

Case Study of Community Action for Rural Development

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The inadequacy and inability of the government in providing the needs of the indigenous communities led to the formation of the Community Action for Rural Development (CARD). CARD utilized programs that primarily support the rights of the indigenous peoples (IPs) to ancestral domain, pursuit of advocacy, economic and political empowerment. This case study intends to help CARD execute its social development agenda among tribal communities of Kapalong, Davao del Norte. It addresses how CARD carries out its advocacy work, what issues have been advocated, what factors facilitated or hindered its advocacy work, what are its capability needs, and how can its advocacy work be enhanced or strengthened. Thus, CARD staff members signified their need to have continuous training on advocacy. There might be innovations, new trends and ways of doing and managing their programs they need to learn and apply in their work.

Introduction

Nongovernment organizations (NGOs) constitute one of the key players in the governance process. In some instances or occasions, they are viewed as partner, ally, competitor, or nemesis of government. At the local level, they are perceived by the community as alternative provider of services and a last recourse when government services are wanting if not totally unavailable. On the other hand, most NGOs view their role as beyond that of a government conduit but one that dares to raise consciousness of people and communities about their conditions and use their capacities to carry out fundamental, at

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times, radical changes. Organized groups and communities articulate these changes either within the communities themselves through transformation of community structures and values formation or through demand- and claim-making from government. This role is an arduous, long, and uphill struggle for most NGOs, for many reasons.

NGOs, particularly social development NGOs operating in lowland and upland tribal communities, relate with the most marginalized sectors of society and are located in areas where problems of poverty and unmet basic human needs are stark facts of life; where military encounters and *pangayao* (a local term for ritual vendetta in indigenous communities), at times indistinguishable from one another, are common occurrences; and where natural and man-made calamities continue to create desolation and helplessness among communities. This is aggravated by the remoteness and inaccessibility of some communities from urbanized areas and centers of government where offices, infrastructures, and facilities are located, and services are available. In a nutshell, it is this socio-cultural-geographic setting that Community Action for Rural Development (CARD), one of the two pioneering social development NGOs (the other is *Silingang Dapit sa Sidlakang Mindanaw* or SILDAP) has continued to work with the indigenous peoples (IPs), i.e., the Atas, Manobos, Mandayas, and Dibabawons. Some of them have lived in CARD beneficiary communities of the municipality of Kapalong, in Davao del Norte since 1988. Kapalong is 81 kilometers away from Davao City.

Objective of the Study

This case study of CARD is an effort to help CARD to more effectively carry out its social development mission among tribal communities of Kapalong, particularly in its advocacy work. Specifically, it addresses the questions: How does CARD carry out its advocacy work? What issues have been advocated by CARD? What factors facilitated or hindered its advocacy work? What are CARD's capability building needs? How can the advocacy work of CARD be enhanced or strengthened? Although the study is directed mainly at the advocacy work of CARD, the organizational reflection elicited a holistic picture of how CARD has performed its mandate.

Given the social, cultural, economic, and political setting in which CARD operates, advocacy is imbedded in community organizing work. CARD's effort is focused on enabling the communities to organize themselves so that they can articulate their needs and force government to provide them with basic services and facilities. These enabling processes required CARD to direct its attention to providing basic services needed by the communities since government services are inadequate or non-existent. To these communities, government's neglect is not rhetoric but a reality.

Issue-oriented advocacy is a consequence of the communities' realization that they have a stake in policies implemented by government. This realization can come about when communities engage organizations to assist in the provision of basic services and in awareness-raising to help them understand their predicament. Through organized effort and collective action, communities would be able to make their claims on government and pursue what they believe are rights due them. Hence, CARD's work has to be appreciated in this context. Its advocacy work can be viewed within a broader perspective that encompasses support for survival and sustenance, value formation, and protection of ancestral domain of the communities. This is woven into the programs and services it delivers to the communities.

Methodology

Organizational reflection was undertaken through free-wheeling discussion with CARD's Executive Director, a member of its Board of Directors, area team leaders/program coordinators, and staff; the Barangay Captain of Florida; and two members of the Sanggunian Bayan of Kapalong, Davao del Norte. Likewise, a casual interaction and discussion was conducted with a group composed of: the tribal datu of Sitio Tagwango, the Barangay Kagawad of Barangay Sua-on who is a resident of Sitio Tagwango, the head of community organization, and some residents of the Lumad community, also in Sitio Tagwango. These were supplemented by data from narrative reports of CARD submitted to donor agencies.

Profile of CARD

CARD was officially established on 24 September 1988 and registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) on 8 November 1988. An earlier reference to CARD dates back to October 1986-August 1987 when it was known as Lumad (a tribe) Development Program (LDP) of Kahayag Foundation, an NGO that reached out to the Ata-Manobos in the strife-torn Paquibato District of Davao City. The LDP ceased operations due to lack of funds, the worsened peace and order problem in the beneficiary communities, and Kahayag Foundation's decision to refocus its services in urban areas. Two of the LDP staff (brother-sister team) decided to continue their work in Kapalong. They organized CARD and launched its operations in September 1988 with a one-year assistance from Canada Fund-Canadian Embassy.

Sociocultural and Economic Context

CARD's choice of Kapalong as project area, particularly the indigenous people's (IP) communities, was based on a confluence of factors: (a) high

incidence of communicable and water-borne diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, and schistosomiasis; (b) high incidence of malnutrition; (c) high illiteracy rate; (d) tribal disputes that result in pangayao; (e) widespread poverty particularly among IP communities; (f) red scare tactics to ward off NGOs from community work; and (g) the displacement of IPs' during encounters between insurgents and government forces. Kapalong has been identified as one of the municipalities in the country with the highest illiteracy rate due to its mostly illiterate IPs.

Kapalong was a fifth-class municipality up till the early 1990s when it was reclassified as a first-class municipality. Its income is sourced mainly from the three banana plantations operating in the area. Despite the taxes collected from these banana plantations and from its share of the internal revenue allotment, local government services, facilities, and infrastructures are deplorable. CARD reports that four out of the nine primary schools and two out of the four rural health midwives in one barangay (Barangay Gupitan) are CARD-assisted. A literacy program was implemented in 16 communities comprising the entire municipality only in 1997. Three of these programs were conducted in CARD's beneficiary communities. The construction of four of the eight water systems in Barangay Gupitan was facilitated by CARD. Most of the communities in the hinterlands rely on shallow-dug wells by the river/stream banks as sources of drinking water, which give rise to the high incidence of water-borne diseases. Flooding, poor roads, and inadequate utilities such as telephone system and rural electrification are a common sight.

In terms of the IP population, Kapalong is inhabited mostly by Atamanobos, Dibabawons, Mandayas, and pockets of Omayamnons, Bagobos, and Magindanaoans. In Barangay Gupitan alone, IP population is estimated at 15,000. It has 27 sitios, of which eight sitios and six communities are CARD beneficiary communities.

The main source of livelihood is swidden farming. However, many IPs have engaged in illegal logging as a means of livelihood. The Barangay Development Councils averted this practice in February 1996. Further, the IPs have relentlessly asserted their claims on ancestral lands over the years. In July 1996, the IPs through the Association of Ata, Mandaya, Manobo, Dibabawon, and Omayamnon (AMMADO) tribes submitted their application to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claim (CADC) of around 36,000 hectares. The DENR has yet to act on the CADC application.

Indigenous Peoples' Political Structure

The datu system remains entrenched in these communities. CARD's entry into the community had to be coursed to and approved by the Datu. The datus are recognized leaders, decisionmakers, and mobilizers in the community. If one goes to the community, the datus are the contact person. The datu has *tauhan* (allies of the datu who work for the datu) who are responsible for services/functions in the community. This is an internal structure of the datu system. The barangay officials are different from the tauhan of the datu. Not all datus are barangay officials. If there are peace and order problems in the community, CARD asks the datu about the status of the area and seeks permission to enter the place. The datu gives the signal to proceed or not to proceed.

Mandate of CARD

Commitment to the IPs' welfare must have been the defining reason of CARD's work for IPs. This can be gleaned from the objectives that CARD sought to accomplish since the start of its operations. These objectives were:

- to serve as catalyst for the formation of rural community organizations such as cooperatives that provide avenues for the participation of beneficiaries in collectively identifying problems, discussing options, and choosing solutions in their processes of development;
- to disseminate modern agricultural livelihood projects and appropriate rural technologies that tap alternative energy sources such as sunlight, wind, water, waste, human pedal, or animal power; design, manufacture and promote simple devices that supply such energies; and conduct skills training for the operation and maintenance of such devices;
- to encourage feminist roles as a major factor for community development besides shouldering the primary responsibilities for health as trained health workers;
- to facilitate physical, intellectual, and moral development of indigenous pre- and school-age children towards early integration with the lowland Christians, as well as implement literacy programs for adult illiterates;
- to provide a measure of rural credit to speed up savings mobilization and local economic initiatives for self-uplift; and

- to establish interlinkage with other tribal organizations and/or existing cooperatives for cultural and economic interaction; maintain close service coordination with related government and other nongovernment organizations; and with local, national or foreign funding agencies for the furtherance of the above objectives.

