The views expressed in this report are those of the author only and do not necessarily reflect those of the PATH Foundation Philippines Incorporated.
Executive Summary

The Integrated Population and Coastal Resource Management (IPOPCORM) project is a three pilot activity funded by the David and Lucille Packard Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID/Washington). The project consists of: a) expanded information and service delivery through local NGOs and a network of peer educators and community-based distributors (CBD) of family planning commodities, b) policy advocacy to national local government officials, and c) operations research designed to test the hypothesis that an integrated of coastal resource management (CRM) and reproductive health (RH) is more effective than single sector approaches in achieving food security. This external review of IPOPCORM, its strategy, and program accomplishments was commissioned the PATH Foundation Philippines Incorporated (PFPI) who has overall management responsibility for IPOPCORM.

The review makes various recommendations about specific aspects of IPOPCORM, but the most important recommendation that is grounded in the overwhelmingly positive information about the progress and accomplishments of the project is that:

The review strongly and unequivocally endorses the PFPI proposal to the Packard Foundation and USAID to provide sufficient funding for a two year extension to strengthen further what is in place, maximize the utility of its accomplishments, and work toward sustainability of project results.

Key findings of the review include the following:

- There is no apparent "downside" to the integrated CRM/RH strategy

- Significant progress has been made with CRM at the community level. Attitudes and practices have widely changed. All information indicates that members of IPOPCORM communities have ceased illegal fishing practices, ceased destruction of mangrove forests, contributed to maintaining a cleaner coastal shoreline, and improved their disposal of wastes. Illegal practices continue but in every site visited, this is done by individuals outside of the community and by commercial fishing boats often times protected by local powerful, politically connected individuals.

- The integrated strategy lends sustainability to CRM interventions, while CRM provides a comprehensible context for coastal residents to recognize the necessity of limiting family size to achieve food security and improve their family’s welfare.

- Unlike family planning approaches used for the past forty years in the Philippines, the integrated strategy deflects criticism and obstructionism directed toward family planning by the Catholic Church and conservative rural residents because they too recognize the association between food security and family size. The reality of the situation is simply becoming too overwhelming to ignore or deny any longer.
• The integrated approach has greatly facilitated the ability to communicate reproductive health information to rural youths because of the context it provides. Considerable emphasis is given by youth peer educators to delaying sexual activity for both physiological and economic reasons. However, recognizing the extent of sexual activity among rural youths, messages about contraception and safe sex are also communicated.

• At every site visited, respondents reiterated the observations that family planning use has increased, that the number of pregnancies have decreased, and that people are far more open and receptive to RH information as a direct result of IPOPCORM and its integrated strategy.

• The use of adult and youth peer educators, i.e., fisher folk and other members of the coastal communities, has greatly contributed to the effective dissemination of key information about CRM and RH, as well as to motivating individuals to make behavioral changes.

• The CBD component is nothing short of a run-away success in receiving tremendous acceptance by local communities as a source for pills, condoms, and RH information. The Trust products they sell are perceived as very high quality products, so much so that people are willing to pay for them instead of using free commodities provided by government facilities. The current network has the capacity to become a self-sustaining social marketing network in the next two years.

• Overall, the IPOPCORM strategy might very well be the first approach that is genuinely effective in informing and promoting the use of family planning in rural coastal communities. There is no reason why a similar strategy that links reproductive health to inland and upland natural resource bases could not be equally as effective. Forty years of experience with population projects in the Philippines shows that single sector approaches are marginally effective in rural communities.

• IPOPCORM is strengthening capacities at the local level in government, partner NGOs, and Peoples Organizations to support and expand CRM and RH activities. Local governments have a greater appreciation of the linkage between CRM and RH, and recognize the need to budget accordingly, especially in light of their expanded responsibilities under decentralization. NGOs and their staff are gaining skills and experience in CRM and RH that will enable them to receive funding in either or both areas. Peoples Organizations have been formed and/or strengthened under the assistance of IPOPCORM, enabling them to become effective stewards of their local resources, as well as to become effective advocates of RH. Capacity development is very likely to be one of the most important and lasting results of the project.

• IPOPCORM has significantly contributed to building lasting partnerships between local government and IPOPCORM's partner NGOs. In some cases, local officials noted that relations have never been better. The most telling point is that they are willing to provide funding for future activities, including the NGOs' operations.
## Acronyms

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>BOMA</td>
<td>Boyo-an Mangrove Association</td>
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<td>CBD</td>
<td>Community-based Distribution</td>
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<td>CCEF</td>
<td>Coastal Conservation and Education Foundation</td>
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<td>CFI</td>
<td>Culion Foundation, Incorporated</td>
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<td>CHOW</td>
<td>Community Health Outreach Worker</td>
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<td>CPE</td>
<td>Couple Peer Educators</td>
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<td>CRM</td>
<td>Coastal Resource Management</td>
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<td>CRMP</td>
<td>The USAID-funded Coastal Resource Management project</td>
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<td>DENR</td>
<td>Department of Environment and Natural Resources</td>
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<td>EED</td>
<td>Environment-Friendly Enterprise Development</td>
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<td>FCBFI</td>
<td>First Consolidated Bank Foundation, Incorporated</td>
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<td>FP</td>
<td>Family planning</td>
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<td>IEC</td>
<td>Information, Education and Communications</td>
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<td>IPOPCORM</td>
<td>Integrated Population and Coastal Resource Management project</td>
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<td>IUD</td>
<td>Intra-uterine device</td>
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<td>LGU</td>
<td>Local Government Unit</td>
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<td>MPA</td>
<td>Marine Protected Area</td>
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<td>MPE</td>
<td>Male Peer Educator</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
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<td>NSV</td>
<td>Non-surgical vasectomy</td>
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<td>ORS</td>
<td>Oral Rehydration Solution</td>
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<td>PE</td>
<td>Peer Educators</td>
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<td>PFPI</td>
<td>PATH Foundation Philippines Incorporated</td>
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<td>RH</td>
<td>Reproductive health</td>
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<td>RHU</td>
<td>Rural Health Unit</td>
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<td>STD</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted Disease</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>YPE</td>
<td>Youth Peer Educator</td>
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Section 1: Introduction to IPOPCORM

Background:

The Integrated Population and Coastal Resource Management (IPOPCORM) project, managed by PATH Foundation Philippines Inc. (PFPI), is currently the largest population – environment project in the Philippines, both geographically and in size of investment. The David and Lucille Packard Foundation and the US Agency for International Development (USAID/Washington) are providing complementary funding to support the development and implementation of linked Coastal Resource Management and Reproductive Health (CRM – RH) activities in 17 coastal municipalities of six target provinces during 2001-2004. The target provinces include Palawan (including the Calamianes Islands), Camiguin (Mindanao), and four provinces in the Visayas region - Bohol, Cebu, Siquijor, and Negros Occidental.

Results of IPOPCORM's baseline survey conducted in 2001 demonstrated high levels of unmet family planning need and childhood malnutrition in areas that are environmentally degraded. In the same communities, the vast majority of respondents knew someone personally engaged in illegal fishing/logging and most expressed the opinion that only the government can stop such practices. These findings point to problems that are fundamental to the well-being of millions of rural Filipinos. Finding solutions to these problems will entail identifying effective ways in which behavioral changes needed for improving environmental management, limiting family size, and ultimately, achieving food security can be facilitated and expedited. That is IPOPCORM's chief goal.

IPOPCORM is designed to enhance food security and the quality of life of rural coastal people by providing technical and financial assistance to local government and coastal communities largely channeled through local NGOs. IPOPCORM works toward three principal objectives:

- Improved reproductive health for people living in coastal communities
- Enhanced community management of marine and coastal resources
- Increased awareness of population – environment issues and linkages

The project consists of three main components:

- service delivery to rural coastal communities targeting fisher folk and other coastal resource users, including youth between 15 and 20+ years of age and private entrepreneurs serving as family planning (FP) commodity outlets.
- policy advocacy at local and national levels
- operations research to test the hypothesis that food security will be achieved more quickly when CRM and RH/FP are integrated in a project package compared to single sector approaches
IPOPCORM’s community-based projects currently span seven marine conservation priority areas ranked as extremely high or very high in the Philippine Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. In these sites, PFPI and local NGO partners are developing and testing three different models of integration and delivery mechanisms for linked RH/FP and CRM strategies. These are:

- Start-up of new integrated project sites where NGO staff support both CRM and RH/FP components
- Add-ons of RH/FP to existing CRM projects started by the USAID-funded CRMP
- Single sector project sites that support only CRM or only RH/FP

IPOPCORM utilizes IEC tools and messages developed under the CRMP project, particularly the “three critical results” articulated in CRMP’s joint publication with DENR and DOA/BFAR entitled “Coastal Resource Management for Food Security.” In this publication, the two national agencies acknowledge that food security and sustainable development in the coastal zone will only be achieved when fishing effort is reduced, illegal fishing is stopped, and coastal habitats are protected. A strategic intervention recommended to reduce fishing effort is to “strengthen family planning in coastal areas.” IPOPCORM responds directly to this recommendation through the integrated CRM – RH/FP strategy guiding the majority of IPOPCORM-funded NGO projects.

IPOPCORM’s Implementation Structure

It will be useful to the reader to understand the basic organization of IPOPCORM, particularly at the community level, given the focus of this review.

IPOPCORM’s implementation arrangements engage local governments in partnership with local NGOs to carry out project activities. IPOPCORM has successfully helped to establish very close and positive working relationships between these two partners. This is key to the progress achieved to date. Local health officials, agricultural and/or environmental officers, the mayors and barangay council members are key players from the local governments where IPOPCORM works.

NGO teams consist of an overall project manager/director and Community Health Outreach Workers (CHOW) supervised a senior CHOW – a "Super CHOW". The CHOWs constitute the NGO staff working on the project, typically numbering three or four per project site (i.e., a municipality). CHOWS receive training and support from PFPI and their NGO directors to develop the skills necessary to support CRM and RH/FP activities. PFPI and senior NGO staff work with local government – municipalities and barangays – to advocate for better enforcement of environmental laws, and to plan and implement barangay-specific family planning and CRM activities.

The NGOs and their CHOWs train people from the local community to serve as peer educators who inform, promote and motivate others in their community about CRM and RH/FP. This includes Couple Peer Educators (CPE), Male Peer Educators (MPE), and
Youth Peer Educators (YPE). The peer educators are the key to disseminating information throughout the community and to promoting behavioral change. Peer educators are selected in a collaborative fashion with local government, for example, candidates are identified by barangay council members. To date, PATH and partner NGOs have trained and supported over 1,200 fisher folk, including youths, who serve as volunteer peer educators, motivators and agents of change for environmental stewardship and responsible sexuality. Some are also trained to educate, screen and counsel men and women about family planning and to sell pills and condoms. Many function both as volunteer fish/forest wardens and as peer educators for CRM and RH/FP.

The private sector participates in IPOPCORM's social marketing program by engaging sari-sari (convenience) shopkeepers as Community Based Distributors for family planning products sold at subsidized prices. A referral mechanism is also established with the local government health facilities for surgical methods of contraception (vasectomy, bilateral tubal ligations) and for other reproductive health concerns (sexually transmitted disease, etc.). The CBDs have opened an important new source of supply of pills, condoms, and RH/FP information that complements and augments the government health facilities.

IPOPCORM's third component, Environmentally Friendly Enterprise Development (EED), provides skills training and micro-credit for small enterprise development in IPOPCORM project sites. Credit programs are managed by the local NGO who have assigned staff specifically to work on this activity. Fisher folk and other community members who participate in the program and serve as volunteer FP motivators, fish wardens, or members of the BFARMC receive priority consideration in the selection of beneficiaries for training and micro-credit. In this way, credit for alternative livelihood development functions both as a CRM intervention and as a reward scheme for volunteerism.

