

A MULTI-PURPOSE SURVEY OF FOUR FISHING VILLAGES IN EASTERN MINDANAO

Introduction

The Eastern Mindanao Research Consortium (EMARC) which is composed of four social research centers (Ateneo de Davao University, Holy Cross of Digos, Notre Dame of Cotabato City, and Urios College of Butuan City) has completed the first phase of its poverty survey of four fishing communities in eastern Mindanao. The focus on fishermen and fishing villages appeared as a research imperative since fishermen are often alluded to as "the poorest of the poor" in many poverty studies. Each of the EMARC members selected one research site in its locality in which the survey was conducted.

The multi-purpose study was primarily undertaken for the purpose of providing information which will hopefully help in the formulation of policies and programs that will improve the living conditions of fishermen; and secondly, for the purpose of generating hypotheses as to why fishermen are poor and remain so. More specifically, the survey intended to:

1. present a socioeconomic profile of coastal households;
2. describe economic activities related to fishing communities;
3. determine fishermen's participation and attitudes towards existing organizations;
4. determine their attitudes and perceptions towards government-assisted programs; and
5. describe their perception of poverty, aspirations, needs, and sentiments.

The single research design divided the work into three phases:

- I. preliminary survey of the fishing communities;
- II. final selection of four fishing communities, pretesting instruments, immersion activities, and community survey;
- III. mapping/household listing activities, selection of sample households, interviews.

Household listing and mapping activities were undertaken simultaneously for one week. The listing generated 150 eligible respondents for the study and 100 fishermen-respondents were randomly chosen from the list. Substitute respondents equal to ten percent of the sample were likewise chosen.

I. BAGO APLAYA, DAVAO CITY

CORAZON MAE BAYLON
LOURDES J. MAMAED

General Profile of the Village

Bago Aplaya is one of six sitios in Bago Gallera, Davao City. Approximately eleven kilometers from Davao City Poblacion and 1.1 kilometers from the national highway, it is reached either on foot or by tricycles that ply the route from Toril. Bago Aplaya is inhabited by 361 squatter families, majority of whom are full-time fishermen. In January 1981, the Ministry of Human Settlements inaugurated its BLISS Project in the area and relocated 50 families to the BLISS Site. "Old" Bago Aplaya now refers to the area that is not included in the BLISS Project. This study includes "Old" Bago Aplaya and the BLISS Site. There are 50 fishermen-households in the BLISS Site, while 155 fishermen households are scattered all over the rest of "Old" Bago Aplaya.

The village's proximity to the poblacion gives the household members access to secondary occupations like carpentry and utility work. The construction of a 17-hectare modern beach resort on an adjacent area, for example, gave the household members the opportunity to work as casual laborers, carpenters, and utility men. There are two types of fishing activities in the area: marine fishing and fishpond farming. Two hundred and one families are engaged in marine fishing, while five families manage fishponds. Households engage in fishing the whole year round. The months from May to July are considered peak months, while February to April are the lean months.

A number of government agencies, established mainly to extend government assistance to the households, can be seen in the BLISS Site. These are the Ministry of Human Settlements, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Ministry of Local Government, Population Commission, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Social Services and Development. In contrast, no government agencies hold office in Bago Aplaya.

The presence of two boat manufacturers, mat weavers, and a noodle factory is an indication of the growing industrialization in the area.

Demographic Characteristics

Of the 100 respondents interviewed more than three-fourths (78 per cent) of the respondents are married while the rest (18 per cent) are single or widowed (2 per cent). Fifty-three percent of the fishermen are below 40 years old, and the mean age is 38.7 years. More than half (53 per cent) of them have resided in