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**EVALUATION REPORT**



**UDF-PHI-12-515 - Strengthening Democratic Processes for Bangsamoro  
Government in Lanao Lake Watershed Reservation in the Philippines**

**Date: 13 July 2016**

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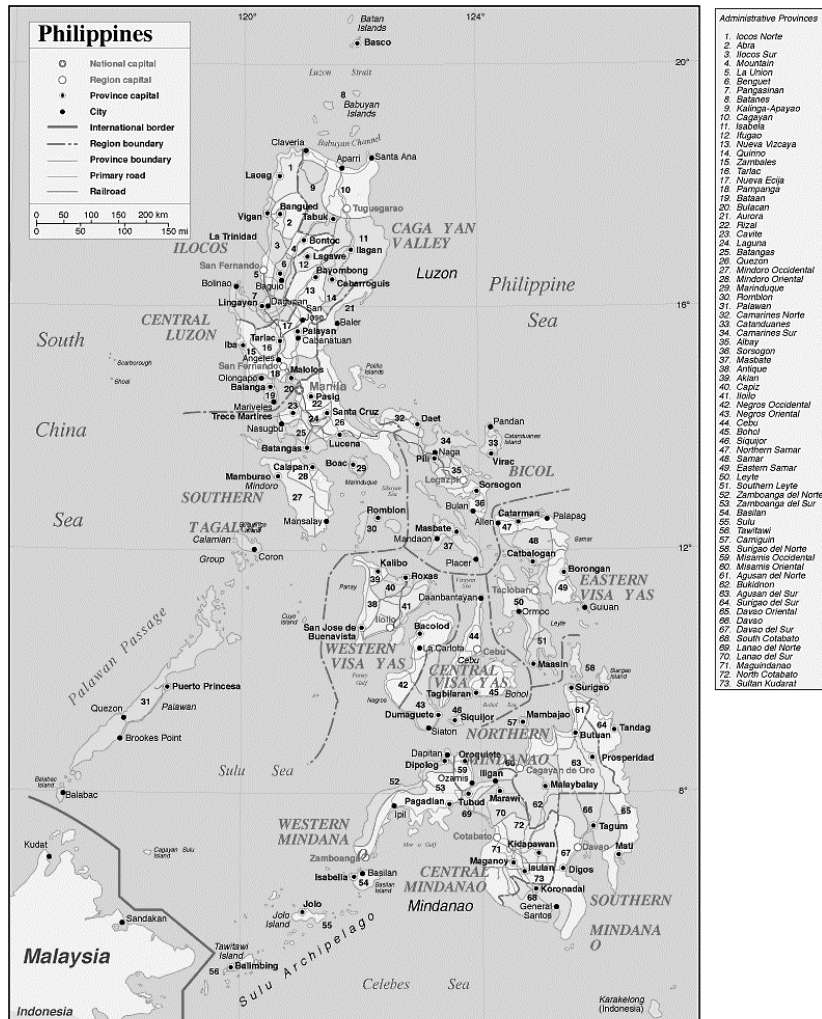
## Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluators. They do not represent those of UNDEF or of any of the institutions referred to in the report.

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Project Area Administrative Province of Lanao del Sur, Northern Mindanao (No. 70)



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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### *(i) Background*

The project ran from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2016, with a total grant of USD 250,000 (out of which UNDEF retained USD 25,000 for monitoring and evaluation). However, due to slow progress and shortfall of outputs UNDEF disbursed USD 185,075 to the grantee. It was designed by Tanggol Kalikasan Inc. (TK), and was implemented in partnership with the Mindanao State University (MSU), the Watershed Management Department of the National Power Corporation (NPC), the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in 18 municipalities along Lake Lanao's shore areas, in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) of the Philippines. The target population consisted of local government officials and key personnel in the Provincial Government of Lanao del Sur; leaders of local civic organizations, grassroots organizations and non-governmental organizations; religious/cultural leaders including (indigenous) "datus", "bai a labi" (women datus), and Muslim Religious Leaders (e.g. Mufti, Imam, and Madrasa); as well as youth leaders, and local professionals. As defined in the Project Document, the objective was to build a strong coalition to ensure the efficient management, conservation and protection of the Lake Lanao Watershed Reservation – through democratic processes involving community integration and the introduction of partnerships, pre-consultation, capacity building, the promotion of micro-projects, and monitoring of policy implementation. Accordingly, the project's three key outcomes were defined as follows:

- The capacity for environment and natural resources governance has been built to enhance participatory democratic processes;
- Participatory decision-making mechanisms on watershed conservation and management were established and an area-wide action plan was adopted;
- A public awareness campaign about the area-wide action plan and coherent sectoral policies on watershed management were implemented.

### *(ii) Assessment of the project*

The design of the project's training methodology was appropriate to introduce the basic concept of ecology, best management practices, and to raise awareness of applicable environmental laws, rules and regulations. Aiming to activate participatory decision-making mechanisms, it was appropriate to launch multi-staged technical working groups and workshops, in order to inspire the joint elaboration and adoption of environmental action plans, as well as supporting policies and ordinances on watershed, fisheries and solid waste management. Print and radio media outputs intended to facilitate the wider public's key role in the protection of the environment and, more precisely, to empower individual citizens to participate in the enforcement of environmental laws. It is therefore our view that **the project represented a relevant effort** to promote participatory democratic processes for environmental and natural resource management.

While the project recognized the rich cultural traditions of the people of the Lake, the grantee underestimated the time and resources needed to overcome the challenges and divisions, which characterize the political and societal context. Although the youth responded strongly to the project's capacity building offer, acceptance was less pronounced among local

government officials at the barangay level, as well as among traditional/religious leaders (respectively, only 58% and 71% of the target audience attended the training). This made it impossible to launch the multi-sectoral working groups foreseen to monitor, in cooperation with civil society, the implementation of local policies and action plans, which were prepared under the project. Given the above, and the fact that trained leaders expressed to evaluators their frustration about the spill over effects of environmental degradation originating from neighbouring barangays that were remiss on environmental protection, **the project's effectiveness was limited.**

Capacity building activities represented the project's principal focus. Accordingly, 46% of the grantee's expenditure covered the training of beneficiaries and the organisation of subsequent workshops and meetings. Compared to the project's total budget, the grantee made significant savings (i.e. almost 18%), but these actually originate from adjustments made to the original plan, which were born out of necessity or non-realisation. In other words, **while the relationship between the project's actual inputs and outputs is deemed efficient, it holds also true that the project achieved less.**

During group interviews with project stakeholders and end-beneficiaries evaluators found considerably heightened levels of environmental awareness and stewardship. Examples include a municipality having obtained multiple awards for being the cleanest in Lanao del Sur, and the unplanned creation of a dynamic and vibrant environmental youth organization. The project has also provided first, positive impulses to overcome stakeholders' lack of knowledge and commitment, as former local government trainees clearly expressed the need for a joint effort by all groups to ensure the Lake's conservation and preservation. On the basis of the above evaluators independently formed the view that **the project still generated some positive impact.**

The fact that TK and its implementing partner MSU have failed to devise a strategy to secure additional resources for capacity building has left those local government units not covered by the project without perspective and direction. On the other hand, the youngest beneficiaries trained by the project have shown their ability to organize themselves as an environmental youth organization (RYTK), which continues to hold clean up drives, environmental leadership seminars, and environmental youth summits. This is a promising starting point to promote continued participatory governance for the protection and conservation of the Lake Lanao's Watershed System. However, RYTK's members are too young and too inexperienced to be the sole carriers of such a responsibility. Evaluators are therefore concerned that **the sustainability of the project's achievements is at risk.**

### ***(iii) Conclusions***

- The fact that TK's approach and methodology included the conduct of baseline research and the formulation of target indicators is highly commendable, as this supported the project's **relevance**. In addition, it facilitated the evaluators' assessment of **effectiveness and impact** of the grantee's contribution towards the participatory management, conservation and protection of the Lake Lanao Watershed Reservation.

- Given the project's **limited effectiveness**, we concur with the assessment of implementing partners and beneficiaries that the project missed a permanent

and fully empowered resident project manager and/or coordinator.

- In view of the increased levels of environmental awareness and stewardship, and the anecdotal evidence about the results thereof, there is little doubt that the project provided first impulses towards participatory governance for the protection and conservation of the Lake Lanao's Watershed System. It is, however, also clear that TK will ***need to organise complementary actions to secure the intervention's medium- and long-term effects.***

- It is finally our strong belief that a ***wider dissemination of the UNDEF-funded project's approach***, reaching out to all barangay-level local government units, will be ***essential to gradually achieve comprehensive, participatory implementation and monitoring of local policies and action plans throughout the Lake Lanao area.***

#### ***(iv) Recommendations***

- In accordance with our ***observations on relevance and effectiveness, we recommend to the grantee*** to design result frameworks with ***modest objectives and realistically achievable target indicators***. Given the grantee assessed the starting situation as complex, evaluators would have preferred a project implementation strategy that recognizes the challenges and divisions, which characterized the political and societal context.