To carry out these objectives, CARD initiated a two-fold project package that involved community organizing, service delivery, assistance for economic projects, capability development, and provision of support facilities. BILANCE (formerly known as CEBEMO) has financially supported the Community Organizing-Agro-Economic Program (CO-AEP) of CARD since 1992. This project package was refocused and renamed in early 1999 as Community Organizing-Community Development Program (CO-CDP). CARD has proposed the CO-CD Program for assistance by Bilance for 1999-2001. The Health Program (later placed under an expanded Rural Women's Program) and Child Care Programs received funding support from Christian Aid since 1990. Additional funding assistance for the Child Care Program, particularly for the construction of the Reception and Study Center (RSC) came from Mensen In Nood/Caritas Neerlandica. The objectives for each of the programs were laid out, as follows:

Community Organizing for IP Community Beneficiaries

- to enable each tribal member or group to contribute to collective decision process for self-determination;
- to instill the role of tribal peoples in the democratic protection of their natural birthright as part of ecological conservation;
- to redirect objectives of grassroots organizations already formed from purely developmental pursuits towards organizing the IPs and to facilitate the formation of same in other areas in order to augment manpower base for the official recognition of ancestral domains and the corollary right to determine their extraction or exploitation;
- to prepare each group formed for the implementation of chosen revenue-generating projects; and
- to facilitate a systematic linkage of these groups with other existing tribal organizations/federations/cooperatives for social, political and economic interventions.

Community Organizing for Peasant Settlers

- to assist in raising their level of awareness on the socioeconomic and political conditions of the country;
- to impart respect of tribal customs and traditions including their national search for the preservation of ancestral domain and thus diffuse agrarian-related strife;
- to assist in instilling their larger role in the preservation and/or socialized reforestation efforts of the public and nongovernment sectors; and
- to consult with and assist beneficiaries in the identification of sound economic or low technological projects suitable to their respective localities.

Agro-Economics Program

- to enhance the economic condition of the marginalized Tribal Filipinos (TF) and peasant settler-beneficiaries through non-formal education on agriculture and acquisition of means of production;
- to implement sound economic projects that would help augment their economic productivity and uplift their condition for survival;
- to establish a model farm that will serve as a showcase for multi-agricultural endeavors and venue for intensive agricultural training;
- to implement projects to reclaim birthrights lost or in danger of being lost mainly due to logging concessionaires; and
- to establish and strengthen farmers' cooperatives to support their community organizations.

Health Program

- to train women who will serve as volunteer community health workers in basic health care along with preventive, promotive, and curative aspects of medicine;

- to facilitate the Department of Health's extension of its medical assistance in far-flung communities in controlling malaria, TB, and schistosomiasis; and
- to develop a feminist consciousness among rural women thereby enabling them to assert their rights in family and community affairs.

Child Care Program

- to arrest malnutrition and undernutrition of zero-to-six year old children in the beneficiary communities, thus extending their inalienable right to life;
- to facilitate the Food for Growth (FFG) Service of the Department of Social Welfare and Development in the more remote communities in Kapalong;
- to enable parents to recognize and exercise their irreplaceable role in child-rearing and development by providing them with basic education on nutrition, parenting, and child care;
- to put up projects that would help in maintaining a normal nutritional level of children when the FFG is phased out after one year;
- to provide a stimulating day care service to enable the four-to-six year old children to develop their physical, social, emotional, and intellectual potentials; and
- to help these children acquire a sense of cooperation and responsibility and redirect them away from vagrancy and unwholesome influence of adults.

The CO-AEP Programs did not immediately take off (but were nonetheless implemented at a later time) because of the fragile peace and order situation and the red scare alert. As a start-up, health and child care became the fallback strategy of CARD, for a number of reasons:

- The CARD Executive Director (ED) who was the project proponent and the first Health Program Coordinator has expertise in and exposure to health and child care, which explains how CARD started.

- CARD had no funds for CO.
- Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) was very strong then such that CARD had to show more service orientation. CARD was in fact labeled as a "communist front." This thinking crops up every now and then, even up to the present. (In Sitio Mambago, the people asked one of the CARD staff to explain this perception.)

In 1995, CARD conducted its program assessment and organizational planning. As a result of this assessment, CARD's vision, goals, and strategies were reconceptualized. For its vision, CARD's efforts revolve around sustained advocacy and vigilant support for ancestral domain and right to self-determination, and pursuit of economic, political, sociocultural empowerment of IP and peasant settlers' communities. This vision has been integrated in all its programs through education and technical assistance. Its goals are redirected towards enabling these communities to develop political maturity and will, secure control of natural birthright, assert and enhance appreciation of tribal identity and cultural heritage, assert women's rights and enhance women's social status, improve the economic condition of the communities, and improve the health status of children and adults, particularly their intellectual, emotional, and psychological well-being. Further, CARD seeks to impart the practice of sustainable agriculture, assist in averting threats to environment, and mobilize resources of government, nongovernment, and people's organizations, funding agencies, private institutions, and concerned citizens to support the IP and peasant settlers' communities. As a strategy, the community organizing program serves as the lead program, supported by the Rural Economic Development Program (REDP), Health Program, Rural Women Programs, and Child Care Program.

Over the last ten years of work with IPs and peasant settlers in its beneficiary communities, CARD has made significant headway in the following areas: a) facilitated the formation and strengthening of IP community organizations, b) raised awareness of IPs' rights through culture-based and gender-fair education, c) delivered services along health, early childhood education, agriculture, cooperative development, d) provided skills and knowledge in managing livelihood projects, and e) supported the IPs' claim on ancestral lands.

Beneficiaries/Communities

CARD's priority beneficiaries are the purely indigenous communities and mixed communities with tribal and peasant settlers. At its inception, the CO program covered three barangays (Barangays Gupitan, Sua-on, and Palma Gil) and seven sitios (Sitios Daya, Bunawan, Kilantang, Lagangdan, Pipisan, Matol, and Quiapo). On the other hand, the Health and Child Care Programs

covered two barangays (Barangays Gupitan and Sua-on) and sitio Upper Florida in Barangay Florida.

The eventual increase in the number of areas covered by each program resulted in the pooling of the beneficiary communities and the identification of expansion areas common to both programs. In 1999, CARD was serving 16 beneficiary communities through both its CO-CD Programs and Health and Child Care Programs. These were: Matol, Tiyapo, Pipisan, Patil, Upper Tagasan, Lower Tagasan, Aninipot, Mansalinao, Mambago, Magbobooy, Quarry, Paiton, and Banwalay in Barangay Gupitan; Tagwango of Barangay Sua-on; and Upper Florida in Barangay Florida. Most of these communities are either sitios or smaller than sitios. These areas are mostly inhabited by tribal groups, the most predominant of whom are the Ata-Manobos, followed by the Dibabawons, Mandayas, and pockets of Omayammons.

A brief profile of two of these communities is in order. Upper Florida is a purely Ata community with around 40 families. Although it is just two kilometers from the center of Barangay Florida, Upper Florida is separated from Barangay proper by the Libuganon river. It has a difficult terrain due to the swelling of the river, which prevents the children from attending school.

In Sitio Tagwango of Barangay Sua-on, the IP community is a mix of Ata-Mandaya-Dibabawon tribes and Maguindanao Muslims who live a semi-nomadic life and thrive on root crops, foraging, and hunting. This can be reached by an hour of motorcycle ride on a rough and dirt road, then a four-to five-kilometers hike in an interior sitio, and finally, a banca ride across the Libuganon river. A meeting with the tribes requires informing the datu prior to the scheduled date through CARD. A bell, located at the sitio center, is then rung to call the sitio residents to the assembly.

In general, these communities can be described as either pure IP or mix-IP communities; hard to access due to distance and physical terrain; highly dependent on rain-fed production of rice, corn, and vegetables; lacking or totally absent basic facilities; poor health conditions; least served by government or in some sitios, the absence of government services; and instances of pangayao to resolve tribal conflicts.

Program Implementation Strategies

From project inception to 1998, CARD utilized the program approach to deliver services. This meant that the staff concentrated on delivery of services to communities covered by the program. However, in August 1998, a joint external evaluation was conducted on CARD programs. As a result of the evaluation, CARD shifted its implementation strategy to an integrated area

focus and team approach starting 1999. This validated an earlier recommendation given by the Council of Elders which acts as an advisory body to CARD. The Council of Elders called for the consolidation of CARD's services into a single program, the Community Organizing-Community Development Program (CO-CDP).

