) viable organization(s) in the community; b) a working marine reserve protected by the community; c) sources of livelihood based on coastal resources; d) networking arrangements with other agencies; and e) capacity building program (Alcala 1998). In the absence of these essential features, the probability of success and sustainability of CBRM areas is very limited if not, nil. Among the reasons for non-sustainability of CBRM are limitations in research capacity and budget, and certain political issues e.g. parochial interest of local politics (Alcala 1998).

It is evident that the above issues on CRM's sustainability involve the major players of CRM – local leaders and their constituents. Both have their respective stake in CRM and the corresponding privileges. Most importantly, coordination and synergy of their efforts has to be emphasized. Their partnership or co-management of the coastal resources plays a vital role. Berkes (2009) presented the various aspects (or faces) of co-management of resources (between the government and local resource users) that have evolved through time (as a concept). These 'faces' include co-management as "power sharing, institution building, trust and social capital, process, problem solving, and governance" (Berkes 2009). Hence, co-management of resources is relatively complex thus, the need to further explore particularly in various local settings. This attempt may offer an opportunity to address the issue on sustainability of any CRM initiative.

Thus, as this paper presents a local experience of CRM in Southern Philippines, it attempts to interrogate the implications of LGU-initiated CBRM on the mobilization of communities, and on sustainability of these projects. It: a) describes the local CRM initiatives in a municipality; b) explores the roles and needs of the local government and people's organizations (POs) as the local players on CRM; and c) assess the extent of community participation in CRM, which along with other socio-political issues, have bearing on CRM's sustainability.

Material and Method. This is descriptive and exploratory study. It was conducted in Bucas Grande Island which is contiguous with the municipality of Socorro, Surigao del Norte, southern part of the Philippines, on April, 2014 to March, 2015. Bucas Grande is an island with pristine waters and idyllic topography. Its distance from the main island of Mindanao and circumstances akin to travel via seas added to the seemingly secluded reputation of the island. It houses abundant coastal resources. Presently, it has attracted a number of tourists visiting the island. According to the 2010 census, Socorro has a population of 20,304 from its fourteen (14) barangays.

This study employed quantitative (survey of 341 respondents) and qualitative methods (20 Key Informant Interviews) of data collection. Respondents from LGU and POs were purposely selected on the basis of their involvement in coastal resources management.

A univariate analysis using basic descriptive statistical tools (e.g. frequency, percentage, range, and mean) were used for quantitative data. Qualitative data were then transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis where patterns and themes of the responses were determined and analyzed to form part of the discussion.

Results and Discussion

Initiatives on coastal resources management

Socorro Island Resources Development Sub-project (SIRDS). A major initiative on coastal resources management in Bucas Grande island is the Socorro Island Resources Development Sub-project (SIRDS) under the Community-Based Resources Management Project which was implemented in 2001-2004. SIRDS is a World Bank-funded project implemented by the LGU of Socorro, Surigao del Norte, Philippines at the said municipality. It has three major components namely: natural resource management, community organizing/development, and livelihood (Table 1).

Table 1

Components of SIRDS

<i>NRM component</i>	<i>Community organizing/ Development component</i>	<i>Livelihood component</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipal coastal water management; - Fish sanctuary and coral reef management; - Sea grass sanctuary; - Mangrove resource management; - Mangrove rehabilitation; - Upland resource management; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tree plantation; - Micro-watershed development; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fruit plantation; - Sloping agricultural land technology (SALT) 1; - Sloping agricultural land technology (SALT) 2; - Bamboo plantation; - Community-based eco-tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Covered 14 barangays; - Organized 33 POs with: bank accounts, official receipts, book accounts, trained bookkeeper, established procurement committee; - Simple trainings on book keeping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Salago plantation and utilization; - Romblon plantation and utilization; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Payao fishing; - Lobster culture; - Lapu-lapu culture; - Mudcrab culture; - Bobo fishing

Source: Municipality of Socorro, Surigao del Norte.