- ***To improve the effectiveness of future project interventions, we recommend to the grantee*** to abandon its current practice to manage its projects remotely and part-time. The use of permanent, resident project managers should allow for swift integration with the local population, adjustment with local customs, and acknowledgment of highly sensitive social and political-religious sensibilities in the target areas.

- ***Based on our comments on impact and sustainability, we recommend to the grantee to:***

##### **(1) Undertake measures securing the intervention's medium-term effects:**

Consider ways to encourage MSU to (a) fully integrate the Institute of Environmental Governance in its strategic planning, and to (b) raise IEG's planning capacity to elaborate annual work plans in support of a training programme for those barangays not yet covered by the project.

##### **(2) Investigate long-term options introducing enhanced cooperation in local environmental governance to a wider circle of beneficiaries:**

Install a local coordinator within IEG, whose permanent task it will be to continue where the UNDEF project left off, i.e. integrate previous and future trainees into the currently inactive multi-sectoral working and steering groups, to ensure the continued participatory development, implementation, and actual monitoring of the local and area-wide environmental action plans.

## II. INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

### ***i. The project and evaluation objectives***

This report contains the evaluation of the project entitled “Strengthening Democratic Processes for Bangsamoro Government in Lanao Lake Watershed Reservation”. The project ran from 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2016, with a total grant of USD 250,000 (out of which UNDEF retained USD 25,000 for monitoring and evaluation). However, due to slow progress and shortfall of outputs UNDEF disbursed USD 185,075 to the grantee.

The project was designed by Tanggol Kalikasan Inc. (TK). It was implemented in partnership with the Mindanao State University (MSU), the Watershed Management Department of the National Power Corporation (NPC), the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in 18 municipalities along Lake Lanao’s shore areas, in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) of the Philippines. As defined in the Project Document (UDF-PHI-12-515), the objective was to build a strong coalition to ensure the efficient management, conservation and protection of the Lake Lanao Watershed Reservation – through democratic processes involving community integration and the introduction of partnerships, pre-consultation, capacity building, the promotion of micro-projects, and monitoring of policy implementation. Accordingly, the target population consisted of local government officials and key personnel in the Provincial Government of Lanao del Sur; leaders of local civic organizations, grassroots organizations and non-governmental organizations; religious/cultural leaders including (indigenous) “datus”, “bai a labi” (women datus), and Muslim Religious Leaders (e.g. Mufti, Imam, and Madrasa); as well as youth leaders, and local professionals.

UNDEF and Transtec have agreed on a framework governing the evaluation process, set out in the Operational Manual. According to the manual, the objective of the evaluation is to “undertake in-depth analysis of UNDEF-funded projects to gain a better understanding of what constitutes a successful project which will in turn help UNDEF devise future project strategies. Evaluations also assist stakeholders to determine whether projects have been implemented in accordance with the project document and whether anticipated project outputs have been achieved”.

### ***(ii) Evaluation methodology***

The evaluation was conducted by a team of international and national experts, under the terms of the framework agreement between UNDEF and Transtec. In accordance with the agreed process, the evaluation aimed to answer questions across the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria of *relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability*, as well as the additional criterion of *UNDEF value added* (see Annex 1).

The evaluation took place from April – June 2016 with the fieldwork in the Philippines conducted from 13 – 17 June 2016. The evaluators reviewed available project documentation and contextual / background materials on issues surrounding local governance in Mindanao (Annex 5). Initial and final interviews were held with TK, involving its Enforcement and Area Director, and project staff. Other meetings focused on interviews and exchanges with the grantee’s implementation partners, and representatives of the project’s target groups from

various municipalities along Lake Lanao's shore areas, to confirm the project beneficiaries' experiences and to obtain updates of their most recent activities. These interviews and group meetings involved 2 project staff and a mixed group of 20 project stakeholders and end-beneficiaries.

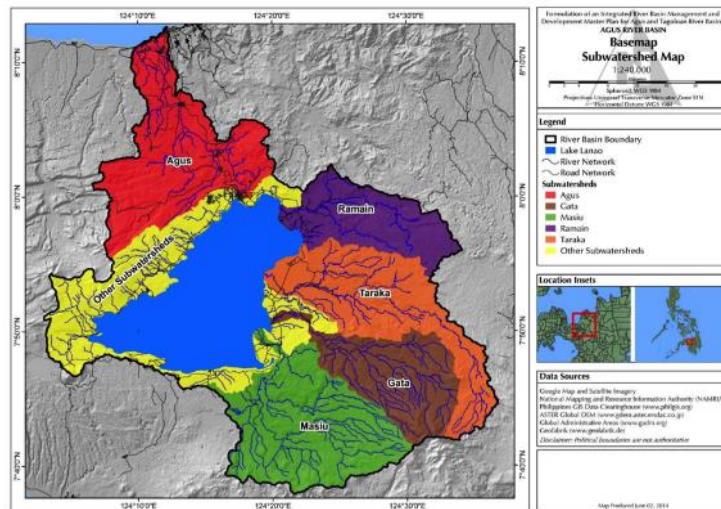
**(iii) Development context**

Surrounded by 18 municipalities and Marawi City, the Lake is vital to the economic development of the communities around its shorelines<sup>1</sup>. As a major source of hydroelectric power that altogether generates an installed capacity of 727.1 megawatts of electricity, the Lake provides about 60% of the total electricity needs of the people of Mindanao. The power plants are owned and operated by the National Power Corporation (NPC). As stated in the Ranaw Area Specific Action Plan (TK, 2015), the lake is also a major source of food and livelihood, as well as a major water transport highway,

Beyond its economic value, the Lake has a very important symbolic value for the “Meranao” (or: people of the lake). In Meranao language “Ranao” (Lanao) means lake. The term Lake Lanao is an indication of misunderstanding brought about by the country's colonial past. For the Meranao, their psyche, identity, and ethnicity are woven around the lake (Naga, 2010).

The conflict in the management and allocation of the lake's bounties cannot be totally dissociated from the broader conflict between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and various Muslim secessionist groups. Three major Muslim groups define the overall sociopolitical landscape in Mindanao today: the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) founded in 1969 by Nur Misuari, a former political science professor from the University of the Philippines; the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) founded in 1977 and headed by Hashim Salamat up until his death in 2003; and the Abu Sanyaf Group (ASG), which came into existence with the resurgence of Muslim extremism in Southeast Asia in the 1990s. President Corazon Aquino's administration sought to address the Muslim struggle in Mindanao by creating the ARMM through an Organic Act (Republic Act 6734), which was approved by Congress in August 1989. In the plebiscite that followed, however, only four (Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao) out of the 13 provinces voted to join the ARMM. In a later plebiscite in 2001, under the amended Organic Act, another province (Basilan) and a city (Marawi City, the capital of Lanao del Sur) joined the ARMM.

The unsuccessful efforts of the national government to achieve long-term peace in Mindanao



<sup>1</sup> The following basic information about the physical characteristics and management issues affecting the Lake Lanao Watershed Area was sourced from Pipälawan O. Naga, “Lake Lanao Brief”, Save Lake Lanao Movement, Inc., 2010 (unpublished).



had serious consequences in the protection and conservation of the Lake Lanao watershed areas. The watershed that feeds into the Lake has an area of 180,460 hectares, including the water surface area of 35,468 hectares. Naga (2010) pointed out that the watershed around the Lake has suffered from illegal and unsustainable forestland activities partly because of the years of neglect by agencies mandated to protect it. As a result, the water flowing into and from the Lake has been reduced drastically. Soil erosion, agricultural run-off, and sewage have also contributed greatly to the deterioration of water quality in the lake.

While most of the watershed is located in Lanao del Sur, some portion falls within the jurisdiction of the adjacent province, Lanao del Norte. The pressing peace and order problem in the area, for the most part, defined the national government actions and inaction in the region, which resulted in a series of conflicting and sometimes overlapping institutional jurisdictions over the management of the Lake Lanao watershed systems. The situation is complex<sup>2</sup>, as the conflict over roles and responsibilities involves national-, regional- and provincial-level authorities. It does not only span across these different levels but also comes to play between authorities situated at the same administrative layer. The fact that the legality of some of these institutional arrangements is in question, while other players will not act upon their assigned roles, aggravated the situation.

With the passage of the Bangsamoro Framework Agreement in 2012, and the signing of the Comprehensive Agreement of the Bangsamoro (CAB) in March 2014, the national government and the MILF have recognized the need for an expanded self-governance for the Bangsamoro people as a way of ending the decades-long armed conflict in Mindanao. However, the corresponding Bangsamoro Basic Law, which is still pending in the Philippine Congress, remains unclear about how and by whom environmental protection and the allocation of the resources emerging from the lake will be determined in the future.

