

# Helping Communities Establish Barangay Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Teams: Handing over the Stake



**A**fter meeting with the municipal planning and development coordinator at the municipal office, we went back to our barangay to monitor ongoing work on the farm-to-market road. We have to argue with the foreman of the contractor because we've observed certain deviations on the work being done. The foreman ignored our observation so we have to inform the contractor and the municipal engineer."

*BPMET Chairperson, Pudong, Kapangan, Benguet Province Ms. Carina Guilan,*

# Introduction

The significance of community participation in the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) process of development interventions is recognised under the Second Cordillera Highland Agricultural Resources Management Project (CHARMP2), hereafter referred to as the Project.

The participatory M&E process offers new ways of assessing and learning together with community members, making development more inclusive and more responsive to the needs and aspirations of those most directly affected.

Handing over is different from just sharing the stake. Handing over, in CHARMP2, is the act of relinquishing ownership of development interventions to the real owners at the onset of implementation. They are given the chance to participate in the project from inception to implementation to keeping it sustainable.

The CHARMP2 organises and strengthens barangay participatory monitoring and evaluation teams (BPMET) in each of the barangays covered. They take an active role in assisting the Project and local government unit (LGU) officials to ensure that projects are implemented as planned. The organisation of the BPMETs is also among the Project's exit strategy.

The BPMETs are trained in monitoring the projects being implemented within their barangays. They are made to understand the basics of subproject plans, including program of work (POW) of infrastructure subprojects. Achievement of good results is envisaged with BPMETs actively participating in monitoring Project activities, even beyond the project duration.

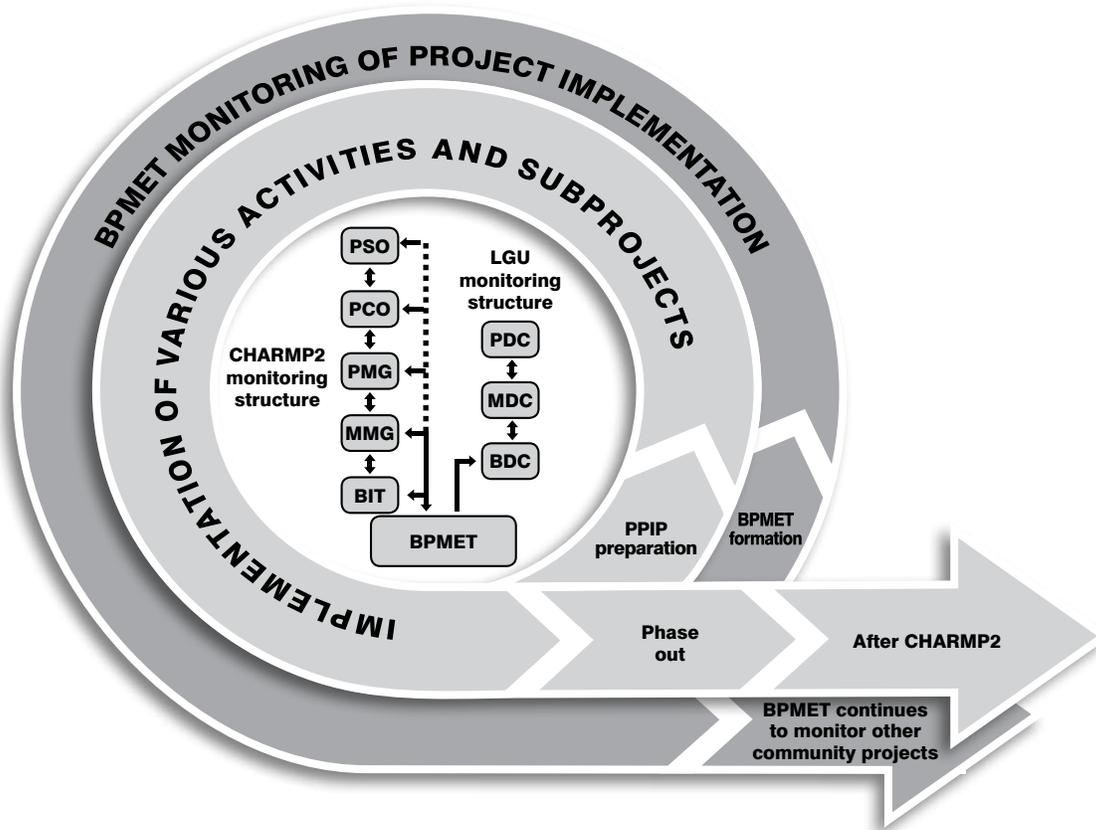
CHARMP2 is a 7-year (2009-2015) project under the Department of Agriculture implemented in 170 barangays of 37 municipalities in six provinces of the Cordillera Administrative Region north of the Philippines. It is jointly funded by the national government of the Philippines, the IFAD, OFID, ADB, local government units and beneficiaries.