Review Process

PFPI requested this external review to assess the validity and preliminary results of the integrated CRM – RH strategy guiding IPOPCORM. Information for the review came from various sources, including project documents, mid-term technical evaluations, baseline survey results, grant agreements, NGO reports, and IPOPCORM biannual reports. Site visits were made to six IPOPCORM municipalities: Cordova in Cebu province; Tubigon, Candijay, and Mabini in Bohol; Dauin in Negros Oriental; and Busuanga, and Culion in Palawan. Interviews were conducted with mayors, council members, barangay captains, barangay council members, and local government health workers. Group discussions were held with the various peer educators and CBDs supported by IPOPCORM partner NGOs. Well over 300 people involved in one way or another with IPOPCORM were part of the interview process over an intensive two week period.¹

¹ Annex A contains the Scope of Work for this review
Section 2
The IPOPCORM Integrated Strategy

IPOPCORM’s overall strategy follows directly from a framework for sustainable coastal resource management necessary for food security jointly developed by the USAID-funded Coastal Resource Management Project, the Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the Department of Agriculture. Based on current conditions and trends in coastal resources and aquatic food production, three critical results are put forward as essential for sustaining coastal resources to achieve greater food security in the coming years; they are:

- Critical Result 1: Fishing effort reduced to sustainable levels
- Critical Result 2: Illegal and destructive fishing practices stopped
- Critical Result 3: Coastal habitats protected and managed

The framework then specifies the various interventions that need to be undertaken to achieve these results. The innovative element among what are mainly the core activities of environmental projects is the inclusion of a call for decreasing population pressure on the resource base in coastal communities to reduce fishing effort to a sustainable level. The framework calls for promotion of family planning in these communities, not typically a part of environmental management programs.

IPOPCORM responds to the program outlined by the 1999 CRMP/DENR framework, and specifically to the need to promote the use of family planning in the broader context of reproductive health in coastal communities. A major focus of this review of IPOPCORM was to assess the utility of this integrated strategy. This includes such questions as:

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of an integrated strategy as opposed to the typical single sector approach?
- What synergies have occurred as a result of the integrated approach, i.e., is more or less accomplished as a result to the integrated CRM/RH strategy?
- What benefits does the integrated approach bring to coastal communities that might not otherwise be produced, or produced so quickly, from a non-integrated approach?
- How do coastal communities perceive and respond to the integrated approach and do those perceptions lead to greater community response and support?

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Exploring these and related questions with local government officials, municipal health staff, NGO staff, IPOPCORM participants, and people from the communities where IPOPCORM works, the overwhelming bulk of information from these sources supports the following statement:

- **There is simply no meaningful "downside" to IPOPCORM's integrated strategy.**

The following summarizes the information in support of this statement.

1 **Working towards sustainability:** RH/FP clearly contributes to the medium and longer-term sustainability of CRM achievements. A purely CRM focused approach lacks the key element essential for sustainability – reduced population pressure on and use of the resource base. Whatever is accomplished by CRM in the short-term – MPAs, reduction in illegal fishing practices by local fishermen – can be subsequently reversed as exploitation of the resource increases due to population growth.

Local people readily recognize the growing pressure on the resource base. Local fishermen who are PEs reported that during their lifetime, they have witnessed increasing numbers of fishermen from their own and surrounding communities and that fishing by those from other provinces (transients) has also increased substantially. Local officials in IPOPCORM's municipalities recognized that what is accomplished by CRM interventions could be overwhelmed if current population growth rates continue in coastal communities. This growth is due to both expansion of the existing population as well as in-migration from surrounding inland communities as their agricultural and natural resources become insufficient to support their growing populations. Focusing solely on CRM interventions without addressing population dynamics, therefore, seems very unlikely to result in the sustainable improvements necessary for food security. The integrated approach of IPOPCORM increases the likelihood of achieving this result, assuming that both CRM and RH/FP components work effectively over time.

2 **Enabling RH/FP efforts:** CRM activities – information and interventions – significantly facilitates RH/FP promotion in the short-term and it is likely that this impetus will continue over the longer-term. CRM is serving as a catalyst for RH/FP promotion, understanding and acceptance. While RH/FP contributes to CRM sustainability, CRM provides the essential "enabling environment" for RH/FP that has been lacking in the past. From discussions with IPOPCORM participants, it is clear that CRM and the related food security focus provides a tangible, immediate context in which the importance of RH/FP becomes comprehensible and of urgency to an increasing number of coastal residents. Not to discount the importance of RH/FP's contribution to CRM sustainability, but in some ways the RH/FP component "gets more than it gives" to the CRM component. Without CRM, you are back to exactly the same situation that has not been effective in the past in the Philippines—promoting RH/FP as a stand-alone program.
An alternative to the past and mediocre results: A non-integrated approach to RH/FP promotion continues the same types of efforts made over the past 40 years in the Philippines. Considering just USAID's investment into population programs alone, total expenditures over the past 40 years expressed in net present value dollars would likely exceed $200 million, yet there is painfully little to show from such a large investment when the Philippines is compared with other countries where comparable investments have been made, e.g., Indonesia, Egypt. One point emphasized in every meeting during this review is that the integrated approach is generating far more acceptance of FP in IPOP Corm communities as a result of people being able to see and understand the linkage between family size and their economic security. It appears, therefore, that the integrated strategy offers a different approach that is more effective in advancing acceptance of RH/FP information and related behavioral changes.

Increasing use of FP: Respondents consistently noted that they know more couples are practicing family planning since the start of IPOP Corm. At every meeting with PEs and CBDs, respondents consistently report, and the group concurred, that there were noticeably fewer pregnancies soon after the program started. From their work, they find that people in their community are far more receptive to information about RH/FP since the start of IPOP Corm. They consistently attribute this to the linkage between CRM and RH that assists people to understand the importance of limiting family size for economic and food security reasons.

Keeping in mind that partner NGOs have been working with IPOP Corm for anywhere from eight months up to two years, PFPI's Biannual Report for the last half of 2003 provides impressive results regarding FP promotion and use. A total of 34,779 contacts have been made by peer educators to date concerning CRM and RH. This does not include additional contacts by CBDs with customers who ask about RH/FP or follow-up contacts which would easily push the total to somewhere between 50-60,000 contacts. PFPI estimates that participating NGOs, their PEs, and CBDs have generated at least 6,000 new FP acceptors since the start of the program. Moreover, unmet need in integrated projects sites has fallen on average by 15% compared to 11% in a RH-only site. While survey data are currently not available to verify how this translates into an increase in CPR, the substantial increase in new users in what are relatively small communities, combined with declining unmet need makes it very likely that contraceptive use has increased as well.3

Overcoming resistance to RH/FP: For RH promotion, respondents noted that the CRM component provides a more neutral and acceptable starting point for discussions with community residents. For those who object to or initially refuse to talk about RH/FP, peer educators report that they use CRM as a means to approach the issue from a different direction. They shift to talking about CRM issues, and they typically continue the CRM focus on repeated occasions. When the person begins to show interest and understanding, the peer educators will begin to link CRM to how many people are fishing and using coastal resources. Many reported that even among those

3 While substantial increases in new acceptors and falling unmet need suggest the CPR is increasing, high drop-out rates would have the opposite effect. PFPI will support a second round household survey in mid-2004 that will provide a CPR for IPOP CoRM municipalities selected for the OR study.
who initially resisted or rejected discussion of RH/FP, these people begin to see the linkages and become more receptive to information about the importance of limiting family size and the ways to do this. A non-integrated approach to RH/FP lacks this "persuasive second channel" for discussion of broader issues that ultimately relate back to the need for and benefits of family planning.

**Understanding about the CRM/RH linkage:** This is a central issue concerning the integration strategy and respondents offered conflicting views about how well this linkage is understood. On the one hand, respondents stated that have witnessed the decline of the resource base upon which their livelihood depends over recent years. They consistently reported increases in the number of people fishing and using the resource. The size of their catch has decreased, they have more difficulty in catching a sufficient number of fish, they are catching smaller fish, and capture of larger fish is infrequent. While they express hope that the CRM interventions will in time reverse the situation, it is entirely too soon for substantial improvements to have occurred in many IPOPCORM sites. A frequently made observation by respondents is that they believe that life has become harder for them and they report this makes limiting family size absolutely essential to them. This association between the resource base's decline and the need to limit family size is precisely what IPOPCORM is attempting to achieve; so people really do "get it".

However, NGO staff make varying assessments of the extent to which they believe people understand clearly the CRM – Food Security – RH/FP linkage in their communities. Some (e.g., Feed the Children/Tubigon) expressed some reservations about how widespread this understanding is. In contrast, others (e.g., the Culion Foundation, Inc. in Culion) believed knowledge and understanding about the linkage was good. Peer educators at the sites visited tended to report that understanding of the linkage was fairly well established among those they had been able to meet and follow-up with.

In short, it seems that understanding about the linkage varies both within the communities and among the different project sites. Given how briefly IPOPCORM activities have been underway in some locations (only 8 months or less in some recent expansion barangays), further continued dissemination of information and reinforcement through repeated follow-up to strengthen understanding of the linkage must continue during the extension of IPOPCORM.

**The "Quiet Revolution":** There is a "quiet revolution" in thinking going on in rural communities pertaining to religion and the use of family planning. Focus group discussions with PEs and CBs provided an opportunity to talk with people from the communities about how people are able to reconcile their adherence to the teachings of the Catholic church with their use of FP. In every meeting when this question was put forth to the group, participants readily understood the issue. Basically their response was the same. Rural people are now doing what urban people in the Philippines starting doing some 15 years or so ago. They compartmentalize their thinking.
Respondents said they think of themselves as good Catholics – they attend mass, go to confession, receive communion, and generally accept the teachings of the Church. At the same time, they see no insurmountable obstacle to using FP as good Catholics. Some pointed out that the Church also teaches that it is their responsibility to take care of their family as good Catholics.

From their discussions, they tend to view FP as belonging in the secular world and responding to the tangible needs of the family; it is simply not a religious issue for many. They speak of the benefits of FP, the enhancement of the welfare of the family by limiting the number children they have, the potential for advancement their children have as a result of their ability to support their education, and other economic benefits that result from smaller families.

These are views and attitudes that would not have been very common 15 or 20 years ago in rural communities. Clearly, changes in attitudes and ways of thinking among rural people concerning their religion and the need for limiting family size is occurring, especially among the younger and more progressive elements of these communities. This is a sea change in thinking in such communities. Not all, of course, have made the change, but according to these respondents, an increasing number of people are coming to this compartmentalized way of thinking about their religion on the one hand, and their need for family planning on the other.

Though not envisioned as an result of IPOPCORM's integrated strategy, the project is directly contributing to this "quiet revolution" through provision of correct FP information provided by NGO staff and peer educators. Equally important, this change in thinking is creating new opportunities for integrated strategies like IPOPCORM's to be increasing viable and effective. One has to wonder what IPOPCORM's effectiveness would have been without the "quiet revolution".

**Reaching Youth:** IPOPCORM's Youth Peer Educators (YPE) conduct individual counseling and small group discussions about CRM and the full range of RH issues, including adolescent sexuality. While sex education is part of the regular school curriculum, some YPEs reported that the parents of some youths they contacted initially objected to their activities. These parents believed that such discussions would increase the curiosity of their children in sex, leading to their engaging in sexual activities. This response is not surprising in predominantly Catholic, morally conservative rural communities. What was surprising was how infrequent such objections were made. YPEs reported that most parents had no objections and even welcomed them to discuss these topics with their teenage children (perhaps relieved that the burden to do so was lifted from their shoulders?).

The YPEs reported that in most cases, when the parents who initially objected also learned about the full range of CRM/RH messages, many stopped resisting. Moreover, an important element of the YPE message set is to encourage youth to delay sexual activity until they are married or at least older. They emphasize both the physiological risks of early
pregnancy and its economic consequences. However, if they are sexually active, the YPEs counseled them about contraception and the importance of condom use to avoid STDs and HIV/AIDS infection.

It was clear from the YPE’s descriptions of how initial resistance by some parents was overcome that the CRM component of the counseling made the RH element more acceptable and inoffensive. Without the CRM element, it might have been far more difficult to conduct the RH sessions with youth – another element of the benefits of the integrated approach.