The shift to an area team approach for the delivery of program services could be viewed as timely and most appropriate given the programs and services provided by CARD, the peculiar nature and problems of its beneficiary communities, and the size of its staff. The earlier approach adopted—program approach—proved to be efficient in meeting program objectives. However, this approach tended to be less beneficiary-friendly given the nature of problems in these communities. Their problems tend to be so complex and multifaceted that solutions and actions to respond to them oftentimes require a holistic perspective.

Since the CO-CDP is still in its proposal stage as of the writing of this case, the program approach utilized by CARD during its ten years of operation is presented. This would give a total picture of the range of services implemented by CARD. Just what were the services provided by CARD under the two project packages?

Community Organizing and Agro-Economic Programs

The Community Organizing and Agro-Economic Programs had three components: (1) Community Organizing Program (CO), (2) Rural Economic Development Program (REDP), and (3) Agricultural Technology Extension Program (ATEP). The work in each program entailed awareness creation through seminars and training, community organization building and consolidation, self-help through economic projects such as income-generating projects and cooperatives' formation, application of technology to agriculture production such as communal wetland rice farming/production, and linkage-building and coordination with government agencies in the agricultural sector and with NGOs involved in basic sector organizing and rural economic-related projects such as cooperatives. To better appreciate the scope of work undertaken in each service, a brief description of each program is provided.

Community Organizing. In community organizing, CARD's COs had to understand the situation and problems of their beneficiary communities through immersion in these areas. Problems brought to their attention or observed by them included personal, cultural, and environment-related concerns. Among these were: theft of livestock, debt contracting, indolence, vagrancy, very poor environmental and personal hygiene, illegal logging, tribal conflicts, ancestral land disputes, and *kaingin*.¹

Much of the CO work were directed towards awareness raising and advocacy to make the IP communities understand their situation and encourage them to take action. This was carried out through a series of seminars and training in the project sites. Two of these seminars were the Awareness Seminar Workshop (ASW) and the Community Leaders' Formation (CLF). The ASW enabled the community to: reflect on their present situation; identify their problems; recognize factors and forces that influence and affect their lives, communities, and environment; and articulate their needs, what they can do and what assistance CARD could provide to help them respond to their problems and needs. It was also during the ASW that participants realized the need for unified action and expressed their desire to form, or had actually formed community organizations. Once consolidated, these community organizations served as avenue and forum for community participation, decisionmaking, and resolution of conflicts. CARD channeled its assistance and services through these organizations, made follow-ups of economic projects, and undertook advocacy on issues such as ancestral domain, illegal logging, and other environmental concerns.

To complement the ASW, the CLF provided in-depth training for community leaders. A holistic perspective to addressing community problems could be discerned from the topics discussed in the CLF, as follows:

- (1) *Facilitators' Training* focused on the principle of community participation in decisionmaking, agenda setting, and processes in handling meetings;
- (2) *Structural Analysis* discussed the community situation in relation to other sectors and forces in the society;
- (3) *Business Management* presented the idea of a business and the factors that must be considered in putting up a business such as market, price monitoring, profit, easily sold commodities, and related topics;
- (4) *PIME (Planning, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation)* emphasized the importance of planning and objective setting even at the family level;
- (5) *Shared Values and Conflict Resolution* focused on the development of the human being and his/her values, and the importance of respect, understanding, and cooperation in enhancing family and organizational relationships.

These topics are important in orienting and preparing community leaders for their roles and responsibilities in the community. The requisite leadership skills, understanding of the milieu, appropriate intervention,

community processes, and value formation are interconnected in a way that community leaders would have a reality check on actions taken to respond to their problems.

The participants in the five-day CLF were men and women with leadership potential in the communities. CLF training was held at CARD's Farmers' Training Center (FTC) until 1998. Thereafter, it was conducted at the community level. Likewise, its circle of participants was broadened to include not only the actual and potential leaders but also members of the community. As a result, the CLF was renamed Community Education Project (CEP).

Equally important were other activities carried out in COP such as: networking with people's organizations such as the Association of Mandaya, Manobo, Ata, Dibabawon and Omayanon tribes (AMMADO) on issues affecting the IP communities. These included discussing the issues on ancestral domain, documenting and facilitating claims for ancestral lands, coordinating with government offices for assistance and services due the IP communities, and disseminating information on policies, structures, processes, and programs of the national and local government units.

Rural Economic Development Program. Under the Rural Economic Development Program (REDP), CARD Community Development workers were involved in the formation, consolidation, and management of community-based cooperatives, the conduct of orientation on managing cooperatives, the provision of loans to cooperatives and individuals under its Supervised Rural Credit, and the maintenance of CARD Multipurpose Cooperative. The formation of viable community-based cooperatives was the core activity of the REDP. The REDP endeavored to inculcate the values of resource generation through income generation projects, a sense of obligation towards debt instead of dole-outs, and the spirit of cooperativism among the residents in responding to their economic needs.

Agricultural Extension Program. For the Agricultural Extension Program (AEP), CARD's Agricultural Technology Extension Workers (ATEWs) provided assistance in agriculture production, livestock raising, and work animal dispersal. They were responsible for the operation and maintenance of CARD's model farm and the conduct of Farmers' Class. The topics taken up in the Farmers' Class were basic production technologies appropriate in sloping agricultural land, sustainable agro-forestry, small agro-fruit, lowland integrated farming, and home gardening.

Health and Child Care Programs

Just as enormous were the services implemented under the Health and Child Care Programs. The strategies utilized for program implementation

were training of community volunteers, awareness creation through education, provision of services, and organizing of IP women (eventually together with men).

Health Programs/Rural Women Program. CARD's Health Program services consisted of primary and secondary health care training, women's education on gender sensitivity and other women's issues, curative and preventive health care, assistance for income generating projects, and formation of women's organizations. In Primary Health Care (PHC), IP community health workers (CHWs) were given training on community diagnosis, weight survey, first aid, deliveries, minor surgery, and simple dentistry. These were later expanded to include training on First-Aid and orientation/seminar on reproductive health rights for couples.

After training, CHWs served as the point persons to provide basic health services to the community. Likewise, they assisted the CARD's nurse at CARD's two clinic centers located in Barangays Sua-on and Gupitan in deliveries, blood smear testing, circumcision, wound suturing, immunization, simple dental care, and making referrals to the district, provincial, or regional hospitals. There were instances that CARD had been requested by the Office of Southern Cultural Communities to send a health team to Barangay Nasiliban and by the Municipal Health Office to help in the government's immunization program in far-flung CARD areas. The CHWs had been most invaluable in preventive and promotive health care and in health consciousness raising of IPs. During consultations at the sitio level, the CHWs explained to the IPs the importance of simple personal hygiene and sanitation practices, and the causes and sources of their sickness. Taking cognizance of the role that CHWs performed in improving the health conditions in the community, CARD involved them in its annual program review/assessment.

Given the low level of awareness and status of women in beneficiary communities, CARD conducted a series of Women's Education Seminar (WES) at the community level. The WES initially focused on topics of feminism and child rearing and was gradually broadened to include gender sensitivity, livelihood skills, personal hygiene, home remedies on health, herbal gardening, and the use of oriental curative means (i.e., acupuncture). From the myriad of topics taken up in WES, CARD decided to put more emphasis on Gender Sensitivity Training (GST). In GST, participants were asked to reflect on their roles in the family and their relationship with their husbands, taking note of incidence of violence and marital rape in the home.

CARD was able to launch a multisectoral Women's Forum in 1998 in coordination with the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office. Representatives from IP peasants, youth, schools, municipal government, cooperatives, church, and the informal sector participated in this Forum. The issues discussed were Violence Against Women (VAW), girl-child abuse, and

feminism. The Forum resulted in the formation of an ad hoc committee on VAW, and proposals to conduct a Training of Trainers' on GST and a municipal-wide GST.

Child Care Program

The major services provided under this program were (a) Pre-school Service; (b) Late Childhood Reach-Out Service; (c); Parents Education Service and (d) Capability Development. A brief description of activities implemented in each service is in order.

Pre-school Service. Most IP communities had been unable to send their children to school due to economic difficulties, the distance of the elementary school from the community, and their lack of appreciation for the education needs of their children. This situation has resulted in the growing illiteracy among the IP communities. In response to this problem, CARD initiated day care classes for four-to-six-year old children. It established pre-school centers (PSCs) in Sitios Bunawan, Upper Florida, Tagwango, Gupitan, Mambago, Patil, and Tagasan staffed by its trained parateachers. To facilitate children's comprehension, the parateachers structured learning activities in music, arts, science, mathematics, and social studies into plays. These activities were directed at developing the children's cognitive ability, attitudes, and behavior. To arrest malnutrition among the preschoolers, supplemental feeding was provided for preschool children in day care centers and health clinics. The parateachers mobilized the children's parents and the Parent-Teacher Committee (PTC) in day care activities such as cleaning the PSC's surroundings, assistance in supplemental feeding activity, and in the conduct of graduation activities at the PSCs. They encouraged parents to plant vegetables in their backyard to support the nutritional needs of the children. Further, the parateachers held tutorial classes for seven to twelve-year olds as part of CARD's Late Child Reach-out Service.