With his deep understanding of the complex development management issues surrounding Lake Lanao and its watershed system, coupled by the rich cultural traditions surrounding the Meranao use of the Lake, Naga (2010) suggested that the best way to address the pressing environmental degradation of the lake is to pursue a co-management conservation approach. This should take into consideration the interests of the different groups utilizing, conserving and protecting the Lake. To be successful, various groups, communities, and the different government entities should be capacitated for their collective governance of this common resource.

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<sup>2</sup> Since a detailed description would go beyond the scope of this section, the interested reader may refer to Annex 5 for more information about the institutional jurisdiction over the management of the Lake Lanao watershed system.

### III. PROJECT STRATEGY

#### ***(i) Project strategy and approach***

The objective of the project “Strengthening Democratic Processes for Bangsamoro Government in Lanao Lake Watershed Reservation”, as defined in the Project Document (UDF-LAO-12-515) in February 2014, was to build a strong coalition to ensure the efficient management, conservation and protection of the Lake Lanao Watershed Reservation – through democratic processes involving community integration and the introduction of partnerships, pre-consultation, capacity building, the promotion of micro-projects, and monitoring of policy implementation.

Despite the national government’s acknowledgement of the Bangsamoro as autonomous and representatives of political entity, the situation in this area of Mindanao remained volatile. Conflict has been flaring up repeatedly and has caused losses of lives, temporary internal displacement, and significant material/economic damage. Given these circumstances, poverty as the local root cause of the issue remained practically unaddressed. According to the grantee’s initial analysis, chronic poverty was the ARMM government’s principal developmental challenge. With a rate of 68.9%, Lanao del Sur was the area home to the highest number of poor families in the Philippines (NSCB, 2012). The lake’s ecological decline aggravated the problem – it no longer provided the natural resources once enjoyed by the local population; and with its water level lowering, the lake’s capacity to continue securing the electricity needs of more than half of Mindanao’s population was in question. TK saw therefore a need to operate at the grass-root level, in order to collaborate with local constituencies and to involve a variety of stakeholders in decision-making processes on institutional arrangements and key sectoral policies. The project’s approach foresaw to work at area, municipal and barangay<sup>3</sup> level, to address watershed, fisheries, and solid waste management issues.

Accordingly, the project’s three key outcomes were defined as follows:

- The capacity for environment and natural resources governance has been built to enhance participatory democratic processes;
- Participatory decision-making mechanisms on watershed conservation and management were established and an area-wide action plan was adopted;
- A public awareness campaign about the area-wide action plan and coherent sectoral policies on watershed management was implemented.

Established in 1987<sup>4</sup>, Tanggol Kalikasan (i.e. “Defence of Nature”) is a Manila-based NGO operated by volunteers. Its services focus on capacity building for democratic environmental governance. TK’s strategy is to engage all stakeholders, in order to ensure the establishment of all those systems, processes and institutions, which are required for the protection of environmental rights and resources. Based on the application of scientific knowledge and cultural respect, its specific activities include community consensus building and negotiation, law enforcement assistance, and the mainstreaming of environmental education, information

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<sup>3</sup> The barangay is the smallest elected local governance unit in the Philippines.

<sup>4</sup> TK was incorporated as a fully independent organization in 2001, after having served for 12 years as the environmental law office of the Haribon Foundation.

and communication via the media<sup>5</sup>.

**(ii) Logical framework**

The Project Document translates TK’s programmatic approach into a structured plan of project activities and intended outcomes. The framework below aims to capture the project logic systematically, and attempts to link activities and intended outcomes with medium-term impacts and long-term development objectives, which evaluators observed dispersed over different sections of the grantee’s Project Document.

Project Activities & Interventions	Intended outcomes	Medium Term Impacts	Long Term Development Objectives
<p><u>1. Capacity building in environmental and natural resources governance</u></p> <p>Establishment of an Institute of Environmental Governance, elaboration of training materials, and staff training</p> <p>Training and planning workshops for municipal and city level officials</p> <p>Pilot training for elected barangay captains and officials, youth leaders, civil society leaders, indigenous and Muslim religious leaders</p>	<p>The capacity for environment and natural resources governance has been built to enhance participatory democratic processes</p>	<p>Better involvement of stakeholders in facilitating the formulation of action plans</p>	
<p><u>2. Establishment of participatory decision-making mechanisms</u></p> <p>Situational analysis and elaboration of alternative proposals</p> <p>Formulation of area-wide action plan through pre-summit meetings of three technical working groups</p> <p>Production of policy papers and draft ordinances</p> <p>Policy development workshops</p> <p>Stakeholder summit</p>	<p>Participatory decision-making mechanisms on watershed conservation and management were established</p> <p>An area-wide action plan, as well as specific municipal- and barangay-level action plans were adopted</p> <p>Area-wide policies on watershed, fisheries and solid waste management adopted</p>	<p>Strengthened community participation</p> <p>New partnerships introduced</p>	<p>Build a strong coalition to ensure the efficient management, conservation and protection of the Lake Lanao Watershed Reservation</p>
<p><u>3. Promotion of the implementation of coherent sectoral policies on watershed management</u></p>			

<sup>5</sup> Sources: ““Tanggol Kalikasan - a public interest environmental law office”, Tanggol Kalikasan (2015); and “Tanggol Kalikasan at 25 – public interest environmental law evolves”, Tanggol Kalikasan (2012).

Monitoring the implementation of summit recommendations at the municipal/city level by multi-sectoral working groups

Award of micro-grants to support the municipal multi-sectoral working groups

Monitoring the implementation of the area-wide action plan

Development of a communication plan and production/dissemination of information

Dissemination of environmental information through a radio programme

An area-wide action plan and coherent sectoral policies on watershed management are being implemented

The local population displays:

- Increased awareness of participatory / institutional mechanisms
- Basic knowledge of action plans

## IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS

### *(i) Relevance*

#### *Baseline Situation*

The grantee's initial assessment of the baseline situation was the result of a combination of TK's experience and local analysis, which included findings from its own research undertaken about the project's target area and population. In the absence of centrally recorded data, local plans, and/or provincial ordinances, the grantee's baseline study work was limited to performance-oriented observations, i.e. research focused on local governance practices identified with the help of anecdotal evidence, academic literature and existing laws, as well as rules and regulations put in place by the provincial ARMM government.

This way of insight prompted the grantee's concern that the identified lack of collaboration, coordination and practical, participatory arrangements left Lake Lanao without clear policies, jurisdiction and deprived of a functioning local coalition, all of which would ensure its protection and effective management of natural resources and the environment. According to the grantee's research the roots of these issues lied mainly in (1) the weak capacity of stakeholders, (2) the absence of clear and participatory decision-making processes and institutional arrangements, and (3) the general public's lack of awareness and the lack of stakeholders' clear understanding of policies and actions addressing conservation challenges.

#### *The project response*

TK concluded that there was a need (a) to provide opportunities and venues for continuous dialogue, skills training and sharing of knowledge, as well as (b) to organise an information and education campaign. It was expected that the resulting mobilization of the general public and the generation of mass support would ultimately lead to clear jurisdiction and a functioning coalition, which is prepared to effectively manage and protect Lake Lanao. Within this framework, evaluators found various examples of relevant project design, addressing the baseline aspects and involving a variety of relevant stakeholders:

#### **Selected baseline findings**

- *Stakeholders' lack of knowledge, skills, and commitment* required to fulfil their mandates *negatively affected their preparedness* to jointly tackle complex environmental issues, and to appreciate the benefits of people's participation.
- *Confusion caused by overlapping jurisdiction* (i.e. different institutional arrangements at regional and national level) *hampered inter-agency and multi-sectoral collaboration*. Instead of joint conservation and management efforts, local initiatives like the *Save Lanao Lake Movement* were plugging organizational and capacity gaps.
- *The general public lacked understanding of key environmental management and policy issues*. However, the National Environmental Awareness and Education Act (2008) and a guidebook with relevant references on environment from the Koran contributed to gradually improved environmental awareness among youth.