A Second Integration: The integration strategy of IPOPCORM focuses on the cross-sectoral tie between CRM and RH. However, the CBD component of the project constitutes a second important type of integration between the public and private sectors where both work toward common objectives. IPOPCORM establishes a network of outlets – sari-sari stores – for FP information and contraceptives – pills, condoms and injectibles (only if a trained medical person can do the injection) – in the communities where IPOPCORM supports RH. The great advantage of the CBD shops is that they are open seven days a week for many hours every day, they are readily accessible, and they are run by someone known and trusted in the community. Shop owners receive FP training and follow-up support from the partner NGOs, including the use of a screening protocol for women who want to use the pill. All indications are that these shops are a very well received, popular source of supply for contraceptives in their communities. CDB shop owners report that they are frequently asked about family planning by customers who are curious about the posters on the shop walls promoting FP. They also refer women to the barangay midwife or Rural Health Unit who should not use the pill or who are experiencing side effects. The CBDs have clearly become yet one more additional channel of communication and information about RH in rural communities as a result of IPOPCORM.

Local health staff, i.e., Municipal Health Officers, Rural Health Unit staff, and barangay midwives – were all very supportive and positive about the CDB element of IPOPCORM. None saw the CBDs as competing with their services because they are well aware of their increasing inability to meet demand for contraceptives. Some reported that they no longer have contraceptives in stock and recognize the CBDs are now the primary source of supply. The amount of good will and cooperation expressed by local health staff regarding the CBDs was striking in all health facilities that were visited, including regional hospitals.

The government’s former FP program is currently collapsing as supplies of contraceptives are no longer available from the national level and remaining local supplies are running out. Municipalities do not recognize the extent of the problem. Until local governments respond adequately, the CBD outlets that IPOPCORM have created will become increasingly important for expanding and sustaining FP acceptance and use.

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4 The Trust pill sold by CBDs is reported to be less likely to produce side effects than the pills provided by the local health facilities.
The integration or partnership that IPOPCORM and its partner NGOs who support the CBDs have managed to establish exceptionally positive working relationships with local health staff. It was clear from the interviews that local health staff view the CBDs as sharing their objectives and contributing to the common goal of promoting and making FP commodities more accessible.

Finding Neutral Ground with the Church: The integrated strategy makes the RH/FP component less of a target of resistance by the clergy and conservative Catholics in the community. NGO staff and PEs consistently reported no major difficulties with their local priests about the RH/FP promotion, contrary to what one would expect. According to NGO staff, the RH/FP linkage to CRM, food security and improving the welfare of the rural community is making RH/FP more palatable to local clergy. In at least one project site, the local priest is openly supportive of the RH/FP component because he sees the important link it has with CRM and food security for his island community. Not all are such ardent supporters, but PEs and CBDs repeatedly stated that their local priest has not spoken out against their RH/FP work. However, a few exceptions to these claims were also found. In short, it appears that another benefit of the integrated strategy is that in many cases it offers sufficient context and justification to the clergy on an individual, personal basis for at least not resisting RH/FP promotion, despite official sanctions against such practices.

Building Local Capacities: Each IPOPCORM component was evaluated between July and August 2003. Predictably, they each find a number of issues and weakness with individual NGOs, as well as good progress and reasons to be hopeful that problems can be resolved. There is really nothing too surprising in any of these reports, nor reason to be overly concerned. They identify the typical problems any project has when it starts, and perhaps IPOPCORM encountered a few more because it involves a number of NGOs with quite varying capacities in CRM and RH. Nothing in these evaluation even remotely implies that IPOPCORM is seriously off track or its fundamental strategy is misguided. Quite to contrary, information the reports provide and interview data for this review indicates precisely the opposite – much has been accomplished in a relatively short period of time, and the pace of the project is accelerating as NGO partners and those working with them gain experience.

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5 One notable exception is a priest who reportedly refused communion to the family of a woman who had an IUD inserted. The doctor who did the insertion informed the priest. The woman ultimately had the IUD removed. In another instance, the local priest and lay preachers went to the mayor to pressure him to act against the NGOs RH/FP activities. The mayor ultimately refused. This mayor was one of four who IPOPCoRM sent to Thailand for exposure to community-based family planning in 2002.
What was very apparent from the meetings conducted for this review is that each of the visited NGOs and those from the communities participating in IPOP CORM are gaining skills and experience from the project. This is true regardless of the specific weaknesses and need for additional training and technical assistance identified by the mid-term component evaluations.

Of course, all technical assistance projects aim to build local capacities either in or outside of government, and IPOP CORM does both. What is unique about the capacities IPOP CORM helps to develop, particularly for partner NGOs, is that the integrated strategy broadens the NGO's programmatic capacities, i.e., not just CRM, not just RH. This will enable them to receive funding for either area, and hopefully both which would not have been possible for them prior to IPOP CORM. For participants – government staff, NGO staff, educators, CBDs – the integrated strategy helps them develop understanding, skills, and rational approaches to systemic problems. That would not happen to the degree that it is with a non-integrated strategy. The capacities are being established and strengthened though IPOP CORM can summarized as follows:

- For local government health workers at Rural Health Units or Barangay Health Stations, IPOP CORM has provided RH/FP refresher training to 1,122 staff.

- For NGOs, IPOP CORM is helping them to gain capacity in new substantive, program areas, specifically CRM, RH, community organization, barangay planning, and micro-credit. It was also apparent from the statements of local officials that the NGOs have improved their working relationships with local government as a result of IPOP CORM activities. Some NGOs are also benefiting from improved management systems that have resulted from participating in IPOP CORM, including staff management and development, and financial accounting systems.

- For NGO staff, most Community Outreach Workers (CHOWS) are fairly young university graduates in a variety of fields, including nursing, midwifery, education, marine sciences, accounting, and more. They all show high commitment to their work and are eager to learn more and do more. Perhaps the most visible displays of commitment are living in the communities where they work and working weekends when more residents of the community can be contacted. While certainly more training is needed in specific areas as identified by the mid-term evaluations, the training they have received through IPOP CORM and experience they have gained through their work is invaluable to them and will stay with them long after IPOP CORM ends. This should help them to progress professionally in the future.

- For Peer Educators, IPOP CORM has helped them to become change agents in their community through the knowledge of CRM and RH/FP they have gained, as rudimentary as that knowledge might seem to professionals in these fields. The Philippines fortunately enjoys a culture of community involvement and a strong social sense of responsibility for helping others in the community. The Peer Educator approach benefits greatly from this tradition.
benefits greatly from this tradition. In turn, the educators derive considerable satisfaction from being able to inform others about these topics. When asked why they are willing to be peer educators, time and again the response was that it is important to help the community and help those who need it most. In most group meetings with peer educators, the expression of shared common objectives created a sense of not talking with a collection of individuals, but with an informal "People's Organization". IPOPCORM has clearly helped them to help their community through training, motivation and continuing support.

- For Youth Peer Educators, IPOPCORM has taught them valuable life skills that they are passing on to others in their age group. As with adult peer educators, YPEs also attribute their ability to help others like themselves as key to explaining their desire to participate. By becoming a YPE, they gain a degree of confidence in their ability to inform and motivate others regarding CRM and RH, including adolescent sexuality. Again, these are skills that will remain with them long after IPOPCORM ends, and it is quite likely that some of these YPEs will continue on to work in either CRM or RH as result of this early exposure to these fields.

- For CBD agents, IPOPCORM has broadened their understanding of CRM, RH and food security linkage. What IPOPCORM has done is to make use of a well established community institution – the sari-sari store – to create a new channel for communication, information and motivation about CRM and RH. Once in place, these CBD outlets become a viable resource in the community that can be used for a number of other health-related topics and services, such as child health messages and commodities, e.g., selling ORS.

Conclusions

Information from all sources interviewed for this review point in only one direction – that the integrated strategy IPOPCORM uses is producing meaningful results in a comparatively short period of time. As PFPI's July – December 2003 Biannual Report shows, as the NGOs have gained experienced and expanded to additional locations, the pace of outputs being produced is accelerating. With the current end of the project in June 2004 approaching, it would be extremely unfortunate if the project is not extended. Much has been accomplished, but much remains to be done, as identified by the mid-term evaluations and this review. This includes the following:

- Expansion and further strengthening of CRM activities, specifically the marine protected areas, mangrove forest management agreements, and eco-tourism sites, as well as the Peoples Organizations needed to sustain these activities.
- Expanded promotion of longer-term contraceptive methods, specifically IUDs, tubal ligation, and vasectomy, and greater accessibility to these services (discussed in section 3.2)

To end the project in June 2004 is tantamount to prematurely abandoning what might be the first genuinely effective approach for promoting RH/FP in rural communities in the Philippines.
- Developing the CDB activity into a more complete social marketing system and establishing the logistics system with DKT to assure a reliable and sustainable supply to outlets (discussed in section 3.2)
- Additional training and technical support for CHOWs, PEs and CBD agents as identified in the mid-term evaluations and by this review.
- Continued advocacy work with local government, specifically municipalities, on CRM and RH activities, including vigorous enforcement of existing municipal orders, adequate budgeting for MPA operations, and adequate budgeting for contraceptive supplies provided through local health facilities
- Adjust the micro-credit program to focus more clearly on CRM objectives, specifically on alternative employment that can reduce fishing effort.

These and other revisions and refinements to the integrated model IPOPCORM is working towards will simply take more time. To end the project in June 2004 is tantamount to prematurely abandoning what might be the first genuinely effective approach for promoting RH/FP in rural communities in the Philippines. An extension is needed and well justified based on the progress made and potential IPOPCORM offers.

**Recommendations**

1. The Packard Foundation and USAID should provide the funding PFPI is requesting for a two year extension.

2. PFPI should focus on establishing mechanisms to sustain key project activities as opposed to expanding into additional locations as some NGOs suggest.

3. Complete the Operations Research element of the project, but incorporate RH/FP in CRM-only sites and CRM in RH-only sites once the project extension is assured.
Section 3
IPOPCORM Components

This review is not a technical evaluation, that was done with the three 2003 mid-term evaluations. However, during the course of the interviews held for this review, a number of points arose about each of the three main components of the project that might have utility for the proposed extension period.

3.1 Coastal Resource Management

Approximately 200 PEs, CBDs and YPEs participated in the meetings and discussions organized for this review at the selected project sites. In every location, participants made the following points:

- No one from their community now engages in dynamite fishing
- No one from their community now poisons fish with arsenic
- No one from their community now cuts mangroves
- The coast line is now cleaner than before IPOPCORM started
- Illegal fishing continues in their municipal waters and this is always done by "people from the outside".

No one ever disagreed with these points nor did NGO staff later suggest this was not the case, or suggest that even one or two community members might still engage in illegal practices. A certain amount of cynicism might be warranted here in that everyone was also very much aware that this was an external evaluation of IPOPCORM and the project's future depended on the outcome (or at least that is what they thought). None the less, the consistency of their statements does suggest that at the very least illegal practices have been significantly reduced and perhaps totally eliminated among community members in all of the locations visited. Given the previous high levels of illegal and destructive fishing and environmental practices revealed by IPOPCORM's baseline survey, this is definitely an important accomplishment of IPOPCORM and the CRMP that preceded it in a number of IPOPCORM sites.\(^6\) The question now is how to eliminate illegal practices by outsiders.

Enforcement is one part of the solution and while every LGU visited had enacted municipal ordinances about the control of and penalties for illegal fishing, enforcement seemed to vary by location. However, mayors that were interviewed in Cordova, Tubigon, Candijay, Mabini and Culion all spoke about increased enforcement efforts.

Tubigon is a good example of what was reported about enforcement. The strictest penalties were imposed in Tubigon where each person on the boat is fined P2,500 ($45), plus P15,000 ($268) for the release of the boat. All illegal equipment, such as drift nets and

fine mesh nets, are confiscated and destroyed. The majority of violators are commercial fishermen from outside of the community, and Cebu was cited as the most common origin of those who have been apprehended. It was also noted that enforcement efforts are undercut sometimes by connections with politically powerful individuals who themselves benefit from illegal fishing.