The Project supports several projects and activities under the following components:

1. Social Mobilisation, Participatory Investment Planning and Land Tenure
2. Community Watershed Conservation, Forest Management and Agroforestry
3. Agriculture, Agribusiness and Income Generation Activities
4. Rural Infrastructure Development and
5. Project Management and Coordination

Under CHARMP2, participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME) is geared toward measuring the effectiveness of subprojects while at the same time building ownership and empowering beneficiaries, building accountability and transparency and, where possible, immediately taking corrective action to improve performance and attain desired outcomes. PME then seeks to encourage stakeholders to take action and improve the flow of information for strategic planning at different levels.

# The BPMET framework



## CHARMP2's monitoring structure

The Project looks at the status of activities and subprojects from the field through structures established with LGUs. The barangay implementation team (BIT), the municipal management group (MMG) and the provincial management group (PMG) are composed of LGU officers while the Provincial Coordination Office (PCO) and Project Support Office (PSO) are managed by Project staff. At the barangay level, the BPMET and BIT conduct parallel monitoring based on subproject and activity plans. In most cases, the BPMET complements/counterchecks reports by the BIT (which acts as the field team of the MMG). BPMET reports are integrated into the reports of the MMG, which are periodically submitted to higher management. These structures will be phased out as CHARMP2 ends.

## Local government unit's monitoring structure

The LGUs and their corresponding development councils (provincial (PDC), municipal (MDC) and barangay development councils (BDC)) are permanent structures that will be in the Project areas even after CHARMP2 ends. Such structures are mandated by law to monitor implementation of projects within their political jurisdictions. It is envisaged that, at the barangay level, the BPMETs will be supported by the barangay, either by the community or by the barangay LGU, enabling them to assist in monitoring projects.

The barangay is the smallest administrative unit in the Philippines and is the native term for a village, district or ward.

# Organising

The BPMET is organised by the community during a general assembly (GA) called for the purpose of adopting the Project Investment Plan for the CHARMP2.

Each BPMET has at least 9 to at most 12 members, depending on the decision of the GA or the barangay assembly. Members of the BPMET are elected by the GA. The PMET is composed of four officers (a chairperson, a vice chairperson, a secretary and a treasurer) and 5-8 members from the different sectors of the community. While the Project allows a term of office co-terminus with the CHARMP2 duration, it is still the decision of the GA to set the final term of office. In organising the BPMET, 40% of the membership and 30% of the leadership positions are set aside for women.

There are two barangay assembly meetings prescribed under the Philippine Local Government Code (LGC) of 1991. During such assembly meetings, the GA and their local leaders can review development directions for their barangay. These will be an opportune time to review their BPMET's performance.

# Training

Appropriate training provided to members of the BPMETs to build or improve their capacity. Through such training, principles and procedures on M&E are introduced to members of the BPMETs. It is also during training that various subproject plans are discussed with the BPMETs; emphasis is made on the salient parts or items of work in the plan that the BPMETs shall monitor. The municipal or provincial LGU staff and the CHARMP2 staff are invited as resource persons. Trainers include an array of expertise coming from agriculturists, community organisers, engineers and foresters.

The training is composed of two parts. The first part presents M&E basics, including details about the Project's components and targets and reporting requirements. The second part is the practicum, wherein participants do actual monitoring with guidance from the resource persons.

Members of the BDCs are also given the same kind of training as part of the community empowerment efforts of the CHARMP2. This also helps make the barangay LGU appreciate the functions of the BPMET. It is also during such training that community participation is being advocated as an indispensable tool to enhance barangay development.