SIRDS illustrates partnership and collaboration of international and local institutions for CRM. While the LGU initiated it, the World Bank provided funds for the project. SIRDS appears to be holistic given its natural, economic, and social components namely: natural resources management, capability building, and livelihood. These components are evidently significant for any CRM. Integrating livelihood in particular, signals sustainability of the program since subsistence needs of the communities are addressed. However, what seems unclear in the program is the integration of these components.

Other activities on CRM. Aside from SIRDS, there were other projects that were conducted in the island. The Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for instance, have regular programs such as dispersal of fishing paraphernalia or materials e.g. fish nets, fingerlings, and livelihood for the fisher folks. There was also another World Bank-funded project through the DENR and was implemented by a non-government organization (NGO), the Surigao Environmental Developmental Foundation (SEDF). SEDF partnered with a cooperative in the community, the Pamosaingan Fisherfolks Cooperative (PAFECO). The said project also established MPAs and provided livelihood such as fish culture and pump boat for hire.

In terms of legislation, the LGU of Socorro also formulated and implemented ordinances on environmental conservation and protection. They also have efforts on implementation of the country's coastal code.

The above initiatives are commendable and relevant to the preservation and conservation of natural resources, particularly coastal resources. These efforts demonstrate the participation of various sectors and agencies on CRM activities. While international agencies provided funds, national agencies and local government take charge on the implementation. The local constituents often serve as the 'frontline' in the implementation of CRM. They are often required by the government to form POs. Presumably, having the community organized formally may facilitate implementation of CRM projects. However, there is always the challenge of sustainability and effectiveness of such efforts. While international agencies are providing funding support and the national government agencies are providing enabling mechanisms, the local government and communities are likewise expected to demonstrate commitment in their role for CRM.

Local players of CRM

Local government unit (LGU). Literatures support the contention that LGUs play a role in

CRM particularly through allocation of funds for implementation of various CRM activities and the passing of legislation for marine sanctuaries and gear regulations. Pomeroy et al (1996) reported that government support through legislation, funding and enforcement, is crucial to sustaining the project interventions. Russ & Alcala (1999) also noted that government support is essential for the sustainability of marine protected areas, which is a key element of local CBCRM initiatives. In the study of Gutierrez et al (2011), strong leadership was identified as one of major factors for a successful management of coastal resources like fisheries. In the Philippine context, the LGU could take the lead in making its constituents cohesive and directed to a more efficient and sustainable CBRM.

Provinces, along with municipalities and cities, are mandated by the local government code to carry out program planning and implementation, legislation and enforcement, taxation and revenue generation, monitoring and evaluation, capability-building, and interagency and inter-LGU collaboration for the protection of coastal and marine resources (Yambao et al 2001). The code, which established jurisdictional entitlements to provinces, municipalities and cities, and barangays, assigned the settling of disputes over the boundaries of municipal waters to provinces and provided oversight functions of the governor and provincial council (Abregana et al 1996).

In the case of Bucas Grande, SIRDS in particular, the LGU initiated the conceptualization of the project. In one occasion, certain LGU officials of Inabanga, Bohol, Philippines shared their experience on a World Bank-funded project to few LGU officials of Socorro, Surigao del Norte. Thus, representatives from the Municipal Development Fund Office of Socorro inquired of the requirements from World Bank.

Consequently, a Technical Working Group (TWG) was created to prepare and submit proposal and feasibility study. The Municipal Development Officer served as the chair of the TWG and the Municipal Agriculture Officer, Municipal Accountant, Municipal Manager and Municipal treasurer, as members. The group finally came up with the proposal and feasibility study and submitted to the World Bank through the Department of Finance. The said proposal was approved thus the LGU Socorro implemented the project.

The LGU, in conceptualizing SIRDS, recognized the importance of community organizing. In fact, part of their initial activities is the formation of POs. They organized 33 POs from among 13 communities, both coastal and upland. They hired community organizers who were responsible for groundwork activities. They also initiated the establishment of 12 MPAs. They conducted seminars among communities in these areas to make the latter aware of the importance of MPAs and their respective responsibilities. They also identified fish wardens who were primarily responsible for the security of MPAs against illegal intruders.