While the PSCs in the sitios were initiated and operated by CARD, it also saw to it that the operation of these PSCs would eventually be assumed by the Barangay Development Councils (BDCs). In 1998, CARD was able to negotiate the turnover of the PSCs in Bunawan, Upper Florida and Gupitan to the respective BDCs. The BDCs agreed to take over the PSCs but expressed anxiety over their inability to sustain the PSCs despite their having provided for the salaries of parateachers. Moreover, CARD facilitated the request of the community residents in Bunawan to the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) for the reopening up of an abandoned primary school in Bunawan to accommodate PSC graduates.

CARD has a Reception and Study Center (RSC) which serves as a half-way house for IP children enrolled in the public elementary schools. The

Matron conducted tutorial and remedial classes for Grades I to V children who had very poor educational background or lacked educational exposure. The Matron and Assistant Matron also taught older children in the RSC sewing, pot holder making and mat weaving as part of their vocational training. Proceeds from the sale of these projects were used to augment the resources of RSC. As part of the children's socioemotional development, sessions in values formation such as tribal identity and respect were likewise conducted twice a month by the Matron. To augment RSC resources, the parents of children staying in the RSC were asked to provide food support, such as rice and corn, as counterpart.

CARD is not only concerned with providing education to IP children but also making the parents aware of their roles and responsibilities. Through the Parent Education Service, the parateachers conducted a series of one-day seminars on Responsible Parenthood for men and women in the community. In these seminars, the parents reflected on their relationship as a family, specifically on how the husbands treated their respective wives and their children. The datus and men who participated in these seminars realized the burden imposed upon women such as attending to child care and household chores, and helping the husband in farm work and in kaingin.

Capability Development. The parateachers assigned in CARD areas other than Patil, Mambago and Tagasan are indigenous to the communities. This facilitated their acceptance by, as well as their immersion in and access to, the communities. Equally important was the continuous training of parateachers to prepare, develop, and enhance their competence in teaching and in relating with children and parents. A number of these training programs for the Child Care Program Coordinator and parateachers included: New Parateachers' Training; Training Assessment; Teaching-Learning Skills and Visual Making; Early Childhood Education I, Pedagogical Training I, II, III; Music and Movement for Early Childhood; and Parents' Education Seminar.

Livelihood Assistance

In both project packages, CARD provided financial assistance through loans for income generating projects, crop production, and seed capital for community-organized cooperatives and for community organizations. Loans granted to organizations ranged from P1,000 to P5,000.00. A very critical situation in which CARD had to extend financial assistance was the rat infestation that started in IP communities in August 1997 and continues to the present. The rat infestation ravaged the people's crops for at least two to three cropping seasons, leaving the communities with nothing to harvest at all. This was aggravated by the dry spell from February to May 1998. CARD called the attention of the municipal officials to the rat problem and requested livelihood assistance to these communities. Until 1999, CARD had not

received the promised livelihood assistance from these officials. The Municipal Health Officer (MHO) responded by providing supplemental feeding and medicines to affected areas. On the part of CARD, its request for financial assistance from Christian Aid was granted. As suggested by Christian Aid, availment of assistance would take the form of an exchange. The people could claim a sack of rice at the CARD's office in exchange for every 300 rat tails collected in the lowlands or 500 in the uplands. CARD observed that the people had turned to rat tail collection as a source of livelihood and a means of eradicating rats. CARD felt it was doing more work in addressing the needs of communities infested by rats than the government which should have greater responsibility.

The loss of crops due to rat infestation and El Niño has also affected the once viable community-organized cooperatives and income generating projects (IGPs) of community organizations. Hence, CARD had to extend loans to these organizations through its Livelihood Assistance Fund and Supervised Rural Credit Cooperative Fund for production of corn, mungo, and vegetables, and for swine raising, as well as for other IGPs.

Meaning of Advocacy

Advocacy implies embracing a cause and making others recognize, understand, and believe in the cause and ensure that desired actions and changes are realized or achieved. It can come in various forms and levels. It can be as general as cause advocacy and rights advocacy or as specific as an issue-oriented, policy, and process advocacy.

While there are many conceptual referents to the meaning of advocacy, on the part of the CARD staff, it means making the people aware of their condition, understand the causes that give rise to their condition, and take the necessary actions that would bring about desired changes. Hence, they see advocacy as integrated into their work in the communities. They stress that they are actually doing advocacy work by way of conducting training programs and seminars, community organizing, forming cooperatives, providing health and child care services, and extending financial assistance through livelihood projects to the community. At the municipal level, advocacy would mean making local officials aware, better appreciate, and become sensitive to the situation of the IP communities. In this way, local officials would respond with dispatch to the needs of the IPs for basic government services in health, education, and livelihood. Further, with this informed sensitivity to IP communities, local officials would formulate policies that respect and protect indigenous culture and values, and implement programs suited to the peculiar nature of these communities.

Advocacy as Service Provision

A number of CARD staff expressed their views on advocacy. One stated that advocacy is an integral part of her work. There were instances that she had to carefully plan out her advocacy strategy. She cited a situation in which she had to convince the Public Health Nurse (PHN), and the Municipal Health Officer (MHO) to visit the IP sitios more frequently and, most importantly, to provide services to the far-flung IP communities on a regular basis. She perceived the role of CARD as facilitator in community preparation but ended up as provider of basic health and social services, and support for economic and livelihood projects. This is because government workers have not been able to reach these areas (they only reached the centers), nor have they provided immunization, medicines, and even medical doctors and nurses. As the staff said:

Advocacy work of staff at the municipal level is important to make these officials aware of the situation and conditions of the natives in the areas where we work. For advocacy work at the municipal level, I talk to the Municipal doctor, nurse, and mayor (who are open to and consider the participation of NGOs as important and have programs in health and nutrition). Last January, there was a meeting of the Nutrition Committee attended by representatives of NGOs and CARD. There had been instances that we had to meet with them particularly on our request for medicines. Government health workers do not reach the sitios; they go only up to the center of the barangay. Only CARD assists areas or sitios far from centers of the barangays. You have to cross 17 rivers to reach Patil where there is no regular government service. Patil is an area of CARD.

Advocacy as Awareness Creation

Another notion of advocacy is associated with creating awareness and taking action to solve problems and initiate changes. This is no easy task for the staff. The staff encountered much difficulty in educating the IPs. Knowledge has to be imparted to them repetitively. Also, the IPs have a wait-and-see attitude. Despite the difficulties, the staff observed changes in attitude and willingness among the IPs to participate in CARD's programs. Before, the IPs in the upland would withdraw and hide if they encountered new faces. Now, they are more open, friendly, and linger on to talk to people. The process is gradual. This is true of all areas where CARD is operating. This concept of advocacy emphasizes the importance of training programs and seminars. As argued by a staff:

Convincing people that they should do the work, making the people aware of their condition and identifying the activities that need to be undertaken are advocacy. CO is advocacy. Our series of training programs and seminars have resulted in changes. Before, they were

afraid to tell us their problems; they did not like to go to the barangays because they were shy and afraid that their problems would not be resolved. Now, they are no longer shy. This is the effect of advocacy: that people find ways to respond to their problem.

Advocacy as Issue-Orientation

On the other hand, the Executive Director (ED) of CARD thought that CARD has not been conscious of its advocacy work. She said that she did not know at what point advocacy came about in CARD and that they were already doing advocacy. This is rather a very modest remark considering what the ED and CARD did in pushing the issue of ancestral domain and making local officials aware of the situation of IP communities as well as they did. At the community level, CARD's modes of advocacy are community organizing, education, and service provision. Their advocacy was to bring out the message that IP communities must first understand their situation before they could make informed decisions and collective action. In this regard, the objective of CARD's advocacy is to seek redress for the continuing government neglect of the IP communities and lessen its effect on them. At a higher level, CARD is involved in issue-oriented advocacy though of less magnitude and exposure than its work in cause advocacy. In particular, the issue of ancestral domain (AD) is central to CARD's mandate and the core of CARD's organizing work. Though CARD has done a lot for the AD issue at the community level, it has yet to make a significant dent at the higher levels, from regional to national offices. The Women's Issue has likewise been pursued by CARD in all its programs.

Advocacy at Work: Major Issues and Concerns

Gender Sensitivity Issue

Gender Sensitivity Training (GST) evolved as an integral component of WES. It was incorporated in the orientation on feminism conducted by the Child Care Program Coordinator for women participants on 11-12 September and 28-29 October 1992 in Sitio Bunawan. In addition to feminism, WES topics include VAW, parenting, child rearing, livelihood skills training, and health-related concerns. WES had been conducted in CARD beneficiary communities, first in sitios of Bunawan and Sua-on and then expanded later to the sitios of Upper Florida and Tagwango.