### 1. Capacity building in environmental and natural resources governance

The wider purpose of the activities under this project component was to build capacity for environment and natural resources governance so as to enhance participatory democratic processes. As a consequence, the foundation of the *Institute of Environmental Governance (IEG)* was a measure designed to establish a permanent, main training mechanism for participatory environmental and natural resource management under the Mindanao State University (MSU). Accordingly, the IEG was to be steered by a Management Committee, whose mission was the development of its proper work plan. It was also required to elaborate a strategy for securing additional resources, in order to ensure the training of barangay officials not covered by the project. The methodology of the project's *training materials* was to be developed on the basis of the grantee's *training baseline survey*, which was meant to identify and serve the specific needs of target beneficiaries, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), people's and civil society organizations (CSOs), women/youth organizations that are active in the area, as well as local government officials and known Datus and Muslim religious leaders. The training material's content was expected (a) to consider existing TK material, which had previously obtained approval by the country's Local Government Academy (LGA), and (b) to involve the contributions of TK's specialists and of local expertise to be provided by the MSU's IEG. With a view to establishing this as a long-term training mechanism, the recipients of the *Training of Trainers* were to be selected from among experienced MSU in-house staff and/or its pool of local experts.



**Evaluators meet with representatives and staff of NPC and MSU's Institute of Environmental Governance**

The objective of the *training and planning workshops for municipal and city level officials* was to introduce the basic concept of ecology, best management practices, and to raise awareness of applicable environmental laws, rules and regulations. Three target groups (mayors and vice-mayors, environmental and natural resources officers / agricultural officers, and municipal/city council members) were to be trained separately, in order to ensure that the roles and needs of local government players at different levels were adequately addressed, as far as environmental governance and the rules of procedure on environmental cases and their application in ARMM are concerned.

The *pilot training* followed a similar objective, but targeted the smallest local government units (barangays), and various forms of citizen representation. As not all *barangays* could be possibly covered by the training, the grantee closely collaborated with municipal governments to recruit participants from among those lakeshore barangays which displayed the highest potential inclination towards environmental governance. Their trainings specifically aimed to focus on governance principles and the Bangsamoro context, and in addition featured an exposure trip showcasing best practices in ecological solid waste management, watershed and fisheries management. *Post-training evaluation, monitoring and mentoring* was meant to monitor the implementation of area-specific action plans that adjacent barangays may have agreed upon as a result of the pilot training programme. Separate pilot training for *youth*

*leaders* aimed to inform participants about environmental governance, conservation and enforcement, group dynamics and environmental agenda building, and the subsequent development of action plans. As far as the training for *civil society leaders* was concerned, separate training modules were geared towards enhancing organizational capacity, and therefore aimed to build capacity in conflict management, lawful engagement in participatory processes, metalegal strategies, constituency building, community mobilization and facilitation.



*Indigenous and Muslim religious*

*leaders* finally were targeted by the pilot training as it was expected that the provision of knowledge, skills and motivation would result in long-term environmental benefits for their communities.

**The youth of Lanao del Sur have proven to be motivated and have continued to disseminate environmental information among their peers**

## 2. Establishment of participatory decision-making mechanisms on watershed conservation and management

Building on the skills and knowledge transferred under the previous project component, the following activities served to turn the concept of participatory environmental governance into practice, thus arriving at area-wide policies and action plans for watershed and conservation and management.

With the *situational analysis and elaboration of alternative proposals* for environmental and natural resource management and related governance mechanisms, the grantee intended to inspire policy formulation and institutional directions, all of which were going to be discussed in the workshops and technical working groups (TWG) of this project component. The actual mission of the TWGs was the integration of the action plans produced by the participants of the pilot trainings, in order to *formulate an area-wide action plan*. Its work plan foresaw a three-stage process, so as to enable former trainees to provide feedback, and to ensure consultations with national, provincial, and local government agencies, as well as the business community.

In addition, the grantee foresaw to charge external consultants with the *elaboration of policy papers and draft ordinances on watershed, fisheries and solid waste management*, which subsequently were to become the subject of discussions and refinement during the project's *policy development workshops* for municipal councillors on environment, agriculture and fisheries. Further consultation thereafter was planned to ensure the inclusion of views of the youth, civil society, as well as indigenous and Muslim religious leaders. By the end of its four stage process the workshops were expected to draw up concrete plans for the filing and eventual adoption of policies by the different municipal/city councils and their signing into ordinances by the respective municipal/city mayors.

Eventually, activities of this project component upon their completion would culminate in a

*stakeholder summit*, in order to formally adopt and launch the consolidated area-wide plan, as well as the local area plans, which were generated during the trainings and TWG meetings. Involving national and regional level officials, key government institutions, and the implementing partners (including MSU to provide the venue), it was hoped that the summit would serve as an occasion of commitment setting and pledging of support.

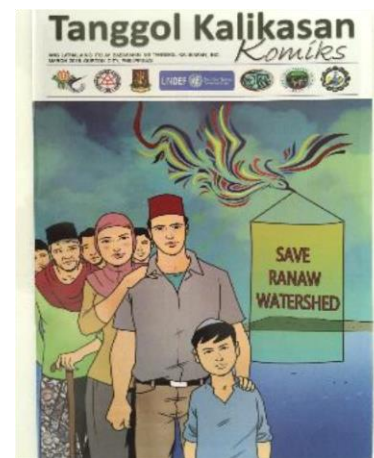
### 3. Promotion of the implementation of coherent sectoral policies on watershed management

The design of activities under the project's third component was rather ambitious, as it assumed consensus on the area-wide action plan and the existence of fully functioning institutional arrangements to facilitate the implementation of local-level policies and action plans in the areas of watershed, fisheries, and solid waste management.

Accordingly, it was expected that each municipality would task about 10 of the project's trainees to run *multi-sectoral working groups*, in order to monitor the implementation of summit recommendations, and to set up and apply participatory governance mechanisms allowing for the involvement of civil society. At the same time municipalities had the possibility to apply for support by the project's *micro-grant facility* (USD 600 per award), which was designed to promote actions either (i) setting up institutional mechanisms, (ii) initiating consultative processes, (iii) or realising local initiatives in one of the three sectoral focus areas.

The members of the *Steering Committee monitoring the implementation of the area-wide action plan* were to be selected by and from among the participants in the stakeholder summit organised held under the project's second component. Their task would have been the quarterly monitoring of the action plan's first year of implementation and, based on the input received via barangay and municipal monitoring reports, the formulation of strategy reviews and recommendations for additional actions.

To raise the awareness of the wider population living and working in the area, the grantee foresaw the development of a *communication plan and the production/dissemination of information* concerning the need to conserve, protect and manage Lake Lanao. This included most importantly, the publication of (i) a *Citizen Handbook on Environmental Justice for ARMM*, in order to provide citizens with an easy-to-use reference material enabling them to play a key role in the promotion and protection of the environment, and thus empowering them to participate in the enforcement of environmental laws (e.g. by bringing environmental cases before court); and of (ii) an *Environmental Justice Comic Book*, in order to help citizens living in remote rural areas to gain access to information about common issues affecting Lake Lanao. The dissemination of environmental information through a *radio programme* followed similar purposes, and was expected to further increase the project's outreach (at least 1,000 listeners per programme aired).



**TK's Comic Book was one of the project's two major publications to promote environmental justice**

Overall, the above strategy and methodology appeared relevant, as it was consistent with the profile and needs of the project's final beneficiaries. Risk mitigation measures were, however, not as pronounced - despite the sensitive context and the volatile situation – and this certainly



had a negative bearing on the project's relevance. This remark refers in particular to the fact that the project's design missed a locally capacitated and empowered management and/or coordination function. Concretely, the chosen mode to remotely manage the project would have required a more flexible approach to (i.e. more responsive) communication with implementation partners. While foreseeing high travel frequency of TK staff to the project location in Mindanao could have probably addressed this issue, the grantee admitted that the respective budget allocation was insufficient to allow for such a solution (c.f. effectiveness and efficiency sections for further details).

### **(ii) Effectiveness**

According to the Final Narrative Report (FNR), the project's implementation faced a number of challenges. Security and accessibility were reportedly issues leading to initial delays the grantee had to come to terms with. Integration with the local population required adjustment to local customs and acknowledgment of the highly sensitive social structure and political-religious sensibilities in the area. Establishing contacts on the ground proved also hard since most of the local government officials were difficult to reach. It took several months to coordinate, train and acquaint both volunteer staff and local partners; in order to build the confidence required to launch actual project activities. During the final stages of the project in early February 2016, fighting between government troops and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) resumed, which affected project operations in the target area around Lanao del Sur.

Evaluators noted variations at the level of the initially planned output indicators; therefore the project in some areas fell short of its objectives. In doing so, the grantee however managed to gather the target group's full range of different political, religious and social leaders – something that according to these beneficiaries represents an unparalleled achievement in the area.