A different picture was presented by Tubigon barangay captains who reported that enforcement is indeed a problem. Efforts are considered to be lax or weak, adequate boats are lacking to pursue commercial fishing boats, and some fish wardens accept bribes. The fact that commercial fishing boats are often armed also discourages more vigorous enforcement.\(^7\) Peer educators working with NGO partner Feed the Children reiterated the same view as the barangay captains at a later meeting.

The extent to which the 13 MPAs that have been established or strengthened during IPOPCORM are making a difference in fish harvests varied widely by location. Obviously where the MPA was established recently within the past year or two, fishermen reported little if any change. In Olango, where its MPA has existed for a longer period of time, fishermen reported increases in both the number and size of fish. This could not be verified, but if true, its very encouraging because this location also report continued illegal fishing by outsiders from Cebu.

In Culion, fishermen described a somewhat different situation. Illegal fishermen come from Batangas, Mindoro, Bohol, and Cebu. What local fishermen report is that the abundance of fish in Palawan attract transient fishermen from areas where fish stocks have already been depleted. What they are now experiencing is that their catches are decreasing in number and size compared to the past. In effect, they are being drawn down to the mean.

The longest established MPA visited during this review was the marine sanctuary at Gilutungan. Initial work on the MPA started in 1992 using volunteers to establish the protected area. The operations of Gilutungan were significantly upgraded with assistance from USAID's CRMP in 1997. The area has become a popular dive site given its proximity to Mactan island and the resorts located there. User fees are collected on a per head basis and revenues generated have risen from P300,000 in 2000 to P2 million in 2003. The Cordova municipality and the local barangay control these funds. Funds are provided by the LGU for operations and staffing, though there was some reservations expressed by MPA staff that this might not be sufficient.

An interesting plan for using the Apo Island MPA for eco-tourism was presented by Mayor Rodrigo Alanano of Dauin municipality. He envisions charging P200/day per diver and limiting the number of users each day to maintain a quality experience at Apo Island. Revenues will be divided as follows: 40 percent to the fisherman who helped establish and maintain the sanctuary, 20 percent to the municipality to pay fish wardens, and the balance will go for the MPA's operations. Apo now generates P100,000/month with two other areas generating an additional P50,000. He would also like to have the fish wardens trained as

\(^7\) Culion is a good example of "fighting fire with fire". The municipality patrol boat has the size and power of a commercial fishing boat. During the visit there, a patrol set off with fish wardens and a National policeman armed with an automatic rifle.
guides for divers to create alternative employment for them. Interestingly, he does not consider funding to be an issue for expanding CRM activities. He plans to develop MPAs in every coastal barangay of the municipality, and his enthusiasm is infectious.

An issue raised by the mid-term evaluation of the CRM component that is worth noting here concerns the type of IEC activities used for CRM messages and promotion of behavioral change. The evaluation report points out that CRM is not primarily an individual matter, but involves the entire community, i.e., at least the whole barangay if not the municipality. Adopting practices that lead to improved resource management involves all users of the resource, as the report notes:

"CRM is necessarily a group process that requires education to function mainly on that level educational materials need to be site and issue specific, participatory experiential, and generally based on group processes."

The report then questions whether the interpersonal approach to IEC that works well for RH/FP is equally as effective for CRM promotion. This is a valid point that PFPI needs to consider further. During this review, when NGOs and PEs were asked about their communication of CRM messages, no mention was made of any group events of the sort the mid-term evaluation recommended. CRM is discussed with people largely the same way RH is discussed – on a one-on-one basis using an interpersonal counseling approach. Given PFPI's expertise in IEC and the recent hiring of a well qualified CRM staff member, alternative approaches could be developed when IPOPCORM is extended.

Exceptions to this were the theatrical performances by YPEs in Olango, Cebu and by IPOPCORM volunteers in Mabini, Bohol that contained covered CRM topics. These performances were reportedly well received and the YPEs were eager to put on more of them. The local school principal also expressed interest in having a performance for the students. When the idea of holding theatrical performances for CRM communications was mentioned to PEs at other sites, the idea seemed of interest to a number them.

PFPI reports that in other sites not visited for this review, some NGO partners are using group activities in their CRM promotion activities. For example, ASF working in northern Palawan organized group events during the course of town fiestas in 2002 and 2003. This included "CRM Community Theater" performed by youth and fisher folk that presented skits about the changes needed to assure sustainable coastal resources. "Miss Environment" beauty contests were also part of the fiestas. Two other partner NGOs have sponsored poster and song-writing competitions to disseminate IPOPCORM key messages. In short, group activities are supported by several IPOPCORM partner NGOs.

A final point from interviews for this review is that the study tour to Thailand and cross-site visits to other IPOPCORM locations received high scores from participants. The trip to Thailand helped to get key players in the project on the same wave length at the start of IPOPCORM, and provided a unique opportunity for NGO leaders to develop action plans with their respective mayors. Similar trips might be useful for recent expansion sites, but seem unnecessary to longer established sites. Much more could be done with cross-site visits within the 17 areas where IPOPCORM now works. One such cross-site visit involving the LGU, People Organization and local NGO from Cuyo and Culion to MPA sites in
Candijay and Apo Island facilitated the process of establishing an MPA in Culion. Such visits could be very helpful for key people in local Peoples Organizations to visit another organization in the same or a different province that is well organized and functioning effectively. This could include CBFMA sites, MPA sites, aquaculture projects involving fish and crab raising, and eco-tourism (e.g., Panadtaran). One excellent resource for such cross-site visits is the Boyoan Mangrove Association (BOMA) in Candijay, Bohol.

**Conclusions**

While this is far from an exhaustive assessment of the CRM activities supported by IPOPCORM, this review of IPOPCORM’s strategy and program did capture some important aspects of what has been accomplished.

While some raised doubts about just how well and how extensively the linkage between CRM and RH is understood by community residents, there is good reason to believe that genuine progress has been made toward basic CRM objectives. This includes reducing illegal fishing practices by the local community and protecting the coastal environment – e.g., stop cutting mangroves, re-plant mangroves, coastal clean-ups, proper waste disposal. At locations where CRM has been underway longer (Tubigon, Olango/Gilutungan), some reported that fish catches have improved recently, but in other sites, no improvements were noted, and in Palawan, fishermen in one barangay in Culion reported fish catches are declining in number and size probably due to outside illegal and commercial fishing in municipal waters.\(^8\)

The IEC issue about the approach being used for CRM promotion is still pertinent, though some NGOs have already initiated such efforts. PFPI should encourage and support other partner NGOs to organize more group activities and events to reinforce messages delivered through interpersonal communications.

What is clear is that there are many people thinking about, planning, and implementing various CRM activities with the support of IPOPCORM. This creates the opportunity for cross-fertilization of ideas and experiences that could be very effective and relatively low cost; it also constitutes another form of peer education.

**Recommendations:**

As with the other elements of IPOPCORM, during the course of the project extension, the focus of activities should shift to sustaining what has been accomplished by the end of IPOPCORM in 2006 as proposed by PFPI.

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\(^8\) Culion is a newly established municipality with no MPAs. With IPOPCoRM, planning for a MPA was initiated with the community and a resolution was passed by Barangay Binudac to be adopted by the municipality of Culion.
1) PFPI and its NGO partners need to continue working with municipal governments on annual plans to assure that sufficient funding is allocated for MPA operations, including staffing.

2) PFPI and its partner NGOs need to help their LGU identify what can be done to strengthen enforcement efforts and find the resources needed to make these improvements. Ways of engaging the fishing community in enforcement should also be explored. Political influence that undercuts enforcement needs to be brought to the provincial level or higher to counter such pressure.

3) PFPI and its partners need to identify approaches to CRM promotion and education that are group-oriented and provide a forum for public discussion, e.g., a theatrical performance followed by a "town meeting" where the issues raised by the performance stimulate group discussion.

4) Conduct more cross-site visits, estimate the cost of these visits, and determine how costs might be reduced (perhaps visitors could stay with a host family so only travel and food needs to be covered). Target cross-site visits for Peoples Organizations that are experiencing internal organizational and management problems or who lack experience with a CRM activity they want to undertake.

3.2 Reproductive Health

Key information about RH gathered for this review was presented in Section 2 – IPOPCORM's Integrated Strategy. Several additional issues were identified that will be discussed here: the need for longer-term method promotion and service access, expanding access to pills and condoms for youth via the CBDs, developing a rural social marketing network, and emergency contraception.

- IPOPCORM's Focus on Non-clinical Methods and CBD

It is important to recognize that IPOPCORM concentrates on disseminating information about RH/FP and its linkage to CRM and food security, and on promoting FP acceptance and use. Due to budget, transportation, communications and health infrastructure constraints, IPOPCORM could not possibly afford the investments necessary to make clinical, longer-term FP methods readily accessible. IPOPCORM focuses principally on developing local capacities to support community-based family planning and related promotional activities that follows a CBD model. It does this through strengthening local partner NGOs, most of whom were previously focused on community development and environmental management, engagement of local government, development and support of peer educators, strengthening of local Peoples Organizations, and establishing the CBD network within coastal communities. While CBD programs supporting community-based family planning promotion are now common in many countries, the Philippines Department of Health has yet to endorse such programs. By creating a viable CBD model, IPOPCORM is indirectly contributing to gaining official acceptance of such programs necessary for their replication elsewhere.
The following observations and recommendations, therefore, pertain to what might be possible with an extension of IPOPCORM with sufficient funding, not as shortcomings in the project's progress toward its initial objectives, specifically, community-based family planning using a CBD approach.

- **Longer-term Methods**

  As part of peer education training, longer-term methods – IUDs, tubal ligation and vasectomy – were part of the curriculum. However, discussions with NGO staff, PEs and CBDs clearly showed a lack of adequate understanding about these methods, particularly vasectomy. This is in sharp contrast to their knowledge about pills and condoms that was very strong indeed among these groups at every site. Certainly with respect to vasectomy, the large majority of men refuse to even consider this method. Similarly, due to unsuitable conditions in health facilities, distant travel requirements and other constraints, there is less interest and demand for IUDs as well. The lack of interested clients diminishes the opportunities to discuss these methods, typically leading to forgetting correct information.9

  The difficulty is that they know of these methods but do not know how to inform and promote them as options for couples. They also showed little ability about assisting couples to consider which methods are most appropriate for them, admittedly not an easy task even for trained health workers. This is apparent in their encouraging couples to use reversible, short-term methods who in fact want no more children. Knowledge about IUDs was weak, PEs and CBDs could not readily explain when an IUD was an appropriate option for which types of couples. They had no real appreciation for the greater expense of using temporary methods compared to longer term spacing and limiting methods. Nor did most understand that vasectomy was a much simpler, safer procedure than tubal ligation with lower risk of infection. Given IPOPCORM's focus on CBD and non-clinical methods, it is not surprising that some NGO staff and their PEs are not particularly adept at counseling about longer-term methods. This is one more area that could be greatly strengthened with an extension of IPOPCORM and sufficient funding for long-term method promotion. This is a very sensible thing to do given the availability of IUD and sterilization services in some, but not, district hospitals in IPOPCORM's target areas.

  A surprisingly high number of women in the communities visited have had tubal ligations. In two locations where data were available, roughly 25 percent of women of reproductive age had had a tubal ligation. Older women generally reported that they had a large number of children before using the procedure. There seems to be fairly wide spread

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9 This might also be due to CBDs having received only a one day training that only covered products that they sell. The refresher training that started in the last quarter of 2003 included all FP methods, but not all CBDs have received this training yet.
knowledge and acceptance of the method without the usual burden of misconceptions discouraging its use.\textsuperscript{10} There is a noticeable trend towards younger women having tubal ligations by their mid-twenties after having only one or two children. In one case, the woman was only 21 years old, but already had three children. Whether this is in the best interest of the couple needs to be assessed from several different perspectives before assuming it is a problem in general. Clients do receive counseling prior to the procedure in all IPOPCORM sites. Improving the skills of NGO service providers to assess the relative risks of alternative FP options is clearly needed so that couples can make their best informed choices.