However, a more focused and directed effort at GST started only on 1-2 August 1993 when a group of NGO trainers from Davao City conducted a three-level orientation briefing on GST. The first level orientation was conducted on 3-6 August 1993. Eleven program and administrative staff of

CARD participated in the orientation. This was followed by Level II, participated in by nine parateachers, seven CHWs, and two Reception and Study Center matrons conducted on 8-10 August 1993. Level III was for 20 selected community leaders (eight women and twelve men) from eight beneficiary communities, conducted on 11 August 1993. Levels II and III were facilitated by the Executive Director of CARD and an NGO representative from Davao.

The series of GST programs has shown positive results not only among CARD staff but also for the beneficiary communities. CARD staff became more conscious of the gender issue. CARD does not tolerate even the least insinuations of green jokes, much less sexual harassment among staff, and imposes disciplinary action for such behavior. For the communities, there have been more clamors for GST for men and women. In Sitio Bunawan, the men-farmers who participated in the GST conducted in their area formed a committee called Community Action for Women Against Violence headed by the most notorious among them. This committee spearheaded a mobilization activity to encourage all men in the community to attend GST. Because of the increased demand for GST, CARD decided that GST for women would be conducted by the Health Program staff while GST for men would be the responsibility of the Child Care Program Staff.

CARD's advocacy on gender issue is through seminars and training programs. Through these, CARD is able to contextualize the role of women in the IP communities. Lumad women carry heavier burden and are more exploited than men. The process of explaining the role of women to IPs takes time and is repeatedly discussed not just in GST but in other training programs. Briefly, women do productive and reproductive roles in the household. An IP couple relationship has this pattern: women work more in production like planting. Only the men do the cutting (*kaingin*) but women do the work with men in the entire production. In marketing, it used to be that 90 percent of this role was done by men but women have taken on this role to ensure that the money is put to proper use. Men were thought to use most of the money for drinking and gambling. Child care used to be mainly a mother's role. But with CARD's program of Child Care, the role of men is emphasized. In this process, CARD is already doing advocacy. It also conducted GST for men (though not in all of its project areas) to convince the men that child care is a joint responsibility. GST for men is presented in terms of its cultural context, and not to find fault in men. CARD plans to have GST for both men and women. Improvements as a result of GST were noted from feedback and testimonials given by the wives and from the men themselves. After one year, the wives gave testimonies of what their husbands did. Wives became vigilant by reporting battering by their husbands to the *purok* (cluster of 10-25 households situated contiguously in a *barangay*) leaders.

Tribal Settlement Project Issue

CARD actively supported the struggle of the indigenous communities against the proposed Tribal Settlement Project (TSP) of the Municipal Agrarian Reform Office (MARO), which would negate the IPs' claims on ancestral domain. This project involved the conversion of 10,000 hectares of land into a settlement area for IPs to be provided with infrastructure facilities and government services such as clinic, school, roads, and work animal dispersal. This project was made known in an assembly called by MARO on 25 August 1993 at Barangay Monte. The IP leaders sought the guidance of CARD's community organizers (COs) in a meeting of the leaders of AMMADO on 27 August 1993. Upon knowing about the TSP, the ED of CARD sought a meeting with the Mayor of Kapalong on 6 September 1993 and raised the issue of the TSP's inconsistency with the action plan arrived at on 24 May 1993 during the Consultation on Ancestral Domain conducted by DENR where a Special Task Force was created. This special group was tasked to assist in the identification and categorization of lands in the municipality to be considered as tribal ancestral domain. The mayor viewed these two projects as complementary but failed to explain his position on the TSP and its effect on the ancestral domain claims of the IPs. The ED explained to the Mayor that the TSP would uproot the IPs from the land they presently occupied and that confining them in a limited space would definitely deprive them of their cultural heritage. She said that CARD would conscientize the people so that whatever decision the IPs may come up with, it would be one that they would not regret for the rest of their lives. The ED was then invited by the Mayor to the scheduled 24 September 1993 consultation/assembly for the final decision on the TSP.

CARD's advocacy and mobilization work in reaction to the TSP and in preparation for the 24 September assembly is described by the ED in her July 1994 narrative report, as follows:

In preparation for the 24 September assembly, CARD during its 7 September 1993 coordinators' meeting, decided that the Community Leaders Seminar (COLS) scheduled for January 1994 be modified and conducted the soonest to equip the datus with a strong sense of determination to hold on to their rights to their ancestral lands. Of the 20 persons invited to attend it, 13 datus and one woman leader made it to the 20 September COLS. A resource person from KAKANA-LUMAD (a loosely organized indigenous people's group in Davao del Norte and Oriental), talked on Self-Determination; the Vice Chairman of CARD's Board of Trustees shared the negative effects of resettlements in some parts of Mindanao; the CARD-ED discussed the IPs' Rights to the Ancestral Domain as stipulated in the Ancestral Domain Bills pending in the Lower and Upper Houses of Congress.

In addition to the discussion in the COLS, the CARD COs together with enlightened datu conducted mobilization campaigns in IP communities. The Alliance of Dibabawon Datus (organized by CARD Board of Trustees' Auditor when he was still an IP parish worker) responded and joined the mobilization against the TSP. This Alliance was comprised of the datu from northeastern part of Kapalong, which was also going to be affected by the TSP. This was followed by a discussion session on the TSP, conducted by the COs with the IPs in the afternoon of 23 September until the dawn of 24th in Patil.

The 24 September 1993 assembly was attended, on the government's side, by the MARO, two representatives each from Provincial Agrarian Reform Office (PARO), Office of Southern Cultural Communities (OSCC), Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO), Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO), and proxies of the Mayor and the Governor. On the side of the IPs were 54 IP leaders and five from CARD. Contrary to the latter group's expectation, however, the consultation focused on the two target areas (Kapatagan and Magimon areas) where the IPs would want the TSP located. While the IPs were taken aback by this new development, the IPs did not change their decision. They handed out copies of their 27 August resolution to each of the represented offices. One IP spokesperson declared that the IPs had waited this long for their Ancestral Domain (AD) claims to be recognized and that they could not wait any longer. Another said that the IPs have gotten used to being neglected by the government that they could not care less if the government would attend to their needs or not. Still another datu said that the 10,000 hectares would not be sufficient for the 46,000 IPs who would be displaced. Confusion arose from the CENRO and PENRO representatives who claimed they were not properly informed about the objective of the consultation by the MARO Officer. The Provincial Officer of the Office for Southern Cultural Communities, himself a TF from a Bagobo tribe and whom CARD coordinates with on matters of AD, lambasted his colleagues in government. The people's applause was enough to embarrass them. Then the datu asked the CARD-ED what CARD could do and what other groups could possibly contribute to hasten the approval of the AD bill. The consultation ended with a note from the Chairperson of AMMADO that they would not attend further meetings to be called by the government unless the OSCC Provincial Officer or CARD would give them a go-signal.

During the assessment that ensued and facilitated by the BOT Auditor, the IPs realized their people power. A few admitted that if it were not for the COLS, they would not have been as strong as they were in convincing their communities to stand up against the government. They then requested CARD to conduct more in-depth COLSs to be attended by leaders from the more remote areas.

Ancestral Domain Issue

CARD has advocated AD since the start of its operation. Advocacy is built-in in its programs. But the task of advocacy itself entails a certain degree of staff preparedness in knowing and explaining the nuances of the issue to the IP communities. The role of CARD is to act as catalyst to make IPs realize the importance of AD. To effectively perform this role, the staff must be given the necessary training. A staff mentioned the paralegal training conducted by CARD on ancestral land and the implementation mechanisms for AD as a venue for understanding and clarifying the issues on AD. On the government side, the officials at the Municipal Office told CARD to take charge of the upland people, organize them, and prepare the necessary requirements to support their claim for ancestral land ownership to be submitted to DENR. The COs were temporarily pulled out from their areas of assignment and were told to assist the upland people in preparing the documents needed to support their claims for ancestral land ownership. CARD submitted these documents to the regional and central offices of DENR. At the time this article was written, the DENR had yet to act on the documents.

The CARD staff stressed that ancestral domain is a major concern of the sitios. According to the staff, the IPs are confused; they do not know their ancestral domain boundaries. One source of confusion is delimiting AD boundaries. An issue on AD raised during community planning is that the people do not want to plant durable trees because the area for the planting of these trees may be outside their AD boundaries. Aside from tackling the issue of AD boundaries, CARD also conducted seminars such as the Community Leaders Formation (CLF) in which the context, scope, and implications of AD are taken up. The COs discussed AD in the context of the country's history, both before and after colonization, and the effects of these historical events on IPs and AD. Before colonization, IPs had full control of their AD. This setup changed after colonization with the enforcement of laws (*balaogs*) against IPs and, consequently, encroached on their AD. The laws affected the culture and economic and political structures and processes of IP communities.