#### **1. Capacity building in environmental and natural resources governance**

Following the establishment of the *Institute of Environmental Governance (IEG)* as the permanent training mechanism for participatory environmental and natural resource management under the office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Extension of Mindanao State University (MSU), the grantee focused (as planned) on the preparation of *training materials and presentations; identified the training participants*, and conducted the *training of trainers*. MSU, however proved less



**The Chief of MSU's Ecological Solid Waste Management Task Force explains remaining local challenges**

cooperative, when it came to the introduction of IEG's Management Committee: unlike the IEGs established in other projects of TK, where it succeeded to integrate representatives from other government agencies and institutions, MSU in the present project only admitted its faculty members and officials to the *IEG management committee*. To make things worse, the foreseen *regular quarterly IEG Management Committee meetings* were not held. Instead, these meetings were held on the occasion of IEG training activities, but these did neither lead

to the development of a proper annual IEG work plan, nor did these elaborate a strategy for securing additional resources, in order to ensure the training of barangay officials not covered by the project.

The project's *training and planning workshops for municipal and city level officials*, which was held to introduce the basic concept of ecology, best management practices, and to raise awareness of applicable environmental laws, rules and regulations, successfully reached out to its 3 target groups (mayors and vice-mayors, environmental and natural resources officers / agricultural officers, and municipal/city council members). It involved 113 (planned: 108) local officials, of which 70% during post-training surveys confirmed that their awareness on environmental issues and needs increased, and that they therefore intend to strive for better environmental governance.

As far as the subsequent *pilot training* is concerned, which targeted the smallest local government units (barangays), and various forms of citizen representation, results provide more of a mixed image. Youth and local CSO leaders have proven to be motivated training recipients (100 / 90 participants respectively, compared to the targeted 72 each). On the other hand, significant shortfalls have been observed among the participant figures of Municipality Council members (27, instead of 36), Barangay captains and officials (46, instead of 80) and indigenous leaders (51, compared to 72), all of which demonstrates that outreach to the most local layer of governance and the indigenous /religious Muslim leaders turned out particularly challenging (cf. next project component for the effect on local action plan adoption).

## 2. Establishment of participatory decision-making mechanisms on watershed conservation and management

Under this project component, the *elaboration of alternative proposals* for environmental and natural resource management and related governance mechanisms took place. While the grantee failed to present evaluators with the reportedly produced *situational analysis*, its completion can be assumed, as it provided the basis for the subsequent formulation of 3 *sectoral policies* and related institutional directions. Accordingly, the related 3 *technical working groups* (TWG) were held as planned, and their three-staged discussions (involving national, provincial, and local government agencies, as well as the business community) have led to the *formulation an area-wide action plan*. A review of the document by evaluators confirms its comprehensive nature, as far as the assessment of issues and proposal of required actions are concerned. The review also clarified that the action plan remains vague with regards to implementation modalities and monitoring indicators. Evaluators, however, appreciate the difficulties involved in resolving this aspect, which is due to the continued overlap between national and local roles and responsibilities, and the related uncertainty how to mobilize financial, technical and administrative resources to improve the environmental conditions for Lake Lanao and its inhabitants. The above mentioned *policy papers and draft ordinances on watershed, fisheries and solid waste management* were the subject of discussions and



**Traditional leaders exchange ideas during the workshops serving the formulation of the area-wide action plan**

refinement among municipal councillors. For this purpose, only two (planned: four) *policy development workshops on environment, agriculture and fisheries* took place. The grantee decided to merge this activity with the training of municipal councilors and municipal personnel under the first project component, arguing that this helped saving time and logistical expenses for both the beneficiaries and TK.

As documented by the 2014 Lake Lanao Watershed Provincial Conference, in which project representatives participated, and by the *Lanao Lake Provincial Summit*, which the grantee organized in October 2015, there was no lack of high-level political support for the introduction of the area-wide watershed conservation action plan. According to TK, the *formal adoption of local action plans* though was only achieved in 50% of the targeted local government units (LGUs), as the process fell victim to a fundamental externality: launching the envisaged coordination mechanisms was dependent on the achievement of progress with the local area's peace process and the planned passage to Bangsamoro Basic Law. This process, however, stalled when fights in various areas of ARMM resumed, which ultimately also reached the project implementation area of Lanao del Sur – resulting in internal displacement and thus disruption of project operations related to this activity. Several interview partners, however, also expressed to evaluators the view that this process could have taken a different dynamic, would the training for Municipality Council members, Barangay captains and officials, as well as indigenous leaders have been provided locally (c.f. quotation insert).

“A mobile training unit would have enabled IEG and the project to travel around the lake in order to visit each municipalities for training purposes. It would have ensured a better dissemination of knowledge”

**Comment by MSU's  
Extension Unit Director**

“Bringing the training to the target areas rather than inviting to a central location would improve access for and mobilisation of barangays and municipalities.”

**Comment by MSU's Chief of  
the Ecological Solid Waste  
Management Task Force**

### 3. Promotion of the implementation of coherent sectoral policies on watershed management

The above-mentioned governance issues and the resulting lack of consensus on arrangements facilitating the implementation of local-level policies and action plans prevented the establishment of *multi-sectoral working groups*, which were originally foreseen to monitor, also in cooperation with civil society, the implementation of local policies and action plans. The grantee responded by undertaking the effort to dispatch its own local team twice to the areas surrounding two LGUs (Taraka and Balindong municipality) to observe the status of local action plan implementation. While local action plan implementation is reportedly less advanced than planned (30%, instead of the targeted 50% of completed action plans are currently implemented), the evaluators noted that the grantee's reporting to UNDEF also does not make a distinction between the different types of action plans concerned (municipal, or barangay). Despite the evaluators' requests, TK unfortunately failed to provide the related reports.

The inability to launch multi-sectoral working groups also required alternative arrangements for the identification and support of potential beneficiaries of the project's *micro-grant facility*. The selection of micro-grant beneficiaries and their monitoring was therefore left to an ad-hoc committee comprising of TK and its implementation partners MSU and NPC, which still managed to motivate and approve 7 (planned: 18) micro-grant proposals. It allocated the lion

share (67%) of micro-funds to 5 initiatives suggested by the project's young trainees who decided to organise themselves as "Ranao Youth Tanggol Talikasan" (RYTK). These mostly realised local initiatives (awareness raising, clean-up drives, plant growing) in one of the project's three sectoral focus areas, or served to initiate consultative processes (environmental leadership). Another two micro-projects were granted funds (a) to support a women group's alternative income generating activity in the Balindong area, thus preventing them from continued engagement in illegal logging (22% of micro-funds awarded), and (b) to help the Agricultural Office of Marawi City to promote vermiculture (the cultivation of worms) for use in composting, i.e. as natural fertilizer (11% of micro-funds awarded).



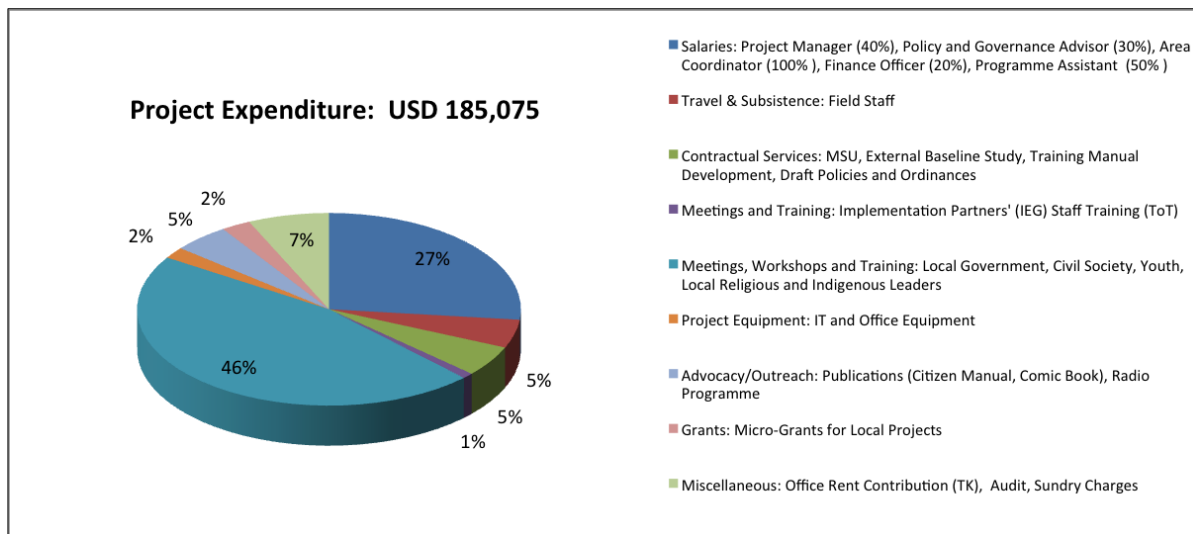
For similar reasons, no *Steering Committee was established to monitor the implementation of the area-wide action plan*. Regrettably, the TK once again despite request failed to present evaluators with evidence of the monitoring activity that reportedly was conducted by MSU instead. It is therefore unknown whether MSU has issued any strategy reviews or concrete recommendations for additional actions.