Based on above experience, the local government does its role of taking the lead in conceptualizing a CRM project. It shows that LGU officials are keen in looking for opportunities and capable of developing a project proposal, which was eventually funded by World Bank. However, it is a question of whether or not such a skill of designing a project could be sustained up to the implementation or even institutionalization of the project. Pomeroy (1995) pointed out that leadership at the local level plays a vital role in the success of CBRM. Effective CBRM is highly dependent on the capacity local leaders to "command respect from members and enforce institutional arrangement" (Pomeroy 1995).

The LGU respondents recognize their need for enhancing their capacities as shown in Table 2. It could be noted that the LGU of Socorro has a number of capacity needs for CRM in terms of knowledge, skills, and practice, especially on trainings and seminars on CRM, management of funds and monitoring of CRM projects. It implies that currently, LGU efforts are still on the stage of raising the level of awareness on CRM.

Table 2

Capacity needs of LGU for CRM

<i>Needs (LGU)</i>	<i>Knowledge, skills, and practice</i>	<i>Skills and practice</i>	<i>Practice</i>
Conduct of trainings and seminars on CRM	2.34	2.32	2.22
Management of funds	2.03	1.76	1.84
Monitoring of CRM projects	2.02	2.16	1.97
Development of IEC materials	1.92	2.08	1.67
Evaluation or impact assessment of CRM projects	1.90	2.07	1.59
Utilization of CRM project outputs/feedbacks (e.g policies, project proposals)	1.87	2.07	1.66
Fund sourcing	1.84	1.73	1.70
Strategic planning	1.80	2.07	1.70
Writing of project/activity proposals	1.77	1.83	1.71
Establishment of linkages/partnership	1.70	1.87	1.76
Formulation of plans	1.68	2.09	1.85
Information dissemination	1.68	1.72	1.48
Mobilization of constituents	1.64	1.62	1.68
Writing of reports on CRM projects	1.60	1.66	1.51

1-1.50 = low; 1.51-2.5 = medium; 2.51-3.0 = high.

People's organizations (POs). While LGUs play a role in mobilizing its constituents and establishing organizations in communities, the latter are viewed essential partners for CRM. In Republic Act 7160 of 1991 or the Local Government Code of the Philippines, Section 35, the local government units may enter into joint ventures and other cooperative arrangements with POs and NGOs. This is to engage into delivery of basic services, and promote ecological balance, among others (Local Government Code 1991). Thus, the state recognizes the role of POs in any CRM initiatives.

As mentioned above, CBRM had been employed as CRM approach in the Philippines since 1970s. Alacala (1998) considered a viable PO in the community as a major component of a successful CBRM. When POs have strong leadership, supported by committed members, and clear institutional, technical, and funding support, any CBRM effort would more likely succeed. A study in Central Philippines argued that fishers whose capacities are properly trained and developed, could be potential partners for any coastal resources management programs (Aldon et al 2011).

Anchored on the development approach that emphasizes community participation, mobilization and empowerment of POs in the Philippines has been initiated mostly by NGOs. These NGOs that have mostly availed of funding support from various donors, acted as "doer, mobilizer, catalyst, and activist" in many local communities (Duthy & Bolo-Duthy 2003).

The POs organized by the LGUs in Bucas Grande had the direct role in implementing CRM activities under SIRDS. The LGU allocated certain amount to each of the different POs to engage in certain livelihood projects. With the assistance of community organizers, the POs had the autonomy to manage these projects.

The community organizing personnel hired by LGU was responsible for organizing the target beneficiaries. They assisted the POs in implementing the projects particularly its livelihood component. Unfortunately, there were issues reflecting an unethical conduct of Community Organizing (CO) personnel e.g. involvement in mismanagement of funds.