The CARD's ED was actively involved in the crafting of Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) that is now in full force. The ED's commitment to this issue brought her into the legislative arena. At the time that the bills were being subjected to consultations with IPs, networks of NGOs working with IPs provided policy inputs through their position papers, comments on and reactions to these bills. One such network in which the ED was actively involved with was Mindanao Consultative Forum for Legislative and Administrative Advocacy Program for Women. This forum recommended that the existing legislative materials on ancestral domain should be studied in order to put into context the tribal women's concerns. CARD's ED was assigned as the convener of a study group while the Institute on Social Studies and Action (ISSA) would secure the needed materials. On 30

September 1993, the 28 participants of the Mindanao Consultation on NGO-WID Conference approved the recommendation to come up with a position paper for the acceleration of the approval of the AD bills pending at the Senate and House of Representatives. The Draft Committee for the position paper was formed, composed of representatives of NGOs such as CARD, KALIWAT Theatre Collective, and MARID Center of Zamboanga City. This committee saw the value of expanding the membership of the study group to include representatives from other NGOs engaged in Moro and Tribal Filipinos/Indigenous Peoples' (TF/IPs) work. They stressed that the Moros themselves are entitled to their own ancestral domains but are now marginalized. Some of them are living along riverbanks and shorelines. The CARD's ED was tasked with convening the study group.

Of the 20 NGOs invited to the study group, ten responded but 15 actually participated in the AD Bills Study Group that met on 15 November 1993 at the Victoria House in Davao City. The group came up with a revised bill, agreed to conduct signature campaigns in support of the revised bill, and determined to submit for consideration the revised bill to the respective authors in both Houses of Congress. They also decided to provide copies to other sympathetic senators and congressmen and the Bills Committee of both Houses. However, due to inadequate documentation of the various positions of participants in the AD Bills Study group, the revised version of the AD bill was not sent until 24 February 1994 to the participating groups. The Draft Committee's position paper was returned to the participants on 3 May 1994 and was expected to be returned to the Committee, together with comments and list of signatures, in two months' time.

CARD's ED took the initiative of linking with the Tribal Filipinos Apostolate (TFA) Coordinator of the Diocese of Tagum on 10 May 1994. The TFA Coordinator of the Diocese of Tagum had been advocating AD and related concerns and her participation would spur other TFAs in Mindanao to support the revised AD bill. CARD's ED provided the TFA coordinator copies of the proposed bill, proceedings and position paper for reproduction and dissemination to the Mindanao TFAs. She requested the TFA to conduct similar activities such as creating a study group for AD bills, mobilizing support for the revised AD bill through signature campaigns, coming up with position papers, and submitting the same to the authors of the AD bills in both Houses of Congress.

The COs discussed the IPRA, and cited the provisions that were favorable and unfavorable to the IPs. They explained to the IPs why certain provisions are not favorable to them. Through the AMMADO organization, the IPs prepared a petition and sent this to the IPs Federation in the municipality and then to the IPs Federation in Manila. The role of CARD in this regard was to give information and advice to the IPs on what to do.

Pressuring Government to Act on AD Claims

On the AD issue, CARD had the support of the local government. This made CARD's advocacy on AD at the local level a lot easier. However, it encountered difficulties at the higher level. CARD was not able to create pressure that would make the Provincial Special Task Force on Ancestral Domain (PSTFAD) act on the Certificates of Ancestral Domain Claim (CADC) of IPs in Kapalong. The ED was informed by the PSTFAD that the DENR adopts the first-come, first-served practice. Further, she was told that CARD's CADC application and that from Talaingod (another municipality in Davao del Norte) came first but Talaingod's CADC application had problems and was returned. CARD's CADC application was held in abeyance and remained pending up to the time of this writing.

While other NGOs/POs were able to create pressure on the PTFAD, CARD's ED did not deem it right to exert pressure on the said body. She realized there were other organizations that submitted their CADC applications way ahead of CARD's application but did not pressure the PSTFAD into action. However, at one point, she asked PSTFAD why other regions could approve CADC applications faster. The PSFTAD replied that the Manila office returned their (CARD and Talaingod) applications to PSTFAD for review due to incomplete requirements.

Assessment of Advocacy Work on Ancestral Domain

Initiatives on Awareness Creation at the Community Level

At the community level, the IPs would not have been aware of AD were it not for CARD. To the IPs, land has no value. The IPs did not have a sense of real worth of their land because they were selling their lands left and right. It was CARD that introduced the concept of AD to the IP communities. It pioneered in awareness creation among IPs regarding AD through the Awareness Seminar Workshop (ASW). Before organizing the IPs, CARD staff conducted ASW to make the IPs realize the real value of their land. This opened the floodgate of AD claims from the IPs. CARD is now assisting the IPs in the pursuit of their AD.

AD as the Compelling Factor for CO Work and the Core of CARD Advocacy

The issue of AD is part of the regular CO work of CARD. The AD issue is brought out in the ASW. The end result of ASW is the formation of community-based organizations that would push for AD. The value of organizing would revolve around the issue of AD. This has been CARD's approach to organizing since then.

To backtrack, CARD took on the issue of AD in its CO work when the DENR issued Department Administrative Order (DAO) No. 2. Prior to DAO-2, CARD embarked on AD appreciation only in seminars and training programs. The objective was just to raise the IPs appreciation of the value of their ancestral land. DAO-2, therefore, was the turning point of CARD's CO work. This piece of legislation, which was implemented in 1994, provided the IPs opportunities to make legal their claim to ancestral lands through the CADC. With DAO-2, CARD's work on AD has been strengthened. A barangay assembly scheduled sometime in 1994, but did not push through because of a big flood, provided an occasion for the ED to talk with the datu about DAO-2. She gave copies of DAO-2 to the datu. While recognizing the imperfections of the DAO-2, she believed there was no other instrument that could secure the IPs' claim on AD on a legal basis. All of the CARD areas are now aware of AD except that not all areas are covered by the application of CADC.

Reforestation and Illegal Logging Issues

CARD got involved with other issues such as illegal logging and the reforestation project of Standard Philippines Fruit Corporation (STANFILCO). It opposed the reforestation project of STANFILCO (a multinational corporation engaged in banana and other agribusinesses in Mindanao) on the ground that reforestation actually meant cutting down trees as well as illegal logging and replacing them with acid-producing though fast-growing *Gmelina alburea*. These trees are more utilized and important for commercial purposes rather than for environmental protection and preservation. The ED filed a formal complaint with the Mayor of Kapalong and furnished copies to the Commander of the 64th Infantry Battalion (IB) assigned in Kapalong and the regional office of DENR. CARD forwarded the letter about the illegal logging activities of three sergeants deployed in the communities covered by CARD to the DENR's main office. As a result of CARD's complaint, the three soldiers were relieved from their position. One soldier threatened to "salvage" whoever was responsible for his relief. Another requested the ED to write to his Battalion Commander to avert a possible decision to disapprove his schooling scholarship. The DENR provincial personnel came to CARD to inform the ED of the Memorandum Order from Manila that the DENR would look into the matter. Confronting these issues had put CARD and its staff at risk but nonetheless did not deter them from taking action.

Organizational Limitations and Difficulties

Organizational Structure

The present organizational structure of CARD reflects the shift to the integrated area focus and team approach that has been implemented starting mid-1999. At the helm is the Board of Trustees (BOT) that meets occasionally.

The CARD structure indicates that decisions are made at various levels: the BOT/Executive Committee, Executive Director, and Management Committee. BOT decisions are arrived at after consultation with the staff on pertinent organizational matters such as policies and/or amendments. The Executive Committee is composed of four members of the BOT and meets once a month. The Management Committee, composed of the Executive Director, program coordinator, and a representative from the staff, decides on matters affecting program planning, monitoring and evaluation. The Program Coordinator supervises the work of the Program Staff, collates monthly reports, and assists the Executive Director in the preparation of reports.

The Council of Elders is a new feature of CARD. It is composed of thirteen members elected yearly from among the Chairpersons of the women's and men's organizations in the community. It advises the Executive Director on program matters. Most importantly, the Council of Elders helps in making members of their respective organizations and other communities understand CARD's programs/services, and assists in monitoring staff performance and in program implementation. The Chairperson of the Council of Elders exercises great influence on the decisions made by the BOT and the Executive Director.

At the bottom layer are the four teams. Team assignment is based on staff educational qualification and in-service training received, and distance and accessibility of communities where they would be assigned.