**Youth participating in an orientation on the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, a RYTK outreach programme supported by the UNDEF project's micro-grants**

Within the framework of the project TK implemented its *communication plan* to inspire the wider public how to conserve, protect and manage the Lake Lanao and its immediate shore neighbourhood. As foreseen, the grantee engaged in *the production/dissemination of information* in the form of two publications, i.e. the *Citizen Handbook on Environmental Justice for ARMM*, and the *Environmental Justice Comic Book*. While the evaluators are of the view that it is too early to assess the extent to which the Citizen Handbook can effectively serve as a reference material to bring environmental cases before court (c.f. observations under impact), they believe that its current volume is of less appeal to the spectrum of different target group it actually addresses. Separate, and hence lighter (since less voluminous) versions for each target group would have probably rather enticed to consider the publication for practical use as a handbook. As far as the Comic Book is concerned, which essentially was supposed to convert the area-wide action plan into easily digestible information about common issues affecting Lake Lanao, various interview partners praised its novelty, but also emphasized the need to simplify its messages (which were considered too wordy). In addition, some members of RYTK commented that while they are used to speak the local Ranao language, they'd prefer to read in Tagalog, which is mostly used for publication and communication purposes in the Philippines. Finally, evaluators noted on multiple occasions praise for the positive uptake of the project's *radio programme*. Resource persons invited by IEG spoke about topics, which were covered by the project's training (among them the lake's ecosystem, and the benefits of organic farming). Aired weekly on Monday afternoon for one hour during one year of the project's implementation period, it invited the feedback and questions of the listening audience, which rose topics principally related to measures recommended to counteract the the deterioration of Lake Lanao. IEG also awarded modest prizes for correct answers to questions about good environmental practices in the fields of forestry and lake fishing.

### (iii) Efficiency<sup>6</sup>

Capacity building and activities supporting watershed conservation and management through enhanced participatory democratic processes in environment and natural resources governance represented the project's principal focus. Accordingly, the *training of beneficiaries and the organisation of subsequent workshops and meetings* pertinently accounted for about 46% of the budget, which related to expenditure committed to (a) raise the capacity of trainees involved in local government, civil society, youth, local religious and indigenous leaders; (b) disseminate relevant information and practices; (c) facilitate the elaboration and finalization of the area-wide action plan, as well as the specific municipal- and barangay-level action plans; and (d) discuss and activate policies and ordinances in the watershed, fisheries, and solid waste management sectors.



Spending about USD 49,500 for project staff, and USD 11,300 for staff training and external contractor inputs, the nominal human resources spending of the grantee amounts to 33% of the total budget. While high, this is still acceptable given the fact that actual staff inputs exceeded the level of part-time resources charged to the budget.

Compared to the project's total budget (USD 225,000) the grantee made significant savings (i.e. USD 39,925). Evaluators established, however, that what at first sight appears to be the result of highly efficient management, were actually rather adjustments to the original plan, which were born out of necessity or inactivity. The following examples relate to those budget categories, which display most significant levels of under spending:

- Meetings, training, and related travel costs: both the volatile security situation, and foreseeable travel expense issues motivated the decision to merge different trainings and meetings for one target group into single events. As a result, 12% of the training budget and 50% of the travel budget remained unspent.
- Grants: Despite the introduction of an alternative award mechanism, 60% of the micro-grant funding remained unspent.

<sup>6</sup> Quantitative assessments made in this section are based on the total amount of project expenditure, which excludes the budget amount reserved for evaluation by UNDEF.

- Advocacy: against the initial plan, the winning drafts of the youth’s environmental poster competition were never printed for display and dissemination. 42% of the advocacy budget remained unspent.

In conclusion evaluators are of the view that the grantee’s overall spending policy has been acceptable. While the relationship between the project’s actual inputs and outputs is efficient, it holds also true that the project achieved less: (1) the merger of capacity building and policy implementation events, and (2) the grantee’s remote mode of project management were detrimental to the achievements of the project, since these resulted in (i) a significant shortfall in the participant numbers among Municipal Council Members, Barangay Captains and Officials and indigenous leaders, as well as (ii) in a reduced turnout from the grant and advocacy activities.

“The presence of a local project officer would have been useful. Sometimes when we had to take decisions on the spot, it was difficult to reach TK.”

**Comment by a representative of implementing partner NPC**

“Barangay captains and officials are so busy - if you don’t follow up constantly and personally with them, you are bound to lose them.”

**Comment by MSU’s Extension Unit Director**

#### **(iv) Impact**

Compared to the baseline findings (c.f. section on relevance), and on the basis of group interviews held with 20 project stakeholders and end-beneficiaries, evaluators independently formed the view that the project generated some positive effects<sup>7</sup>. On the one hand, these relate – in a broader sense – to the need to *address the general public’s lack of understanding of key environmental management and policy issues*:

- The greatest impact the project has achieved is the *heightened level of environmental awareness*, as expressed by members of the youth group, representatives of civil society groups, and religious/cultural leaders, all of which attended the training on environmental governance and people’s participation: a traditional leader told evaluators that her sister - a municipal mayor in one of the communities surrounding Lake Lanao – has implemented stricter solid waste management policies in her locality after attending the training. This initiative was so successful that this municipality for multiple years in a row has been awarded a prize for being the cleanest in Lanao del Sur.



**Representatives of MSU’s Extension Unit and of other civil society groups suggested a revision of the Environmental Comic to improve the impact of the messages conveyed**

<sup>7</sup> In line with current development practice, an effort was made to identify recent anecdotes or to obtain, where possible, details of relevance complementing the grantee’s available report documentation, to conduct an independent assessment of impact.

- Another impact witnessed by evaluators was the unplanned *creation of a dynamic and vibrant youth organization*. On their own, the group decided to name themselves the “Ranaw Youth Tanggol Kalikasan” - effectively reflecting the group’s Meranao identity and, at the same time, illustrating the organization’s main focus on environmental conservation and protection. The group was able to avail of the few micro-grants awarded by the project, which were used to implement outreach campaigns such as environmental orientation, workshops on environmental leadership, and clean-up drives. Today, they actively participate in other school-based activities in order to promote awareness for the protection and conservation of Lake Lanao.
- Meanwhile, *the information campaign seems to have had limited impact* on the targeted clientele. None of the group representatives the evaluation team met with mentioned the Citizen Handbook on Environmental Justice, which may be an initial indication of its limited use for litigation purposes. Various stakeholders highlighted that the Environmental Justice Comic Book, which was designed to increase the environmental awareness should use *simplified formulation and less text to make the comics more appealing and digestible* for the Meranao grassroots.

In addition, it is the evaluator’s view that the project also provided first, positive impulses to *overcome stakeholders’ lack of knowledge and commitment*:

#### **(v) Sustainability**

While the grantee managed to increase environmental awareness and knowledge about participatory governance among its project participants, such achievement can only be considered a first step towards the strengthening of democratic processes in the Lake Lanao area. Without continuously functioning institutional and social mechanisms it will be difficult to manage and sustain the initial seeds of social change, which have been sown. The Institute of Environmental Governance (IEG), which the project established under the Mindanao State University (MSU), was meant to play a major role in this respect. Discussions with the representatives of IEG revealed that no strategy has been devised by the implementing partner MSU, in order

#### **Issue addressed: improve stakeholders’ preparedness to jointly tackle complex environmental issues, and their appreciation for the benefits of people’s participation**

According to CSO and LGU members, the trainings and workshops proved to be an eye opener. Former trainees stated their knowledge about the benefits of environmental management and protection has significantly improved:

CSO and LGU representatives claimed there is improved understanding that *environmental protection should be a broad-based collective effort of neighbouring communities*. Due to existing social and cultural divides between families and clans these communities used to keep to themselves. Knowledge about the pressing needs of the lake has pushed the Meranaos to transcend age-old cultural and social divisions. Prepared to engage in collective efforts, former project participants highlighted that environmental governance efforts cannot be successful without the commitment of all the lake’s local government officials, both at the municipal and barangay levels: “While civil society groups can push environmental advocacy, local government officials are needed to push the implementation of related policies.”

Clearly, the project’s beneficiaries have understood that proper environmental management of Lake Lanao requires a *joint effort of all groups* having a stake in its conservation and preservation. In their discussion with evaluators, they therefore emphasized the need to train and inform those local government officials and residents of contiguous barangays, which were not covered by TK.

to secure the additional resources needed to train those barangay officials not covered by the project. As a consequence, MSU's key personnel does neither dispose of a clear work plan nor a direction how it will maintain its capacity building task over the coming years. The MSU's Extension Office indicated that IEG could continue to offer training on more technical aspects of environmental management, but failed to present evidence of its ability to tap potential development partners within or outside the province for this purpose. If not urgently addressed, this inability may very soon put the sustainability of IEG itself at risk.