Predictably, vasectomy was the least used or understood method. Vasectomy is surrounded by numerous misconceptions in the "macho-man" culture of the rural Philippines. Men and women reported that they believe that after a vasectomy a man will become fat, he will not be able to work hard, he will not be able to have an erection, and/or he will become homosexual. These views were expressed not by untrained people in the community, but by some of the PEs and CBDs interviewed for this review. They cannot possible provide useful information about this method with such misconceptions in their head. Some even went so far as to say that their wives would object to a vasectomy because then he could have sexual affairs and she would not know because there would be no pregnancy. One man went a step further and made a comparable claim about tubal ligation. He would not let his wife be ligated because she could then have affairs and he would not know because she would not become pregnant.

This is just the tip of the iceberg, it seems in the municipalities visited for this review. PFPI and partner NGOs need to explore whether similar misconceptions are pervasive in other IPOPCORM municipalities and to take action if that is the case.

Nevertheless, there is hope on the horizon. Some men were identified during the course of the PE and CBD meetings, not many, but a couple, who had a vasectomy and were very glad that they had done so. These first few "pioneers" constitute a starting point for more effective efforts to promote longer-term methods.

Sterilization services are available in some district hospitals, the key issue is cost of medicines and transportation, especially for remote communities such as Olongo. IPOPCORM did support several tubal ligation and NSV activities. In Busuanga, two batches of clients for tubal ligation received services in partnership with Engender Health staff. Hospital physicians received training and instruments for tubal ligation as well. Where no district hospital existed, clients received services at nearby Coron hospital even though this is not a IPOPCORM site. In Bohol, IPOPCORM linked local NGOs with Marie Stopes who provides periodic services for tubal ligation and vasectomy for approximately P300. The project covers this expense for the truly indigent. In Palawan, services are available at the Culion Regional Hospital (the former leper colony hospital) and at the district hospital in Coron.

\textsuperscript{10} This is not unique to IPOPCoRM target areas. National surveys show tubal ligation is the second most commonly used modern method after oral contraceptives.
As a result of PFPI and partner CFI advocacy, the Busuanga mayor budgeted P75,000 to help defray the costs of sterilization services in nearby Coron, covering food and transportation costs for residents of Busuanga. The truly indigent identified by either CFI in Culion or by the hospital's social welfare department are exempted from payments. Others must pay the costs of drugs and supplies that cost about P1,000 for a tubal ligation and P500 for a vasectomy using old technology. Use of minilap and non-surgical vasectomy (NSV) would reduce these costs perhaps to as low as P300. There are an adequate number of trained physicians, but they need training in NSV and the necessary equipment. The cost factor – only P300 for a vasectomy – will also contribute to more men coming to accept the method.

Conclusions

Just as IPOPCORM has made a significant contribution to increasing family planning acceptance and use through its integrated strategy, it should make an equally concerted effort to promote and make accessible longer-term birth spacing and limiting methods as it has in Busuanga and Culion – through facilitation rather than direct service provision. But it can do so only if sufficient funding is available for the project extension. **Note that IPOPCORM has already started doing so even though that was not an explicit objective of the project from the outset.** Better counseling training of CHOWs and PEs on IUDs, tubal ligation and vasectomy is needed. PFPI needs to intensify efforts to link physicians at local hospitals with program offering training and equipment for minilap and NSV.

- **Male Sexuality and Reproductive Health**

  An unique element of IPOPCORM's RH program is the dissemination of information about male sexuality and reproductive health to the male residents of coastal communities. An important part of this activity is promoting the idea that men should participate fully in decisions and actions about family planning, and not see this solely as a women's responsibility. Men are encouraged to play an active and not a passive role in birth spacing and limiting. Male sexual problems are also covered, including sexual dysfunctional disorders and STD symptoms, topics of considerable interest to these men. The holistic approach IPOPCORM uses has reached men who otherwise might have rejected this information.

  As much as the "macho man" culture is an impediment to vasectomy, it also offers an opportunity to use the same set of attitudes to promote the procedure. As part of the gender awareness discussion in the RH program that talks about how it is not right to treat women as second class people, or to use physical force against a spouse, the message needs

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11 Physicians seeking NSV training are encouraged to first motivate at least ten clients to make a service session cost-effective. More than 50 women in Busuanga were motivated by IPOPCoRM CHOWs and PEs.

12 PFPI had linked up with the Packard-funded program of PDA Thailand that provided NSV training in the Philippines through the Asian Center for Population and Development. Unfortunately, that activity stopped and an alternative source for training was not available.
to be repeated and repeated that it is a "macho man" thing to take responsibility for birth
limiting for the good of family. It is not "macho" to think that family planning is the
woman's responsibility. A "real man" participates in the decision making process with his
wife, and when it is time to stop having children, its "a real man's" role and responsibility to
act and have a vasectomy. Emphasizing responsibility and manliness needs to part of
educational efforts, correct information alone will probably not be enough.

Use of satisfied clients is a natural in this setting. Having men who have had a
vasectomy talk about their experience and confront the myriad misconceptions about the
method should be very effective. PFPI reports that a partner NGO in Palawan used the
satisfied client approach with great success, and a local TV station called "The
Correspondent" aired a feature story containing testimonials given by satisfied vasectomy
clients and their wives.

During several discussions with male PEs, considerable joking quickly started
between the men in the group about who would be the first, as a challenge. There is now at
least one man in Culion who promises to become the first man to have a vasectomy in his
barangay. There is no reason why more could not also be encouraged to have a vasectomy
who want no more children as a step toward forming a critical mass of satisfied clients who
can inform and promote the method. Tubal ligation is widely accepted, there is no reason
that vasectomy could not be next through the concerted RH efforts at the community level
that IPOPCORM supports.

Expanding information and promotional activities about longer-term
methods, including vasectomy, at IPOPCORM sites is sufficient justification on its
own for a project extension. All of the ground work has been done during the first three
years of IPOPCORM, the people and mechanisms are in place, now it is a matter of making
use of them to promote correct use of longer-term methods.

Recommendations

During the extension of IPOPCORM:

1) PFPI and its partner organizations should continue the focus on community-based
family planning with CBDs, but provide more training and continuing education to
improve the skills of CHOWs, PEs and CBDs to improve counseling and referral
information on longer-term methods.

2) PFPI and its partner organizations should identify training needs of physicians in local
hospitals and link them with projects that provide training and equipment for NSV and
minilap. PFPI should continue to sponsor sterilization outreach services and arrange for
local physicians to receive training in NSV and minilap during outreach whenever
possible.

3) Given the presence of RHUs in every municipality, mobile NSV services could reduce
transportation costs for clients. However, it is not likely that IPOPCORM could cover
4) PFPI should develop more IEC messages, materials, and activities that inform and promote the correct use of longer-term methods as an option for birth spacing and limiting. This should include the use of satisfied clients, especially for vasectomy.

5) PFPI and partner NGOs in Bohol should intensify their efforts to link with Marie Stopes to make sterilization services accessible at an affordable price on a regular basis to the extent possible in their partner municipalities.

6) Following Busuanga's example, LGUs should be encouraged by PFPI and its partner organizations to begin allocating a budget for transportation and food costs for local residents who want to be sterilized.

**Expanding Access to Pills and Condoms for Youth through the CBDs**

The Youth Peer Educators activity delivers a comprehensive range of RH information targeting those 15 to 24 years of age. Adolescent sexuality is a key topic discussed with a strong emphasis on delaying sexual activity until marriage or at least until the individual is older. Both the physiological and economic reasons for delaying sexual debut are presented. For those who already are sexually active, contraception and the importance of condom use are discussed.

Even among the PEs, there is a certain reticence among some to discuss openly the fact that unmarried youth in their community are sexually active. Perceptions of the extent to which young unmarried people are sexually active vary widely between adults and the YPEs, the latter having a better understanding of the actual situations. Adults reported that the percentage is quite low, say 10-20 percent. The YPEs then estimated the percentage to more be like 50 percent and above. Several stated that it is as high as 90 percent, and one young man reported that everyone he knows is sexually active. From the YPEs estimates, it is clear that even in rural coastal communities, young unmarried men and women are sexually active to a significant extent. It is informative for the adult PEs to hear the YPEs' estimates to make them aware of what the true situation is.

The IPOPCORM baseline survey, that included respondents 15-24 years of age, found that 28 percent of youth surveyed reported they were sexually active. Only five percent of single sexually active males and no sexually active single females reported using protection during their last sexual encounter. The survey also found high levels of unmet FP demand among coastal youth. About 70 percent of single female respondents reported a pregnancy in the past year, and half of these said it was unplanned/unwanted. Among married young women, 90 percent reported a pregnancy in the past year and 25 percent were unwanted. Married young men reported virtually the same pattern as female respondents.
CBDs in the groups were asked about sales of contraceptives to young unmarried customers. In every group of five or six CBDs, at least one or two flatly stated they would not sell to young unmarried people. Others said they would sell "if they really needed it" (no clear explanation was every offered to clarify what that means) or that they would educate them first (a lecture). One or two in each group said that they would sell to youth, but none have ever asked. In fact, with only one exception (Olango), CBDs reported no or very infrequent sales to young unmarried people.

This exercise was useful for the adult PEs and the CBDs. The YPEs reported about the extent of sexual activity among the youth of their community. By their own admission, the adults PEs were confronted with the fact that these young people are probably not using condoms, and they definitely are not buying from them. It was hard for anyone not to see that the situation runs directly contrary to their training and promotion of RH as peer educators and CBDs.

One very likely impediment to sexually active youths purchasing contraceptives from the CBDs is recording the name of every client. This was intended to enable the CBDs to follow-up with clients who are due or over-due to buy a re-supply of contraceptives, for follow-up counseling, and to distinguish sales for target and non-target sites. While some might be doing this, no CBD mentioned this during the interviews for this review. Regardless of whatever utility recording customers' names might have, it very likely discourages youth from purchasing contraceptives from the CBDs. The view expressed by a some CBDs that they would essentially interrogate a young person requesting contraceptives would also quickly discourage others.

Conclusions

A very definite problem exists in the CBDs' contribution toward responsible reproductive health among sexually active unmarried young people. The majority appear to be an impediment to promoting RH among youth rather than a facilitator. Refusing to sell to them, interrogating them about why they need a contraceptive, lecturing them about why they should not engage in sex, recording their name in a register that others can see are tantamount to forcing sexually active youth to act irresponsibly. The fact is, like it or not, a significant percentage have chosen to be sexually active. There is no sense teaching these young people about RH without making contraceptives available to them.

Recommendations

1) PFPI an its partner NGOs should increase their efforts to disseminate IPOPCORM's baseline survey findings to CBDs and other adults to heighten their awareness of the extent of sexual activity among youth, unsafe sex practices, the high level of unwanted pregnancies reported by young women and men.
2) PFPI and its partner NGOs should provide continuing education for CBDs and PEs about adolescent sexuality with a focus on overcoming personal reservations about selling contraceptives to sexually active, unmarried young people.

2) IPOPCORM NGOs need to monitor the CBDs with respect to contraceptives for youth and discourage practices that create a barrier to access by youth.

3) Stop recording CBD client names, total sales volume is sufficient to monitor the activity.

- **Developing a Rural Social Marketing Network**

   By all accounts, the CBD element of IPOPCORM is nothing short of a run-away success. It has become so popular that former clients of the government health facilities have shifted to the CBD as their source of supply despite the fact the contraceptives are free from government, whereas they must pay for pills (P12/cycle) and condoms (P6-7 for three). Demand for the products is so great that people from non-IPOPCORM communities come to the CBDs to buy pills or condoms. In the past, this was not permitted, but PFPI recently opened up sales to outside buyers but at higher prices than those charge to the local community. The quality of the Trust commodities is a strong selling point, especially the strawberry flavored condoms.