Aside from issues, the respondents also identified needs of POs as shown in Table 3. Like the LGU, they especially mentioned of the needs for trainings and seminars on CRM and monitoring of CRM projects. It thus validates the above data on their experience relative to CRM. The POs also emphasized on the need for developing IEC materials on CRM.

These data reflect the limited experience of LGU in terms of community organizing which is the foundation of CBRM. Community organizing is hardly a simple process. An effective community organizing involves "building individual and institutional power" (Duthy & Bolo-Duthy 2003).

Table 3

Capacity needs of POs for CRM

<i>Needs (LGU)</i>	<i>Knowledge, skills, and practice</i>	<i>Skills and practice</i>	<i>Practice</i>
Conduct of trainings and seminars on CRM	2.22	2.26	2.28
Monitoring of CRM projects	2.11	2.07	1.84
Development of IEC materials	2.06	2.16	1.59
Management of funds	1.93	1.88	2.07
Evaluation or impact assessment of CRM projects	1.89	2.10	1.65
Writing of project/activity proposals	1.81	1.80	1.77
Establishment of linkages/partnership	1.79	1.81	1.81
Strategic planning	1.74	2.09	1.80
Fund sourcing	1.70	1.78	1.86
Utilization of CRM project outputs/feedbacks (e.g policies, project proposals)	1.65	1.81	1.68
Information dissemination	1.64	1.84	1.48
Formulation of plans	1.62	1.98	1.69
Mobilization of constituents	1.55	1.63	1.52
Writing of reports on CRM projects	1.57	1.57	1.50

1-1.50 = low; 1.51-2.5 = medium; 2.51-3.0 = high.

In conceptualizing and implementing SIRDS, the basic elements of community organizing are less likely visible namely: "community social analysis, identification of issues; consensus building on key issues; strategizing; role playing in anticipation of confrontations with the powerful; mobilization, evaluations and reflections; identification of grassroots leaders; and building of organizations" (Duthy & Bolo-Duthy 2003). Hence, it requires concrete skill in such processes of building not only individuals but also institutions and communities.

In effect, a manifestation of a viable PO is its empowered participation in planning and decision making of the use and development of community resources. In the case of Bucas Grande particularly SIRDS, the participation of community at its various levels may also reflect the potential of LGU in implementing CBRM.

Extent of participation. Results of case studies revealed that involvement of the local community in resources management and their high level of participation in decision making are crucial (Alcala 1998). Active community participation has to be encouraged from inception through the implementation phase. Local participation in monitoring and evaluation also contributes to the sustainability of initiatives (White & Vogt 2000).

The study of Pollnac et al (2001) revealed that community participation is positively correlated with the continuity of CRM activities. Community participation is measured in terms of nature (formal or informal), number and frequency of community consultations, voting in village assembly, and giving contribution (money, material, labor) to any CRM activity.

While LGU Socorro initiated the project, only few were involved in the conceptualization of SIRDS. More so, the communities, the POs in particular, were only informed during its implementation. Thus, even if there is a relatively high level of awareness on CRM activities (except for upland Resource management) as shown in Table 4, participation in these activities particularly in conceptualization is critical in its sustainability.

It can be gleaned in Table 5 that among the respondents who are aware of the CRM projects/activities, there is relatively greater participation in the implementation of the listed activities. Almost all of these activities are participated by more than half of the respondents (who are aware) in their implementation phase. On the other hand, less than half of the respondents participated in the conceptualization and evaluation of all the identified CRM projects/activities. Thus, such experience of Bucas Grande clearly demonstrates the significant role of communities, in this case, the POs, in the conceptualization of any project. The POs' relatively high level of participation in its implementation could be attributed to the LGU's enforcement especially so that they have

obligations to meet as set by the funding institution. Involving the communities and local constituents in the SIRDS may reflect the LGU's recognition of a participatory CRM. In fact, the POs have become the LGU's partners in its implementation. However, their limited participation in the conceptualization of the project constrained the integration of the communities' interest and their assessment of their situation, their issues and capacities.