On a positive note, the project's young beneficiaries independently decided to form RYTK as a group that will put into practice the lessons learned from TK's training. Evaluators were impressed to witness RYTK members' determination to foster a proactive youth to become the stewards of the environment for future generations. Based on its track record of outreach activities, clean up drives, environmental leadership seminars, and environmental youth summits (funded via the UNDEF project's micro-grants), RYTK successfully registered with the ARMM's Coordinating Development Office on Bangsamoro Youth Affairs, and was also accredited by the Youth Office of the Provincial Governor of Lanao del Sur. Mentoring by the grantee enabled RYTK to access additional support from NPC, MSU, and even the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Their activities have started to capture the public's attention in Lanao del Sur. A local radio station (Bangsamoro News) has covered some of RYTK's activities and posted images on the station's Facebook page, on which the organization was described as "a group composed of active and dedicated youngsters, who believe that the peaceful transformation of the Bangsamoro should start with the youth". Overall, the group has shown its ability to network with other partners and to increase its membership to resource its activities - a promising starting point for the RYTK's sustainability. The enthusiasm and dynamism of RYTK is a potent force to push participatory governance for the protection and conservation of the Lake Lanao's Watershed System. However, the leaders and members of RYTK are too young and too inexperienced to be the sole carriers of such a responsibility.

Thus, the best way forward appears to be a continued, long-term partnership between RYTK, civil society, and both a stabilised IEG, as well as a more cooperative government sector. This of course requires coordination, but as things stand no such arrangement has been made. Given that TK is an offsite (Manila-based) volunteer operated NGO, the sustainability of the project's outcome is at severe risk.

***(vi) UNDEF Value Added***

The project and its products were transparently branded as supported by UNDEF. According to TK there was, however, no necessity to further exploit the UNDEF label to promote the progress of its project activities.



## V. CONCLUSIONS

*i.* **The project approach was based on research findings**, which the grantee, Tanggol Kalikasan Inc. (TK), sourced from its previous project interventions and research conducted among the project's target area and population. Accordingly, the project was designed to build a strong coalition to ensure the efficient management, conservation and protection of the Lake Lanao Watershed Reservation – through democratic processes involving community integration and the introduction of partnerships, pre-consultation, capacity building, the promotion of micro-projects, and monitoring of policy implementation.

*ii.* The Comprehensive Agreement on Bangsamoro, which was approved right before the launch of the project in March 2014, provided greater autonomy to the Bangsamoro people, including though not limited to the conservation, utilization and development of natural resources. It is therefore our view that the project's trainings and workshops **represented a timely, relevant effort** to capacitate the different stakeholders on their specific roles for the better management of the Lake Lanao Watershed Area.

*iii.* In the absence of a permanent, main training mechanism **it was appropriate to establish an Institute of Environmental Governance (IEG)** under the Mindanao State University (MSU), so as **to promote participatory democratic processes** for environmental and natural resource management.

*iv.* Our findings related to the **capacity building** component show that the project's **training methodology and contents were designed to introduce the basic concept of ecology, best management practices, and to raise awareness** of applicable environmental laws, rules and regulations. Training the different target groups separately served to ensure that different roles and needs were adequately addressed, while a specific focus on governance principles and the Bangsamoro context was maintained.

*v.* Aiming to activate participatory decision-making mechanisms, it was appropriate to launch multi-staged technical working groups and workshops, in order to inspire the **joint elaboration and adoption of environmental action plans, as well as supporting policies and ordinances** on watershed, fisheries and solid waste management. Accordingly, this process involved all levels of governance and facilitated the consultation of the youth, civil society, as well as indigenous and Muslim religious leaders. **Disseminating information** via print and radio media finally aimed to enable the wider public to play a key role in the protection of the environment and, more precisely, **to empower individual citizens** to participate in the enforcement of environmental laws.

*vi.* While the project recognized the rich cultural traditions of the people of the Lake, the grantee underestimated the time and resources needed to overcome the challenges and divisions, which characterize the political and societal context. This resulted

in variations compared to the level of the initially planned output indicators, which is why ***in some areas the project fell short of its objectives***. However, evaluators are impressed that the grantee managed to gather the target group's full range of different political, religious and social leaders – something that according to these beneficiaries represents an unparalleled achievement.

**vii.** Although the youth responded strongly to the project's capacity building offer, acceptance was less pronounced among local government officials at the barangay level, as well as among traditional/religious leaders. Only 58% of the targeted barangay officials, and 71% of the targeted religious/traditional leaders attended the grantee's training. This made it impossible to launch the multi-sectoral working groups foreseen to monitor, in cooperation with civil society, the implementation of local policies and action plans. It also severely limited the allocation of the project's micro-grants, which were meant to assist the establishment of institutional mechanisms, the initiation of consultative processes, and the realisation of local initiatives. As a consequence, evaluators had difficulties to independently verify if and to what extent the project's area-wide and local action plans, as well as the proposed ordinances and policies are actually being implemented. Given the above, and the fact that trained leaders expressed to evaluators their frustration about the spillover effects of environmental degradation originating from neighbouring barangays that were remiss on environmental protection, the project's ***effectiveness was limited***.

**viii.** On the basis of group interviews held with project stakeholders and end-beneficiaries, evaluators independently formed the view that ***some of the project's activities still generated positive impact***. Evaluators found that the grantee's capacity building programme successfully heightened the beneficiaries' levels of environmental awareness and stewardship, as evidenced by a municipality being awarded as the cleanest in Lanao del Sur, and the unplanned creation of a dynamic and vibrant environmental youth organization. The project has also provided first, positive impulses to overcome stakeholders' lack of knowledge and commitment, as former local government training participants clearly expressed vis-à-vis evaluators the need for a joint effort by all groups to ensure the Lake's conservation and preservation.

**ix.** Capacity building activities represented the project's principal focus. Accordingly, 46% of the grantee's expenditure covered the training of beneficiaries and the organisation of subsequent workshops and meetings. With 33% of combined spending for project staff, staff training and external contractor inputs, the nominal human resources spending of the grantee appears rather costly, but this was partly offset by the fact that actual staff inputs exceeded the level of part-time resources charged to the budget. Compared to the project's total budget (USD 225,000) the grantee made significant savings (i.e. USD 39,925), but these were the results of adjustments made to the original plan, which were born out of necessity or non-realisation. In other words, ***the relationship between the project's actual inputs and outputs is efficient, but it holds also true that the project achieved less***.

**x.** Evaluators are concerned that ***the sustainability of the project's achievements is at risk***. The fact that TK and its implementing partner MSU (despite indication in the UNDEF project document) have failed to devise a strategy to secure

additional resources for the capacity building of those barangay officials not covered by the project, has left IEG without a clear work plan and direction. On the other hand, the youngest beneficiaries trained by the project have shown their ability to organize themselves as an environmental youth organization (RYTK), in order to network with other partners, and to increase membership to support their activities (such as clean up drives, environmental leadership seminars, and environmental youth summits). While this is a promising starting point to promote continued participatory governance for the protection and conservation of the Lake Lanao's Watershed System, the leaders and members of RYTK are too young and too inexperienced to be the sole carriers of such a responsibility.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

To strengthen the outcome and similar projects in the future, evaluators recommend to UNDEF and project grantees:

*i.* The fact that TK's approach and methodology included the conduct of baseline research and the formulation of target indicators is highly commendable, as this supported the project's **relevance** and facilitated the assessment of **effectiveness and impact**. Given the grantee assessed the starting situation as complex, evaluators would have preferred a project implementation strategy that recognizes the challenges and divisions, which characterize the political and societal context. Based on the above **we recommend to the grantee to design result frameworks with modest objectives and realistically achievable target indicators.**

*ii.* According to implementing partners and beneficiaries, one of the main reasons for the project's **limited effectiveness** was that the project missed a fully capacitated and empowered local (i.e. resident) manager and/or coordinator. In order to allow for swift integration with the local population, adjustment with local customs, and acknowledgment of highly sensitive social and political-religious sensibilities in the target area, **we recommend to the grantee to abandon its current practice to manage its projects remotely and part-time.**

*iii.* It is also clear that TK will need to organise complementary actions to secure the medium- and long-term effects for the target population around Lake Lanao. Based on our observations on **impact and sustainability, we therefore recommend to the grantee:**

- To consider ways to encourage MSU to (a) fully integrate IEG in its strategic planning; and to (b) raise IEG's planning capacity to enable it to elaborate annual work plans, which are backed by a permanent donor screening activity that identifies potential sources of funding to support its training programme for those barangays not yet covered by the project; and
- To install a local coordinator within IEG, whose permanent task it will be to continue where the UNDEF project left off, i.e. integrate previous and future trainees into the currently inactive multi-sectoral working and steering groups, to ensure the continued participatory development, implementation, and actual monitoring of the local and area-wide environmental action plans.
- To foresee the use of a mobile training unit. Providing training locally is expected to increase outreach and hence impact among barangay-level officials and -population.
- With regards to publications to consider (a) a more practical (i.e. lighter and appealing) format for the Citizen Handbook on Environmental Justice, by offering versions with differing content according to the target population; and (b) to simplify the textual content of the Environmental Justice Comic Book to improve outreach to the Lake area's wider population.