   In comparison to a more independent social marketing network, the IPOPCORM CBD is a nascent system requiring frequent support. Pricing of Trust products is heavily subsidized by PFPI. The CBDs are currently being supplied by their local NGO which is convenient for the CBDs and makes the system work, but this needs to be replaced by a more cost-efficient logistics system where the CBDs are responsible for their own re-supply.

   With very predictable budget constraints coming even with an extension of IPOPCORM, CBD prices will need to be increased very soon at all sites. A recent price increase in March was made in three municipalities where commodities are now being sold at the unsubsidized price. This needs to be monitored closely to see what effect this has on sales. When CBDs were asked what effect this is likely to have, responses ranged from "very little" to some expressing concern that they will lose some customers. Most tended to think that there might be some loss, but demand is so great that most will buy at higher prices. In a couple visited municipalities, there is really no choice, government facilities are out of stock as the former national system is now decentralized to the local level and local government has yet to respond adequately. This makes creating a sustainable CBD network all the more important because it is very likely that CBDs will be the sole reliable source of contraceptive supplies in many rural communities at least in the near-term.

   What is very clear is that the CBD system very likely will collapse in most IPOPCORM sites if the project were to end in June 2004, especially in sites where DKT does not cover the municipality.\textsuperscript{13} PFPI linked DKT to IPOPCORM NGOs and the LGUs. In

\textsuperscript{13} DKT does not cover most project sites in Palawan because of difficult access. In Bohol, DKT is in the cities, but not in the rural commuiniites.
Tubigon, for example, the LGU bought some commodities directly from DKT with PFPI's endorsement. Take PFPI out of the picture and the process will probably stop at this point. Like other social marketing organizations, DKT excels at organizing and running an urban social marketing program where people are better informed about family planning and where a large market for their products exists. But extending a social marketing network to rural communities, especially remote coastal communities, is not within their capabilities, to say nothing about the cost implications of this for DKT. They will definitely need the involvement of the IPOPCORM NGOs and this type of linkage is indeed quite possible.

PFPI has already taken steps to help some partner NGOs link directly with DKT for commodity support under a new NGO Fund that DKT has created. Similarly, PFPI has linked some RHUs with DKT for similar support under a parallel program for LGUs launched by DKT.

One very interesting possibility facilitated by PFPI that should be pursued further is that DKT has had preliminary discussions with IPOPCORM partner First Consolidated Bank Foundation, Inc. (FCBFI) in Bohol about the possibility of FCBFI becoming the social marketing agent for the province. This could another possibility to pursue during the IPOPCORM extension. NGOs with greater organizational capacities might be able to cover an entire province or at least major portions of it. DKT would supply them directly and they would need to establish a distribution system locally. This will involve identifying a number of key distributors throughout the province where CBDs would go to obtain their supplies.

Conclusions

Another important justification for an extension of IPOPCORM is that more time and work are needed to transform the current highly subsidized, nascent CBD system into a more self-sustaining social marketing network. PFPI will need to engage DKT in discussions about pricing and distribution arrangements with an eye to setting prices high enough to cover costs of the network, but not so high as to "price out" too many users in the IPOPCORM communities. As long as prices remain below those of pharmacies, the CBDs will retain a major market share.

Partner NGOs should be more active in becoming or identifying potential distribution centers that could receive supplies directly from DKT. Sufficient volume will be key for DKT to make this financially viable. Opening up CBD sales to all is exactly the right step because it expands potential sales and increases volume. The goal is to eliminate the current role PFPI and significantly reduce the role of IPOPCORM NGOs when the system is fully functional. Two years should be sufficient time to do this in IPOPCORM's 17 coastal municipalities.

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14 Population Services International is doing precisely this in rural Cambodia through its new United Health Network project. NGOs support the distribution system to extend it out to rural communities, and it's working. If it can be done in a much poorer country like Cambodia, and that includes pricing, where transportation is extremely difficult in much of the country, it certainly should be possible for the Philippines.
Recommendations

1) During the two year extension of IPOPCORM, PFPI and its partner NGOs should work towards transforming the current CDB activity into a viable rural social marketing network.

2) PFPI needs to explore how pricing increases are likely to affect demand in IPOPCORM communities in preparation for discussions with DKT. Better yet would be to involve DKT in this market research.

• Emergency Contraception

CBDs were asked about sales of the emergency contraceptive packs that IPOPCORM makes available. Reported sales were extremely low with many reporting no sales and others with only one or two clients. In contrast, PFPI reports that 1,960 packs have been distributed as of December 2003. It is difficult to reconcile the differences between PFPI's data and the response of the CBDs in the six municipalities visited for this review. Sales might be greater in other IPOPCORM municipalities.

One CBD reported that she had sold three packs in the last year – all to her daughter who would use the pack each time when she forgot to take her pill the day before, i.e., only one missed day. The extent to which such misunderstandings exist among CBDs remains to be seen and PFPI and its partners need to explore in greater depth whether clients are using the product correctly.

Conclusions

The information about emergency contraception available for this review is at best partial, a more comprehensive assessment is needed. Greater use of the product might be occurring in other sites not visited. Given the apparent low use of contraceptives by youth and the number of couples not using contraceptives, there should be a need for emergency contraception. The CBD who thinks it is acceptable for her daughter to use emergency contraception within one further illustrates the inability of CBDs and probably PEs generally to counsel a women who wants to avoid pregnancy but who frequently forgets to take her pill to consider a different method. If these packs are as slow moving as these CBDs reported, then at some point expiration of the pills will become an issue. If sales are indeed very low, then PFPI needs to think further about the future of this activity.

Recommendation

PFPI and its partner NGOs need to review actual sales data, and look more closely at client usage, then take corrective action.
3.3 Environment-Friendly Enterprise Development (EED) and Micro-Financing

As with the other components of IPOPCORM, a mid-term evaluation of the EED was conducted in July – August 2003, and a very insightful report was written that makes a number of useful recommendations for PFPI and partner NGOs. PFPI currently plans to conduct its own review of the EED with its partners. EED was not a priority for this review, however, information from meetings with NGOs, PEs, and CBDs warrants several observations.

EED has four principal objectives:

- Instill among project beneficiaries the practice of savings and the value of self-reliance.
- Develop the capacity of borrowers to build, operate, and sustain an economic enterprise.
- Develop participatory, environmental-friendly, viable and sustainable income generating enterprises.
- Develop a sustainability mechanism for enterprise development at the community level, such as local NGOs capable of managing effectively micro-credit lending.

Training, technical assistance and access to credit were initially intended to target fisher folk and other coastal resource users whose livelihoods were disrupted due to establishment of MPAs and mangrove forestry agreements. This type of compensation for displaced persons is recommended by CRM experts and is viewed as essential for the long-term success of CRM efforts. Due to budget limitations, loans under IPOPCORM were limited to 10 per barangay per cycle. When one round of loans were re-paid, a new set of borrowers were supposed to be assisted in the next cycle of lending. PFPI and partner NGOs identified selection criteria for borrowers and decided to give priority to those playing a key role in IPOPCORM, specifically fish wardens, PEs, and CBDs.15

The targeting of loans to IPOPCORM volunteers, particularly PEs and CBDs (most of whom are FP users) could create misunderstandings that would not serve the project well. On the one hand, PFPI and its partners view the loans as a reward or incentive to remain active in the project, and there is absolutely nothing questionable or objectionable about that. However, this creates the possibility that people are becoming FP users to obtain credit because they mistakenly think this is a requirement. If this were the case, then the provision of credit would run contrary to the widely accepted principal of informed choice guiding decisions to contracept and how to do so. This is area that PFPI and its partners need to monitor closely to assure the credit is being perceived correctly by borrowers and it is not influencing decisions about using family planning. This is simply an alert, not a statement that this is happening.

15 See Annex 2 for an example of the selection criteria followed by one IPOPCoRM NGO.
A second issue pertains to the purpose and objectives of EED. If the lending is to help generate employment that reduces the number of users of coastal resources, then this implies lending that enables the borrower, or better yet, the borrower's entire family, to cease activities dependent on coastal resources. But who to lend to? Is it better to lend to existing businesses since they are a "safer" bet for repayment, or to new businesses that have a much higher failure rate, but might contribute more to reducing the number of resource users? From the mid-term evaluation, it appears that lending to new businesses might account for some of the delinquency and cessation of loan repayments, though, in general, repayment rates to NGOs have been acceptable to very good. Whether a new business or old, it is not clear to what extent the NGOs visited for this review are actually targeting displaced individuals who have lost their former livelihood due to improved coastal resource management.

Nor is it clear from the information available for this review to what extent the lending program is achieving its objective of reducing pressure on coastal resources. At least one NGO makes loans for fishing-related businesses, which does not reduce pressure on the resource base. The question is: How many loans have enabled the borrower and his/her family to cease all use of coastal resources? Until that question can be answered, it is extremely difficult to determine how effective the lending program is with respect to this initial objective.

Third, one NGO noted that the targeting of loans to volunteer workers (PEs and CBDs) had caused them to fall short of the loan targets that had been established for their project. Targeting loans in this way raises concern about the longer-term viability of the NGO lending programs. In principal, loans should be made on the basis of credit worthiness of borrowers, credit history, reputation in the community, and the soundness of the purpose – the business plan – for which money is being borrowed. The NGO selection criteria are expected to do this. Focusing on these criteria typically contributes to higher repayment rates. While it is common to direct lending programs to broad population segments, more narrow targeting can increase the risk of the loans made. Though this review cannot say for sure, some difficulties some NGOs are experiencing might be associated with loan targeting.

Finally, while most of the IPOPCORM NGOs are managing the EED with considerable proficiency, some are experiencing some difficulties. The mid-term evaluation clearly documented this. The NGOs who are doing well could be used as "mentors" for those who are experiencing problems. Again, cross-site visits might be helpful as well as collecting "best practices" that could be presented at an EED workshop for the NGOs. Short-term technical assistance by one NGO to another experiencing problems is another option for improving their lending programs.

**Recommendations**

1. PFPI and its partner NGOs need to proceed with a thorough re-assessment of the objectives, procedures, and targeting of EED lending. This should include serious consideration of how important the EED really is to IPOPCORM's core CRM and RH objectives.
2. Using credit as a reward for IPOPCORM volunteers should be monitored closely to assure unintentional and undesired incentives are not being created by access to credit.

3. Data are needed to ascertain whether the lending program is indeed contributing to reducing pressure on coastal resources.

4. Sound lending criteria and proven approaches as discussed and recommended in the mid-term evaluation should guide EED programming.

5. PFPI needs to review possibilities for using better performing NGOs as mentors for other NGOs who are experiencing difficulties, e.g., through cross-site visits, best practices meetings, and/or technical assistance.
Section 4
IPOPCORM Organization and Working Relationships

4.1 LGU – NGO Partnership

For this review, meetings were held with mayors of five IPOPCORM municipalities, three municipal health officers, 12 barangay captains and 10 RHU staff. The following summarizes their statements about the project and their relationship with IPOPCORM NGOs:

- All greatly appreciated the assistance of IPOPCORM, particularly the addition of the RH/FP component.

- They readily recognized the relationship between CRM and family planning and they all expressed strong support for the work IPOPCORM and partner NGOs were doing to promote FP information and use.

- They all considered the CRM – RH strategy of IPOPCORM as integral to their development plans for their communities. They saw no conflict with the work of IPOPCORM and the work of their municipal offices, rather, it was seen as fully complementary.

- As mentioned earlier, mayors pointed to their municipal ordinances concerning CRM and increased efforts at enforcement as indicative of the municipality's commitment to CRM. Each reported increased apprehensions for illegal fishing, always by transient fishermen and commercial fishing boats in municipal waters.

- Each mayor talked about plans for MPAs that were either in place, being developed, or proposed. They reported that funds would be budgeted for their development and operation.

- Those who had been part of the Thailand study trip stated this greatly helped to clarify what IPOPCORM was trying to accomplish, how RH/FP was integral to CRM, how the project was organized, and how it would work with the municipality.