Table 4

Awareness on CRM activities (multiple response: N = 341)

<i>Activities/initiatives</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Ordinances on CRM	321	94.13
Coastal code	309	90.62
Legal fishing tech.: Payao & Bobo fishing, fish nets	278	81.52
Fish sanctuary	276	80.94
Community-based ecotourism	276	80.94
Sea grass sanctuary	264	77.42
Micro-watershed development	259	75.95
Municipal coastal water resource management	255	74.78
Mangrove resource management	242	70.97
Fruit plantation	241	70.67
Lobster, Lapu-lapu, and mud crab culture	232	68.03
Mangrove rehabilitation	226	66.28
Tree/bamboo plantation	211	61.88
SIRDS under CBRMP (2001-2004)	197	57.77
Romblon plantation and utilization	154	45.16
Salago plantation and utilization	58	17.01
Upland resource management	49	14.37

The communities' role in the conceptualization of the project is crucial as mentioned by White & Vogt (2000). Their participation in this stage provides them with an opportunity to have a sense of ownership thus, motivates them to sustain the project. Hence, while only few LGU officials were involved in the conceptualization of the project, consultations and deliberations among POs have less likely been considered as an option.

Table 5

Extent of participation in CRM activities (multiple response)

<i>Project/Activity</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Participation</i>					
		<i>Conceptualization</i>		<i>Implementation</i>		<i>Evaluation</i>	
		<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>
Ordinances	321	86	26.79	165	51.40	35	10.90
Coastal code	309	74	23.95	165	53.40	13	4.21
Legal fishing tech.: Payao & Bobo fishing, fish nets	278	58	20.86	159	57.19	27	9.71
Fish sanctuary	276	45	16.30	171	61.96	23	8.33
Community-based ecotourism	276	44	15.94	129	46.74	36	13.04
Sea grass sanctuary	264	39	14.77	178	67.42	17	6.44
Micro-watershed development	259	26	10.04	160	61.78	34	13.13
Municipal coastal water resource management	255	27	10.59	185	72.55	20	7.84
Mangrove resource management	242	42	17.35	140	57.85	27	11.16
Fruit plantation	241	50	20.75	146	60.58	31	12.86
Lobster, Lapu-lapu, and mud crab culture	232	25	10.76	135	58.19	33	14.22
Mangrove rehabilitation	226	47	20.80	111	49.11	30	13.27
Tree/bamboo plantation	211	42	19.90	136	64.45	34	16.11
SIRDS under CBRMP (2001-2004)	197	14	7.11	131	66.50	8	4.06
Romblon plantation and utilization	154	24	15.58	88	57.14	24	15.58
Salago plantation and utilization	58	17	29.31	24	41.38	9	15.52
Upland resource management (specify)	49	11	22.45	32	65.31	10	20.41

N = the number of respondents who are aware of each project/activity.

Implications to sustainability. The LGU Socorro's dynamic effort to initiate SIRDS is truly commendable. There may just be some gaps in the process of initiating the project. As mentioned above, wide consultation and a more quality participation of POs who were directly involved in the implementation could have been conducted. In such case, the latter are more akin to support and sustain the project for in the process, they have reached the level of self-mobilization.

It has been contended that the highest level of participation is self-mobilization, where people take initiatives independent of external institutions to effect change. They develop linkages with external institutions for resources and technical advice but retain control over how resources are used. Efforts of some people's organizations to access funding sources on their own to replicate or expand initiatives for MPAs and mangrove reforestation projects are indicative of self-mobilization. However, this type of participation was not common in CBCRM in part because the process of empowerment is long-term and because many initiatives are not sustained beyond the lifetime of the project (Pretty et al 1995).