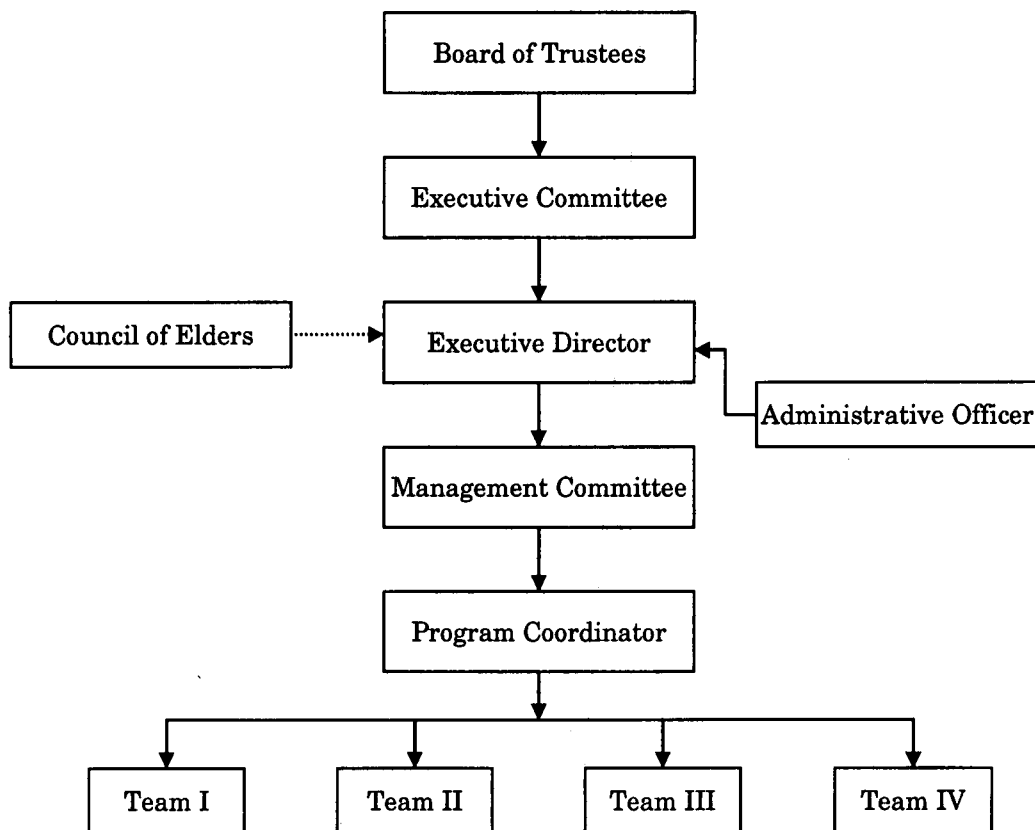
Figure 1 presents the organization chart of CARD.

CARD's setup is far different from its previous structure. Its organizational structure in 1992 showed a four-layered hierarchy with the Board of Directors (now BOT) at the apex, then the Executive Director, Program Coordinators, and Program Staff. The program staff were organized along sectoral areas.

Role of BOT in the Advocacy Work of CARD

One officer of the BOT explained that BOT officers have their respective functions. Although the BOT meets occasionally or on a need basis, the ED provides the BOT members with narrative reports on CARD's operations. It is the Executive Committee composed of four of the BOT officers that meets on a monthly basis.

As a policymaking body, the BOT decides and makes comments on policy proposals presented by the ED. Further, the BOT decides on personnel matters brought to its attention by the ED. However, CARD's operation is the primary responsibility of the ED. Advocacy on issues is mainly an ED decision

Figure 1. Organization Chart of CARD

but the ED has the option to bring the issues for advocacy to the attention of the BOT.

The BOT serves as an opportunity for CARD to link with the local government. For instance, the BOT Treasurer is the Rural Health Nurse of the Municipal Health Office of Kapalong. Through her, CARD is able to get support, such as medicines from the MHO or be involved in the MHO's health programs.

Staff Preparedness

Given the programs and areas covered by CARD, the staff had to be exposed to a wide range of skills development, from CO, cooperative development, teaching-learning techniques, service provision in health and

child care, and agricultural technology to program management processes, such as, recording and report making, communication, planning, monitoring, and evaluation and even advocacy. One area where CARD has done remarkably well is preparing the staff for their work, both upon entry and on the job.

In terms of academic preparation, CARD has painstakingly improved on its staff recruitment. CARD used to have staff with schooling up to Grade 5-6, tops. However, as CARD grew as an organization, and demands for work increased, its standards for work and required educational level became higher. Those unable to cope with their work had to resign. For example, higher standards are now imposed on preschool teachers—from grade level to high school graduate, from part-time to full-time, and subject to regular performance evaluation. Those unable to cope with these demands were weeded out. This paved the way for the recruitment of high school graduates.

As a matter of principle, funding agencies do not dictate on the qualifications of the staff, except for the adult education program funded by Fulford Foundation, which required that the parateacher should be a high school graduate. The ED did not agree with the imposition since only a few lumads would qualify. Besides, the communities prefer a parateacher whom they know, e.g., lumad. For this particular project, however, the requirement of a high school diploma prevailed.

The current staff's academic qualification is generally higher. In 1999 there was one CARD staff who was a high school graduate and planned to resign and would be replaced by a college graduate. Two parateachers—one college level and one high school graduate—also planned to resign. The only staff who had no college degree was the Bookkeeper. Two others were graduates of vocational courses while majority of the staff were graduates of two-year college courses. They were either from Kapalong or have kin in the project areas.

Assessment of Staff Performance

CARD used to have a self and peer rating form for assessing staff performance. In 1999, this form was replaced with a freewheeling assessment where the ED asks the staff to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each one. The ED experimented with this system. Each one was made to write about everybody else except oneself, both the positive and negative. On the negative side, suggestions were given on how to overcome the weaknesses. Some did not write anything because they wanted a freewheeling discussion. The ED asked the staff to write down their criticisms but did not receive any. The problem with this system is that there are no hard facts to base decisions on unless these are documented. CARD failed to document the first time this

system was used. The ED attributed the inability to put comments in writing to the oral tradition that the staff members have been used to. Even in doing field work, the staff do not make documentation; instead they just report to the ED orally what happened in the field. This has been a big problem for the ED. Despite her prodding for the staff to write their field reports, no written reports were submitted.

Linkage with Government Organizations

Linkage with the Local Government Units of Kapalong

CARD is fortunate that local government officials are receptive to partnerships with nongovernment organizations. The Mayor is open to NGOs and has accepted them as members of the municipal development council (MDC) and local special bodies in Kapalong. The ED was unsuccessful in her bid to get a seat in the MDC. According to her, she competed with a known millionaire-businessman claiming to represent the private sector. She, however, acknowledged the support given her by the Mayor and the DILG representative. These officials have knowledge of the track record of CARD.

The Mayor then included the ED as one of the two NGO representatives to the Local Health Board (LHB). The other NGO is PAG-ASA Youth. In one of the meetings of the LHB, the ED expressed her disagreement with the choice of the NGO representative to the MDC and stressed that CARD should be member of the MDC. The Mayor acknowledged the role of CARD in the municipality and decided to create a special body, the Development Council Special Body, with CARD as one of the members. This body was short-lived. It was dissolved when the Mayor met a vehicular accident that incapacitated him and prevented him from executing the functions of his office.

Aside from the ED's membership in the LHB, CARD is the only social development NGO represented in other councils. There are other NGOs in Kapalong such as the Tribal Ecological Education System (TREES) and SILDAP, but CARD was the one included because it had a wider reach than the others. CARD covers 16 communities located in four barangays. There were two councils in which CARD had not been involved: the Tourism and Education Councils. The ED realized that CARD should have participated in the Tourism Council because one of the areas identified as having potential for tourism is located in a CARD project area.

CARD is also involved in mediation between government and IPs particularly in instances of pangayao. This is a case of CARD mediating between two forces on the settlement of pangayao through peace offerings to the offended party. Though the ED realized that mediation was not a responsibility of the CARD, it was caught in this crossfire because the affected

areas were their beneficiary communities. The people in the affected areas ran to CARD for help. CARD had to communicate this tribal problem to the government for appropriate action.

Linkage with Municipal Health Office

CARD established a very good working relationship with the Municipal Health Office. It was able to link its health program with the MHO through the MHO's thrust on health prevention. Despite its limited supply of medicine, the MHO, on a number of occasions had given CARD medicines for its patients. In areas that the MHO could not reach, the MHO requested the assistance of CARD particularly in the government's immunization program. CARD submitted a list of children of IP communities to be given immunization by the MHO. These children are now included in the MHO's program. Further, CARD furnished the MHO with reports on supplies given them.

There are areas that the MHO could not penetrate but which CARD is able to reach. If the MHO goes to these areas, the MHO coordinates with CARD. In the Measles Eradication Program of the MHO, CARD performed a big role. CARD knows the people and the areas and helped the MHO in going to these areas, identifying those afflicted, providing the health services to them, meeting the people, and preparing the community.