- Several mayors and barangay captains noted that municipal and barangay council members have a much better understanding of the link between CRM and RH/FP. This is important for getting budgets approved to fund activities in these areas.

- Various LGU officials noted that efforts had been made in the past to promote family planning and that this created some general interest; however, it also produced some strong resistance, and generally were not highly effective programs. IPOPCORM provided the first systematic approach to promoting FP acceptance and assured that commodities would be readily available at affordable prices to new and old users.
• Several mayors requested that IPOPCORM be expanded to additional barangays in their municipality, reflecting the value they placed on the project.

• Everyone, absolutely everyone – local government officials, local health staff, NGO staff, PEs, CBDs, and members of Peoples Organizations – strongly expressed their support for the project and hope that it will continue because of the benefits they see IPOPCORM delivering to their communities.

• Mayors were asked about their willingness to provide funding for IPOPCORM activities, including their local NGO, if the project was not extended. They all said that the municipality could not maintain the level of funding that the project provides, but they would make an effort to provide as much as they could.

The overall impression about the relationships that IPOPCORM and its partner NGOs have fostered with local government and local health workers is extremely positive. In some cases, IPOPCORM helped to rectify what had been less than optimal relations between the LGU and the NGO in the past. The way in which local government officials talked about "their NGO" was striking, as though the NGO was in fact part of the municipal government as opposed to a organization separate from it. Perhaps the strongest evidence of this is the direct involvement the NGOs have had with helping local governments develop annual plans to assure funding for CRM and RH/FP. This close relationship is all too often not the case. NGOs sometimes develop their own sense of direction and work parallel to local government as opposed to working with and through local government. IPOPCORM has clearly achieved the latter.

Conclusions

A critical role IPOPCORM NGOs can play in the coming years is to continue to participate fully in government planning and budgeting exercises. LGUs seem to be more familiar with CRM activities and several already allocate funding in this area, particularly in places assisted by the USAID-funded CRMP project. Their responsibility to supply contraceptives now that the supplies will no longer come from the national level is new to them. Only one municipality – Cordova – seemed to have a reasonably clear understanding that greater funding would be required for FP commodities, the others did not, and one seemed totally unaware that FP supplies were out of stock at health facilities and the municipality would have to purchase them.

A perfect example of the current situation is Candijay, Bohol. The municipality did budget for contraceptives, but was not aware of the amount required. The Municipal Health Officer observed that the funding is good, but only sufficient for perhaps six months. This is where the IPOPCORM NGOs and PFPI could be of great service. The LGUs need to have a clear idea of what commodities are needed and how much funding will be required. If the CBDs become a viable social marketing network, then government funding for commodities might be reduced. Ideally, government will supply the very poor for free while those who can pay use the CBDs to reduce the burden on government. Facilitating the procurement of commodities by LGUs and NGOs through helping them to establish purchasing arrangement can be another area where PFPI assists.
Recommendation

1) PFPI and its partner NGOs should continue to play an active role with local government concerning CRM and RH/FP programs, including budgeting, at the municipal and barangay levels during the extension period.

2) PFPI and its partner NGOs should play a key facilitating role in assisting local governments to determine the volume of FP commodities they need, plus related service costs, including subsidizing sterilization services, to assure that adequate budget is available to support RH/FP in RHUs and barangay health stations.

4.2 The Role of NGOs, Peer Educators, and CBDs in the Community

The preceding sections have discussed the work of the NGOs, PEs, and CBDs, but some additional observations about their role in the community might help to clarify further the effects IPOPCORM is having in these coastal communities.

- IPOPCORM NGOs

It was obvious during the course of site visits that the NGOs have considerable credibility in the communities where they work. In some cases it is because their staff are long-term or life-long residents of the municipality. It’s their home. In other cases, the NGOs have recognized that they need to maintain a presence in the communities where they work, so staff find housing in the barangays covered by their project. In other cases, the NGO has established a field office in the poblacion (main town) or in a nearby barangay. One NGO decided that it would shift its work week around so that Saturday and Sundays were work days because that gives access to more people who are at home then. The point is that they demonstrate their commitment to the community by being part of it, and in so doing, learn first hand what the real situation is for the people they are working with.

One unintended benefit of IPOPCORM is that the NGOs who have established a field office have created a social focal point, a gathering place in the community. CCEF exemplifies this. They rent a small house in the poblacion where the staff stay and where training sessions and meetings are held. It was clear during the course of the group discussion with the PEs at CCEF’s house that these people like coming there, it is part of their community, some place different where they can meet and socialize with their friends, the other PEs. While it may be CCEF’s field office, there was also a definite sense of ownership of the place by those attending the meeting, it was theirs too.
An important element of IPOPCORM's community-based approach is community mobilization for collective action in response to shared, common problems. Whether intentional or not, the CCEF field office has become the focal point for that. But a field office is not necessarily the only option. BOMA's new office functions in the same way for FCBFI's project in Candijay. It is a focal point, a visible gather place for those engaged in IPOPCORM.

The CHOWs that each NGO fields to implement the project are college graduates, mostly in their mid- to late twenties, some in their early thirties. As mentioned earlier, they have various educational backgrounds, some related to health or environment, but many not. Regardless of their formal education, they have learned a great deal about CRM and RH and have the communications skills needed for the job. The long hours and hard work under what are at times very difficult conditions expresses their commitment to their job. They bring an enthusiasm to the job that contributes to their acceptance in the community. They enjoy what they are doing and their work reflects this.

Key to their effectiveness are strong interpersonal skills, essential for gaining someone's trust and confidence. Their job is to inform and motivate someone to consider changing personal behaviors that have been followed for years. In case of CRM, it's a matter of changing how the person earns his/her livelihood and instilling in the person the long-term effect of correct CRM practices. For RH, it's a matter of changing what are very private, personal behaviors involving his/her relationship with a husband or wife, and the future of that person's family. This is no easy task, yet the CHOWS have obviously taken it on and are succeeding. For lack of a better term, people are their specialty.

The CHOWs met during this review are certainly highly motivated individuals, motivated to make the project work and motivated to learn new skills and gain experience. For example, one NGO's project covers some remote islands and travel there can be difficult at times with stormy weather. The CHOWs that go to those islands stay there for several days to support and work with the PEs. It appears that the NGOs have been very selective and successful in the people who they now have as staff.

As the mid-term evaluations noted, there is need for further training for the CHOWS particularly for those who have recently joined the NGO and missed earlier training. Skills development for community organization and mobilization as it relates to the formation and operation of Peoples Organizations is one area where CHOWs need further training. In RH, with an expanded emphasis on longer-term methods, CHOWs will definitely need training in this area.

Helping the CHOWs to stay motivated and resolve the various problems that come with community-based work are the "Super" CHOWs, the supervisors of the field team. The "Super" CHOWS are more experienced individuals who oversee all field operations, including planning and scheduling of activities. Again, each one met during the review was indeed very knowledgeable about community level work and played an important guiding role in their NGO's project.
In charge of the project are the project directors who in some cases are also the Executive Director of the NGO. Again, each one met during the review was very dedicated to the project and highly qualified professionals.

**Conclusion**

The main point of this is that the reason IPOPCORM has been able to accomplish as much as it has is because of the caliber of people who are working on the project at each level, and the characteristic these people have in common is quality.

- **Peer Educators**

Enough has been said in preceding sections to convey the key role played by the PEs. The Couple Peer Educators and Male Peer Educators range in age from their mid-twenties to mid-forties, with some in their fifties. The large majority are married and have children. In other words, they are old enough and experienced enough to be taken seriously by those they contact.

Regarding knowledge, the large majority of PEs exhibited a very clear understanding of both basic CRM messages and RH/FP messages. They have a very high knowledge about correct use of pills and condoms, a good knowledge of tubal ligation, some understood well about IUDs, and almost none had an accurate understanding of vasectomy.

In general, they seemed to be very committed to their work and they clearly considered what they were doing as beneficial to their community. When asked what they would do if IPOPCORM stopped, the standard answer was that they would continue, but without filling out reports. However, when asked if they felt confident to work on their own, a common response was that it would be better if the NGOs, and particularly the CHOWs, continued to assist them. While they have confidence in being able to do their jobs, they also valued the assistance and support they receive from the CHOWs. Simply on the basis of observing the interaction between PEs and NGO staff, there seems to a very comfortable, relaxed nature to their relationship, viewing NGO staff as friends and neighbors rather than supervisors.

When asked about who they contact, most tended to say that they speak to people they know fairly well – fellow fishermen, housewives like themselves, etc. There is a tendency to restrict their activities to those they know the best. However, in each barangay there are up to 30 or 40 PEs so that everyone in the community is known by at least one of the PEs. Assisted by their CHOWS, they try to keep track of who has been contacted and who remains to be contacted. PEs reported that coverage in the barangays ranged from 50 to over 80 percent of the targeted population – married couples of child bearing age. An effort is made to target those couples who have "many children" according to the PEs because "they need it most". That generally referred to couples with five or more children.
PEs report that they are active for anywhere from one to three hours a week contacting people about CRM and RH. Some reported as many as four to five hours a week. They talk to people when they are heading out to fish, when women are doing the laundry together – whenever there is a social occasion as well as making specific visits to talk to people.

A very frequent response to the question "What do you do when someone says they are not interested in CRM and particularly RH/FP" was to make small talk at first. They then re-visit and talk some more, perhaps a little about CRM. In each subsequent contact, they discuss more about CRM and then bring up its connection to food security and family size. They report that even those who were reluctant to discuss family planning at first, usually become more open and interested during the course of their meetings. Youth, on the other hand, report that no one they contact is not interested, they do not need to subtly persuade any of their peers to discuss CRM and especially RH (not surprising in the least).

As mentioned early, the main motivating factor for the PEs is to inform others about CRM and RH to help them improve their lives. The overall drop-out rate among PEs since the start of IPOP-CORM has been close to 30 percent. However, this is not extremely high new voluntary projects. A certain percentage of people volunteer without fully understanding the amount of time that will be needed to carry out their tasks. People get trained, start working, find they don't really like it or that it requires too much time, and then stop. This is particularly true during the early stages of the project – it’s the "shake down" period. For others, some personal or family event occurs that takes priority over their volunteer work. Others volunteered on the hope that there would be some personal gain from doing so and quit when they realize this is not the case.

There has been no follow-up with those who dropped out to identify the main reasons for doing so. What would be useful is to review drop-outs for the longer running IPOP-CORM NGOs to see if the drop-out rate has decreased over time. If not, and drop-out rates are still near 30 percent, some investigation by partner NGOs is called for to determine what could be done to reduce the number of drop-outs.

- The CBDs

As with PEs, the role played by the CBDs has been discussed sufficiently in preceding sections. Most CBDs are in fact PEs, and even those who are not become "informal" PEs because of the information they provide to inquisitive customers about RH/FP. Drop-out rates among CBDs is a fairly modest 10 percent since the start of the project, showing strong commitment to the project as well as interest due to business expansion and potential profits from sales. Other than sari-sari shops, only partner NGOs have been part of the contraceptive marketing outlets. It is possible that additional types of outlets could also be effective, such as cooperatives, as pointed out by Dr. Lourdes Orsos of the Silliman University. She argues that profits from contraceptives sales could then benefit all cooperative members, and perhaps encourage even wider acceptance of FP. In some municipalities, Peoples Organizations also double as CBD outlets.
The number of outlets is an important issue, especially for upgrading this activity to a social marketing network. Too many outlets means very small sales per shop; too few means poor accessibility for some people. At first, too many CBDs were established, some are entirely too close to each other. PFPI recognized this and now encourages NGOs to have only one CBD in each sitio.

Conclusions

The selection of PEs and CBDs seems to have been done very carefully, getting people who are well received in the community with good social and communication skills. Drop-out rates for PEs needs some further review, but the fairly low rate of drop-outs among CBDs is very encouraging for the formation of a social marketing network recommended earlier.