Aside from the POs' limited participation in the conceptualization of the project, there are also other factors that may have affected the low level of sustainability of CRM activities. Key informants mentioned that they, the fish wardens in particular, could hardly comply with their duties because of lack of economic support, which are needed by their family. Hence, in terms of participation in project initiatives, active project local partners bear a greater cost. The greatest cost to project cooperators, are time and effort spent for various activities (e.g. training's, meetings, conducting research, monitoring, etc.) which would have otherwise been spent making a living (i.e. opportunity costs) (Graham 1998).

While local communities and project partners appreciate the importance of managing the resource based on which they depend on, for food and income, and the liberating experience of empowerment, the primary motivation for participation is personal socio-economic gain. This is true even for the most ardent local CRM advocates and leaders of people's organizations. The inherent expectations for personal economic gains can lead to conflicts within organization in terms of prioritization of economic activities. Projects provide various incentives to individuals and groups to address some personal needs and enjoin participation in CRM activities (Graham 1998). Thus, because participation is crucial and there are considerable costs to participation in resources management, projects allot considerable time, effort and financial resources to enable and enjoin active participation of local communities (Crawford et al 2000).

Moreover, certain political issues are affecting the low level of sustainability of the project (Table 6). Some (40.47%) of the respondents identified corruption/mismanagement of funds. For instance, the treasurer did not have a clear accounting and financial report. The pump boat operator did not also declare the exact income. There was also an instance when the Community Organizer him/herself incurred debt from the PO's money and was not able to pay it. Partisan politics was also considered to have a bearing in the implementation of SIRDS and other CRM projects. There are POs who were identified as "against" the administration thus, they got limited support from the latter. Change in the administration likewise affects the sustainability of a CRM project in the island. There are those who revealed that the illegal fishers had even connivance with police personnel or were controlled by politicians. Lack of political will, of good governance and ascendancy of the LGU had also contributed to the SIRDS non-sustainability.

Furthermore, there are socio-cultural factors that have bearing on sustainability of CRM activities (Table 7). The limited monitoring of the project has been identified as factor for its non-sustainability. At present, the island is less likely homogeneous thus differences in beliefs also affect the sustainability of any project. They are likewise relatively polarized in terms of their organizational affiliation thus the influence of "in-group" and "out-group" is evident in the implementation of SIRDS. If constituents belong to the group where the leaders belong, they are included in the project otherwise they could hardly be part of any project.

Table 6

Political problems and issues on CRM projects (multiple response: N = 341)

<i>Political problems and issues on CRM projects</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Corruption/mismanagement of funds	138	40.47
Partisan politics	136	39.88
Illegal fishers connivance with police or other implementing personnel	129	37.83
Fish wardens are controlled by politics	106	31.08
Lack of LGU assistance	104	30.50
Lack of support of concerned agencies	99	29.03
Lack of political will	87	25.51
Lack of good governance	81	23.75
Less ascendancy of LGUs	68	19.94

Table 7

Social problems and issues on CRM projects (multiple response: N = 341)

<i>Social problems and issues on CRM projects</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Less monitoring of projects	191	56.01
Differences in beliefs	139	40.76
Influence of "in-group" and "out-group"	116	34.02
Lack of good leadership among POs	64	18.77
Lack of technical skills on management of POs	67	19.65
Lack of participation of PO members	43	12.61
Lack of good relations among PO members/officials	31	9.09

Issues relative to POs' internal condition are also evident. The KIs revealed that their organizations lack good leadership, technical skills, and active participation of, and good relationship among, the members.

Conclusions. The local government officials of Bucas Grande island in the municipality of Socorro had the potential of conceptualizing a comprehensive CRM project. In fact, the said project had availed of a fund from the World Bank. The project was integrated because it did not only focus on natural resources management but it also involved livelihood and community organizing components.

As the LGU officials conceptualized and initiated the project, the communities particularly the POs, participated in its implementation. However, there is a relatively low level of community participation in these activities particularly in their conceptualization. LGU's lack of knowledge, skills, and experience on community organizing limits the opportunities for empowering and tapping the potentials of the POs for active participation. Hence, together with some economic, political and socio-cultural factors, such limited community participation contributed to low level of sustainability of CRM activities.

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