## IX. ANNEXES

### ANNEX 1: EVALUATION QUESTIONS

DAC criterion	Evaluation Question	Related sub-questions
Relevance	To what extent was the project, as designed and implemented, suited to context and needs at the beneficiary, local, and national levels?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Were the objectives of the project in line with the needs and priorities for democratic development, given the context?</li> <li>▪ Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs, priorities, and context? Why?</li> <li>▪ Were risks appropriately identified by the projects? How appropriate are/were the strategies developed to deal with identified risks? Was the project overly risk-averse?</li> </ul>
Effectiveness	To what extent was the project, as implemented, able to achieve objectives and goals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To what extent have the project's objectives been reached?</li> <li>▪ To what extent was the project implemented as envisaged by the project document? If not, why not?</li> <li>▪ Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives?</li> <li>▪ What has the project achieved? Where it failed to meet the outputs identified in the project document, why was this?</li> </ul>
Efficiency	To what extent was there a reasonable relationship between resources expended and project impacts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs?</li> <li>▪ Did institutional arrangements promote cost-effectiveness and accountability?</li> <li>▪ Was the budget designed, and then implemented, in a way that enabled the project to meet its objectives?</li> </ul>
Impact	To what extent has the project put in place processes and procedures supporting the role of civil society in contributing to democratization, or to direct promotion of democracy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To what extent has/have the realization of the project objective(s) and project outcomes had an impact on the specific problem the project aimed to address?</li> <li>▪ Have the targeted beneficiaries experienced tangible impacts? Which were positive; which were negative?</li> <li>▪ To what extent has the project caused changes and effects, positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen, on democratization?</li> <li>▪ Is the project likely to have a catalytic effect? How? Why? Examples?</li> </ul>
Sustainability	To what extent has the project, as designed and implemented, created what is likely to be a continuing impetus towards democratic development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To what extent has the project established processes and systems that are likely to support continued impact?</li> <li>▪ Are the involved parties willing and able to continue the project activities on their own (where applicable)?</li> </ul>
UNDEF value-added	To what extent was UNDEF able to take advantage of its unique position and comparative advantage to achieve results that could not have been achieved had support come from other donors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What was UNDEF able to accomplish, through the project, that could not as well have been achieved by alternative projects, other donors, or other stakeholders (Government, NGOs, etc.).</li> <li>▪ Did project design and implementing modalities exploit UNDEF's comparative advantage in the form of an explicit mandate to focus on democratization issues?</li> </ul>

## ANNEX 2: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

### UNDEF

- Final Narrative Report
- Mid-Term Progress Report
- Project Document
- Milestone Verification Reports
- Financial Utilization Reports
- Project Officer's Evaluation Note

### Tanggol Kalikasan, Inc.

- Training Materials
- Citizen Handbook on Environmental Justice
- Environmental Justice Comic Book: "Tanggol Kalikasan Comics: Al Khalifa"
- Ranaw Watershed Area-Specific Action Plan
- Policy Review on Environmental Governance in Lanao Lake Watershed Reservation
- Provincial Environment Summit Covenant
- Ranaw Watershed Management Conference Documentation / Report
- Solid Waste Ordinance
- Forestry Ordinance
- Fisheries Ordinance (incomplete)
- Milestone 2 Project Presentation
- Images
- Brochure: "Tanggol Kalikasan at 25 – public interest environmental law evolves", Tanggol Kalikasan (2012)
- Brochure: "Tanggol Kalikasan - a public interest environmental law office", Tanggol Kalikasan (2015)

### Other sources

- Pipälawan O. Naga, "Lake Lanao Brief", Save Lake Lanao Movement, Inc. (unpublished, 2010).
- Rivera, Temario, "The Struggle of Muslim People in Southern Philippines: Independence or Autonomy", in Moro Reader: "History and Contemporary Struggles of the Bangsamoro People", ed. Bobby Tuazon, 38-55, Quezon City: CenPEG (2008).

### Laws, conventions

- As referred to in Annex 2

## ANNEX 3: SCHEDULE OF INTERVIEWS

13 June 2016	
<i>Grantee's Project Briefing (Manila)</i>	
Tanggol Kalikasan, Inc.	TK Enforcement and Area Director (project manager)
	1 TK Volunteer (project staff)
14 June 2016	
<i>Implementing Partner &amp; Field Staff Interviews (Iligan City, Mindanao)</i>	
National Power Corporation (NPC)	2 representatives (NPC-WMD)
Mindanao State University (MSU)	2 representatives (MSU-OVCRE)
	1 representative (MSU-IEG)
<i>Beneficiary Interviews: Young Project Participants</i>	
Ranao Youth Tanggol Kalikasan (RYTK)	5 RYTK Members
15 June 2016	
<i>Beneficiary Interviews: Various target groups (Mindanao State University, Marawi City, ARMM)</i>	
MSU Marawi Main Campus	4 representatives
Barangay Singcara Lumbayanague	1 representative
CSO, Ganassi	1 representative
CSO, Tamparan	1 representative
CSO, Binidayan	1 representative
LGU, Madamba	1 representative
<i>Stakeholder Interview: Department of Environment and Natural Resources (Lanao del Sur)</i>	
Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office	1 representative
16 & 17 June 2016	
<i>Grantee's Debriefing (Iligan City &amp; Manila)</i>	
Tanggol Kalikasan, Inc.	TK Volunteer (project staff)

## ANNEX 4: ACRONYMS

ARMM	Autonomous Republic of Muslim Mindanao
ASG	Abu Sayaf Group
BFAR	Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
CAB	Comprehensive Agreement of the Bangsamoro
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
IEG	Institute of Environmental Governance
LGA	Local Government Academy
LGU	Local Government Unit
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MSU	Mindanao State University
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPC	National Power Corporation
RYTK	Ranao Youth Tanggol Kalikasan
TK	Tanggol Kalikasan, Inc.
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
USD	United States Dollar



## **ANNEX 5: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Institutional jurisdiction over the management of the Lake Lanao watershed system**

Under the amended Organic Act of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), the Regional Government has jurisdiction over forestlands and waters within ARMM, with the exception of declared watersheds. However, prior to the passage of the Organic Act of ARMM, and by virtue of Proclamation No.871 dated February 26, 1992, Lake Lanao watershed was proclaimed as a watershed reserve. The area is therefore included in the initial components of the National Protected Areas System (NIPAS) as declared in the NIPAS Act of 1992 (Republic Act No. 7586). As a declared protected watershed area, the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is the primary agency tasked to oversee the management of NIPAS component areas. However, up to this day, PAWB has not made any significant steps to integrate Lake Lanao Watershed into the NIPAS System (Naga, 2010).

Following the proclamation of the Lake Lanao as a Protected Watershed Area, the President of the Philippines also created the Lake Lanao Watershed Protection and Development Council (LLWPDC) headed by the DENR Secretary. Naga (2010) however observed that the Council never regularly meets, and to date, its major output was limited to the approval of an Integrated Development Plan in 2003.

While these developments effectively excluded the Lake Lanao Watershed from the jurisdiction of the ARMM, the Regional Legislative Assembly of ARMM, by virtue of Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act 93 of 1999, created the Lake Lanao Development Authority. There are, however, some doubts whether such Act took effect in 1999. Many locals remain unaware that such law exists with the Authority never ever being activated.

Under Republic Act 6395, also known as the Charter of the National Power Corporation (NPC), the agency also previously claimed complete jurisdiction and control over watersheds surrounding its power plants and energy sources. This issue was put to rest by a Memorandum Order by the President of the Philippines designating DENR as the lead agency in the management of the Lake after it was declared a protected watershed area in 1992. The NPC actually entered into agreements with DENR and DENR-ARMM to manage portions of the watershed, recognizing the administrative jurisdiction of these agencies (Naga, 2010).

Meanwhile, the communities surrounding the lake are also entitled to income coming from the use of the lake for power generation. Under the Local Government Code of the Philippines (Republic Act 7160 of 1991), host local governments shall receive 1% of gross sales of government owned or controlled corporations engaged in the utilization and development of the national wealth in the area. Further, under the energy laws (Republic Act 7638 of 1992), local communities are also entitled to direct benefits from the use of energy sources, such as water for hydroelectric power generation. Thus, aside from the overlapping institutional jurisdiction over the management of the Lake Lanao watershed system, another persistent issue is the equal resource allocation among different groups living around the lake area.