Recommendation

There is really only one recommendation to be made here. IPOPCORM has developed a most effective integrated CRM/RH program approach appropriate for rural coastal communities in the Philippines, but further development and consolidation are needed. As this and other sections of this report argue, the human resources, knowledge base, organizational structures, and working relationships are in place or being established, but further strengthening and refinement are needed. The point of calling this a success and walking away from IPOPCORM’s further development has not yet been reached. Therefore:

The Packard Foundation and USAID are strongly encouraged to provide sufficient funding for a two year extension of IPOPCORM through June 2006.
Lessons Learned

- Placing RH/FP in a broader context that links family size to sound environmental management and ultimately food security helps people to recognize the importance of limiting family size by practicing contraception.

- IPOPCORM demonstrates that integrated approaches reduce the resistance to family planning by the Catholic church, religious leaders, and conservative followers because the linkage with food security. This is particularly important for the Philippines where resistance from the religious quarter has undermined previous efforts to promote family planning.

- Integrated strategies such as IPOPCORM’s greatly facilitate informing youth about reproductive health, abating resistance by parents who might otherwise object.

- There is no meaningful downside to integrated approaches like IPOPCORM’s; rather, both the environmental and RH components benefit from this strategy.

- While RH/FP contributes to the sustainability of CRM, CRM provides the enabling context for promotion and acceptance of FP that unidimensional approaches lack.

- It should be possible to develop an integrated approach combining environmental management and reproductive health for inland communities as well.

- Integrated program strategies that are community-focused require a mix of skills by those implementers, including community organization, basic knowledge of environmental management and reproductive health, and strong interpersonal skills.

- It is possible for non-specialists in either CRM or RH to acquire sufficient knowledge support project; however, they require support, coaching, and monitoring from others who have advanced training and experience in CRM and in RH/FP.

- The filed office of implementing NGOs or even a small office/headquarters of a local Peoples Organization can serve as an important focal point for community involvement and participation in project activities.

- It is essential for staff implementing community-based activities to reside in the communities where they work to gain credibility, acceptance, and knowledge of actual conditions and problems that people face.

- Strong working relationship with local government and health officials is essential for any project, and working with government in support of its development plans and objectives is a key element in establishing such relationships.
Annex A

Scope of Work
Assessment of IPOP/CORM’s integrated strategy and synergies
Chris Hermann, PhD

Background:

The IPOP/CORM Initiative, managed by PATH Foundation Philippines Inc. (PFPI) is the largest population-environment project ongoing in the Philippines, both in terms of coverage and investment. The David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the US Agency for International Development (USAID/Washington) are providing complementary funding to support the development and implementation of linked RH-CRM activities in 17 coastal municipalities of six target provinces during 2001-2004. The target provinces include Palawan (including the Calamianes Islands), Camiguin (Mindanao), and four provinces in the Visayas region - Bohol, Cebu, Siquijor, and Negros Occidental.

IPOP/CORM’s community-based projects currently span seven marine conservation priority areas ranked as extremely high or very high in the Philippine Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. In these sites, PFPI and local NGO partners are developing and testing various models of integration and delivery mechanisms for linked RH/FP and CRM strategies. For example, in Northern Palawan (El Nido, Taytay, Culion), IPOP/CORM project activities are dependent on one another and use the same NGO staff (symbiotic model). In the Visayas and Mindanao regions, the staggered approach is being used to introduce reproductive health and family planning strategies into ongoing CRM projects initiated by the USAID-funded CRMP project (Bohol, Cebu, Siquijor, Negros Oriental) and by the Silliman University (Dauin, Camiguin). Additional sites in the Quiniluban Island group (Palawan) use the single sector (non-integrated) approach and serve as sites for assessing the added value of integrated strategies.

IPOP/CORM is also applying IEC tools and messages developed under the CRMP project, particularly the “three critical results” articulated in CRMP’s joint publication with DENR and DOA/BFAR entitled “Coastal Resource Management for Food Security.” In this publication, the two national agencies acknowledge that food security and sustainable development in the coastal zone will only be achieved when fishing effort is reduced, illegal fishing is stopped, and coastal habitats are protected. Among other “strategic interventions” recommended to reduce fishing effort, the two government agencies recommend, “strengthen family planning in coastal areas.” PATH offered to assist the local government and other stakeholders to implement this intervention under the Candijay Municipal CRM plan (2002-2007). The plan was subsequently revised to incorporate reproductive health (RH) as the tenth management strategy. The Candijay CRM-RH plan has since served as a model for development of similar integrated conservation-reproductive health (NRM-RH) plans in other IPOP/CORM sites (i.e., El Nido).
Results of baseline surveys conducted by PATH and research partners in 2001 demonstrated high levels of unmet family planning need and childhood malnutrition in areas that are environmentally degraded. In the same communities, the vast majority of respondents know someone personally engaged in illegal fishing/logging and most expressed the opinion that only the government can stop such practice.

IPOPCORM partner NGOs based in the same sites are encouraged and supported to work with coastal communities to build capacity to advocate for better enforcement of environmental laws, and to plan and implement barangay-specific family planning and CRM activities. To date, PATH and partner NGOs have trained and supported over 1,200 fisher folk who are serving as volunteer peer educators, motivators and agents of change for environmental stewardship and responsible sexuality. These change agents are the ones who translate and disseminate the “three critical results” messages to the grassroots level. Some are also trained to educate, screen and counsel men and women about family planning and to distribute modern methods. Many function both as volunteer fish/forest wardens and as peer educators for responsible parenthood. The private sector is also tapped to implement the project’s social marketing activities, which utilizes existing sari-sari (convenience) stores in coastal sitio as distribution points for family planning products sold at socialized prices. A referral mechanism is also established with the local government health facilities for surgical methods of contraception (vasectomy, bilateral tubal ligations) and for other reproductive health concerns (sexually transmitted disease, etc).

PFPI also supports skills training and micro-credit for small enterprise development in IPOPCORM project sites. Fisher folk and other community members who participate in the program and serve as volunteer FP motivators and fish warden (bantay dagat) or members of the BFARMC receive priority consideration in the selection of beneficiaries for training and micro-credit. In this way, the alternative livelihood inputs function both as a CRM intervention and a reward scheme for volunteerism.

One gender issue identified by PFPI in IPOPCORM sites is the disparity in educational attainment in rural coastal areas. In all six study municipalities surveyed by PFPI and partners in 2001, lower levels of high school attainment was observed in male youth compared to female youth. Available qualitative information suggests an association between school drop-out behavior and the “small money” that boys earn at early ages in fishing communities. Called “the fatal attraction” by a community development worker interviewed in Guimaras, the “small money” tempts boys to quit school and go into fishing on a full time basis. In some cases it is the parent that encourages the boy to drop out for economic reasons; in other instances it is the teen, himself, who elects to drop out because he no longer perceives the need for an education to make money. These same teenage boys end up marrying young – some reportedly because they unintentionally impregnated their girlfriends. Hence, efforts to reduce fishing effort must target young males (13-19 years) as well as their parents and extended family members with messages encouraging boys to complete high school and broaden their options beyond fishing, which is a waning livelihood.
Purpose of IPOPCORM:

IPOPCORM is both a model service delivery project and an operations research activity. In five project sites in Palawan (Calamianes), PFPI is conducting OR activities to test the hypothesis than food security will be achieved more quickly in areas where linked CRM-RH/FP activities are undertaken compared to areas where single sector approaches are being implemented. It is anticipated that the OR study will identify and document other synergies that may emerge in the integrated sites.

Purpose of the Assessment:

The primary purpose of this assessment is to gather feedback from target communities, LGU-NGO partners and other stakeholders on the benefits and gains realized to date from implementing linked CRM-RH/FP strategies. The evaluator will visit several IPOPCORM project sites, including non-integrated sites where RH-only strategies are being implemented. The evaluator will interview community members and leaders to gather and document their perceptions and attitudes about the linked CRM-RH/FP strategy being applied in their catchment areas (or RH-only strategy) and what, if any, benefits have accrued to the community, coastal families and the coastal environment as a result on the linking the two strategies.

The evaluator will also interview municipal and local government stakeholders to leaders to gather and document their perceptions and attitudes about the effectiveness of PFPI's advocacy communication efforts targeted to municipal and barangay leaders that aim to encourage integration of RH/FP strategies into local fisheries management and CRM plans at municipal and barangay levels, and their perceptions of the advantages or disadvantages of supporting such agenda.

The information gathered and documented by the evaluator will be shared with representatives of the donor agencies and national government agencies in April 2004 during a Symposium sponsored by PFPI that aims to stimulate policy dialogue on linked Population-Resources-Environment strategies that can contribute to poverty alleviation and sustainable development in coastal areas. Thus, the consultant's report should focus more on identifying the intersects between POP/RH and CRM activities that are ongoing in the IPOPCORM project sites, the perceived benefits from the perspective of the communities and local government leaders and NGO partners, and the synergies or added value of the integrated approach (based on the consultant's interpretation).

Specific Tasks:

1. Review pertinent project documents including the original proposal, most recent narrative report (Nov 03), most recent bi-annual report (Feb 04), baseline population study report (DRDF), selected NGO subproject subagreements (from the evaluation sites) and last NGO output reports from the same sites, and Mid-Term Evaluation Reports - 2003 (RH, CRM and EED).
2. Conduct field visits to selected IPOPCORM project sites where linked different strategies and approaches are being tested and implemented partner NGOs using either the symbiotic approach (Culion, Palawan and Candijay, Bohol) or the staggered approach (Olango Island in Cebu; Tubigon, Bohol) or the RH-only (single sector) approach (Busuanga, Palawan).

3. Interview community members and leaders to determine the perceived benefits or disadvantages of implementing linked CRM-RH strategies in terms of quality of life, economic benefit, family and community development benefits, conservation gains etc. Document community perceptions of why the integrated approach is superior or inferior to a single sector approach. Observe and document any innovation or unique situation that may be emerging in the site as a result of the projects' advocacy, community organizing, CRM and/or RH activities.

4. Interview local Mayors, Municipal Planning and Development Officers, Municipal health Officers and/or other relevant local government officials to ascertain the level of acceptability and impact of IPOPCORM advocacy communication activities implemented by partner NGOs, and the extent to which linked CRM-RH strategies have been adopted in municipal CRM plans, barangay action plans and other agendas of LGUs.

5. Evaluate/assess the different types of partnerships forged by the IPOPCORM initiative between the public, NGO and commercial sectors and the benefits/gains that have been realized to date by such partnership arrangements.

6. Identify and document perceptions at the level of the family and the community about IPOPCORM's contributions and impacts, if any, to improved (a) food security, family welfare, etc. (b) community organization and empowerment, (c) marine conservation and habitat protection (d) enforcement and (f) environmentally friendly small enterprise development facilitated by micro-credit and community banking schemes.

7. Prepare a report incorporating points of convergence among Reproductive Health, Coastal Resource Management and Environment-friendly Enterprise Development/Alternative Livelihood Programs, lessons learned, advantages and disadvantages of the integrated approach compared to the single-sector approach, and recommendations to improve the IPOPCORM intervention and advocacy communication strategy.
Annex B

NGO selection criteria

1. Priority Areas and Sites
   a. All coastal barangays inhabited by fisher folk, seaweed gatherers, pandan gatherers and weavers, marginal farmers, Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICCs)
   b. Areas where high occurrence of extractive and/or destructive activities can be found
   c. Other areas that are recommended for livelihood support by NGOs, line agencies and the LGU.

2. Beneficiaries - Sectors and Individuals
   a. Women/Housewives in coastal communities
   b. Fisher folk
   c. Marginal farmers
   d. ICCs living in coastal areas

3. Enterprises and Livelihood Activities to be Assisted (Criteria)
   a. Environment-friendly or can be operated within sustainable extraction levels
   b. Availability of raw materials within the municipality for production and/or processing
   c. Existing or potential market for the product
   d. Does not require complicated and high maintenance equipment and technology
   e. Easy to replicate and/or expand
   f. Financially viable as projected in a business module, plan or feasibility study
   g. May complement other products or projects and carry value addition potential