The success of the government's immunization program is manifested in the IPs' willingness to have their children immunized. The IPs have knowledge of immunization through the mothers' class conducted by the MHO, through the Barangay Assembly, and through their datu.

As to referrals, there were CARD patients that required medical assistance and they were referred to the MHO. In one instance, the MHO sent a CARD-referred patient to a hospital. The status of the patient was then followed up by CARD.

Linkage with the Military

Problems on peace and order and military encounters affect CARD's operation and staff mobility. In cases of military encounters, CARD gets two clearances to enter the community: one from the Datu, and another from the military. CARD feels safer if their staff go to communities by themselves rather than be seen in the company of military men. In some instances, the military men would join CARD's free clinic visits and the health staff could not refuse their request.

Linkage with the Sanggunian Bayan

An interview with the *Sanggunian Bayan* (SB) (a local legislative council) woman-member revealed that the municipal government was very much open to CARD's involvement in the municipal affairs because municipal officials had actually witnessed CARD's work for the people. She noted the range of services provided by CARD, from health, literacy, livelihood, and economic projects to children's education. In her personal capacity, she was a sponsor of CARD and was providing financial support for one high school student under the care of CARD. Another SB official interviewed for the study likewise expressed support for CARD's work. He was also a sponsor of another high school student.

CARD's interaction with the SB comes in the form of proposals presented by CARD to the SB. The SB deliberates on the merits of the proposals and acts accordingly. Occasionally, CARD would request information from the SB about activities that CARD can participate in. One instance cited was CARD's letter to the SB regarding a signature campaign on condonation by the International Monetary Fund-World Bank of the country's debt. The SB requested the ED for an audience to explain this issue to them. The SB member expressed support for the ancestral domain issue of the IPs being advocated by CARD.

Overall Assessment of Advocacy Work

On the whole, the ED believed that CARD's advocacy was making a dent in the IP communities and the municipality of Kapalong. In its early years, CARD was taken for granted by the local leaders and even mislabeled. This perception can now be considered water under the bridge given the recognition of the work of CARD from the local officials, IP leaders, and community members.

The ED argued that the difficulties she had encountered in advocacy work are more or less comparable to those of the staff. At the upper level, she does advocacy but at the community and at the barangay level, it is the staff that performs advocacy work. She pushes her staff to do advocacy work at the barangay level as part of their training. Her advocacy work is only 50 percent; the remaining 50 percent is done by her staff. On the whole, the ED is quite satisfied with the staff advocacy work at the community level. Her style of pushing the staff to their limits in advocacy work and in giving them latitude in making decisions at the community level proved to be a good training for the staff. The staff deal with the barangay captains and the ED comes into the picture only when asked by the staff. She provides guidance to her staff in dealing with barangay officials. In this way, she is assured that the staff would grow and develop with their work. She, however, lamented the fact that CARD had not been doing advocacy in a systematic, deliberate manner. CARD

did not have an advocacy agenda. She characterized CARD's advocacy as reactive to the issues of the day and therefore they have to do it. Advocacy is imbedded in the approaches or services of CARD. This, to her is the weakness of their advocacy work. The ED believes that their advocacy work has to be systematized, an advocacy agenda has to be developed, and CARD must map out the corresponding strategies and activities.

Advocacy is seen as part of the organizing function of CARD, and this is concretized in terms of linking, coordinating, and even making the people at the MHO aware of the problems in the communities. Making the municipal officers aware is already a step forward but making them act is another thing. For CARD, convincing a government official to support its issues and causes is already an accomplishment.

CARD is in a continuous process of reflection and assessment, making adjustments or modifications of its organizational processes, and discarding processes not suited and unresponsive to the goals of the organization. The integrated area-based and team approach is a product of these reflections. Program review and organizational assessment or evaluation are annually conducted by CARD either internally or with assistance from organizations external to CARD.

Several observations can be made about CARD in doing advocacy work. Among these are:

Leadership of the ED. The ED is seen as a very strong-willed yet sensitive person. In fact, she realizes that, in her own terms, "A lot of people are angry with me because I go straight to the point." Yet, despite this perception, she is an acknowledged and respected NGO leader in the municipality of Kapalong. For ten years, the ED set the directions and provided the thrusts of CARD. She has maintained a good track record for CARD, not only with its donor agencies but also with local government offices. One potential problem with the ED leadership style is the vacuum that would be created once she decides to leave the organization. No one in the current crop of CARD staff could fill the vacuum, and this is also her realization.

Staff Turnover. All organizations have their share of staff turnover, either as a means of infusing new blood into the stream or affording better opportunities out there. Apparently, CARD has more than its share of personnel problems that affected its efficacy in program implementation. As the ED succinctly expressed:

CARD's difficulty of getting professionals to work among tribal and peasant settlers in far-flung areas plus the not-so-lucrative remuneration has been the main reason for making do with mediocre workers in the hope of developing their performance skills and commitment to our disadvantaged people.

This assessment is no longer reflective of the present staff of CARD. The ED said that the current staff of CARD are better qualified than before. They are also better trained considering the continuing capability development programs implemented by CARD. A plus factor is that most of the staff of CARD are indigenous to the communities. They speak the language of the IP communities. Perhaps, the single most compelling reason for staying on with CARD is their commitment to work with the IP communities and the consequent sense of fulfillment that they experience when they extend assistance to these people. There is also the high expectation that staff have to be role models in the community. Among the difficulties that the staff encounter in the project areas are the distance and terrain that they have to travel and the anxiety and fear that staff keep to themselves in times of encounters between tribal groups or between the military and rebel groups, etc.

On the other hand, poor performance and attitude, new job assignments, family responsibilities, the issue of morality, pursuit of political ambitions, physical incapacity due to accident, and distance of place of assignment were among the reasons for staff termination and resignation. It should be pointed out that staff are regularly evaluated not just by the Office and by peers, but also by the communities where they are assigned.

Capability Building Needs for Advocacy

The ED and the staff interviewed indicated their need to have training on advocacy. The staff believe that they would be able to deal and relate better with the people in the community if they are given training on advocacy. Further, they need continuous refresher courses and updates because they might be using obsolete approaches. There may be innovations, new trends and ways of doing and managing their programs that they need to learn and apply in their work. In terms of skills, the staff would like to learn new skills in convincing local officials and communicating with the natives. The capability building needs and other forms of assistance that were identified by the staff are as follows:

1. Training on policy advocacy;
2. Information on policies such as on ancestral domain to support advocacy function;
3. Development of indicators for policy advocacy in order to establish benchmarks for planning, monitoring, and evaluation;

4. Information on the importance of cooperatives, selling cooperativism to the IPs, and connecting cooperatives with related advocacy issues;
5. Training for the IP communities on financial management of cooperatives, particularly recording of finances and how to maintain or ensure sustainability of cooperatives;
6. Exposure to actual advocacy work in the form of inter-NGO exchange particularly in IP communities;
7. Popularization of information and materials to support CO work, training, and advocacy;
8. Culture-specific advocacy interventions;
9. Knowledge on institutional/government mechanisms where advocacy can be carried out, from national to the LGU levels, and from executive, legislative, and judicial branches;
10. Introduction of Human Resource Development (HRD) interventions to upgrade Staff Capability for Policy Advocacy;
11. Rationalization of the demands of work relative to working conditions of the staff as well as area-focused/team approach;
12. Enhancement of report writing and communication skills of the staff. A decision must be made whether to encourage the use of the lumad language or the vernacular in writing field reports/documentation, or continue the use of English, and to provide appropriate training in this regard; and
13. Rationalization of the extent of policy advocacy work to be undertaken relative to provision of program services while considering staff size.

Research, training, and other interventions, where appropriate, may be undertaken to address these needs.

Endnotes

¹ *Kaingin* or *kaingin* farming method refers to the practice of slash and burn farming in order to utilize a forested area for agricultural purposes.

² Salvage or salvaging is another term used to define extra-legal summary executions commonly perpetrated by men in uniform (i.e. soldiers and policemen).

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Province of Davao del Norte

- 1998 Rapid Rural Appraisal Report.

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A. CARD Executive Director and Staff

1. Myrna Bajo
2. Laida Matucol
3. Liza Balingit
4. Nestor Apas
5. Riza Postrero
6. Art Davao
7. Emmanuelita Agang

B. CAR Board of Trustees Auditor: Ninfa Narciso

C. Barangay Captain of Florida

D. Municipal Social Welfare Officer

E. Sanggunian Bayan Members

1. Mrs. Quezon
2. Mr. Popoy

F. Sitio Tagwango

1. Datu
2. Barangay Council Member of Sitio Sua-on who is a resident of Sitio Tagwango
3. Head of Women Organization
4. Sitio Tagwango residents