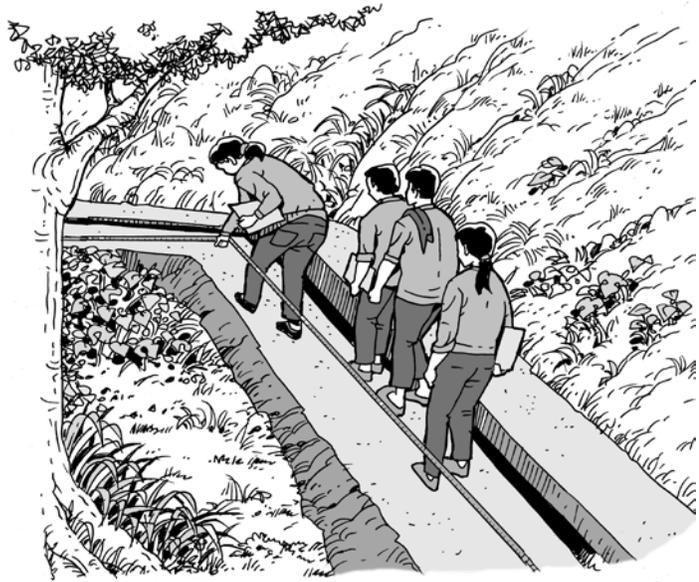
The training seeks to orient and improve capacity of BPMET members on the basics of project M&E systems and procedures. Specifically, it aims to let members

- determine their roles and functions in the various stages of project implementation;
- appreciate the general steps involved in monitoring and evaluating CHARMP2 and other related activities
- describe the M&E reporting and feedback system;
- understand and use project monitoring tools and techniques;
- practice writing monitoring reports; and
- have hands-on experience in proper monitoring and evaluating ongoing projects.

# Field monitoring

BPMETs are equipped with measuring devices, project work plans and POW. The POW describes the rural infrastructure work to be undertaken while the work plans describe other subprojects and activities under the other Project components.

The BPMET monitors use prescribed monitoring forms to note down firsthand observations on projects being implemented on the ground. Monitoring forms are customised in such a way that salient information are captured and reported to Project implementation structures.



## Steps in field monitoring

1. Coordination on monitoring schedule with the MMG, municipal planning and Development Office and Municipal Engineering Office;
2. Orientation and giving implementers updating on progress of project implementation;
3. Conducting exit meetings with project implementers to discuss observations and recommendations of BPMET.



In the case of rural infrastructure, immediate action in response to the BPMET observations may be done if the construction activity is ongoing or if the activity or work being done is not in the POW. Should there be a change in the POW, the BPMET such change. This is one of the reasons the BPMETs must get constant updates from the MMG or its members.

In most of the business plans prepared for people organisations supported by the Project, the BPMETs are included to provide oversight monitoring at the barangay level.

## Reporting

Reports need not be written in perfect English and need not be typewritten. At minimum, reports can be handwritten and the local language/dialect used. This enables monitors to easily express their observations. It is at the MMG level that these reports are translated to English and incorporated into the MMG report to the PMG and ultimately to the PCO and PSO. In most cases, members of the BPMETs also serve as key informants to other Project monitoring teams.

BPMETs can immediately discuss their observations with the contractors and other BIT (MMG field team). However, if their observations are not acted upon, they can give their reports directly to higher Project authority.

“The BPMET is a great help to me. Because of their assistance in monitoring, I am immediately provided updates from the field. I can now devote more time in doing other tasks for other projects in the municipality.”

*Engr. Ernesto M. Dela Torre, municipal engineer. Atok, Benguet Province*

## Acronyms/local terms

Barangay	village or ward
AAIGA	agriculture, agribusiness and income-generating activities
BDC	barangay development council
BIT	barangay implementation team
BPMET	barangay participatory monitoring and evaluation team
CHARMP2	Second Cordillera Highland Agricultural Resources Management Project
CWCFMA	community watershed conservation, forest management and agroforestry
GA	general assembly
LGC	Local Government Code
LGU	local government unit
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MDC	municipal development council
MMG	municipal management group
PCO	Provincial Coordination Office
PDC	provincial development council

PME	participatory monitoring and evaluation
PMG	provincial management group
POW	program of work
PPIP	participatory project investment planning/plan
PSO	Project Support Office
RID	rural infrastructure development
SMPIPLT	social mobilisation, participatory investment planning and land tenure

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