

**TRANSFORMING UNSUSTAINABLE AND DESTRUCTIVE COASTAL RESOURCE USE
PRACTICES IN THE VILLAGES OF TUMBAK AND BENTENAN,
NORTH SULAWESI, INDONESIA**

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ABSTRACT

The United States Agency for International Development in cooperation with the Government of Indonesia started an initiative in North Sulawesi in 1997 which aims to strengthen decentralized and participatory coastal resources management. One goal of the project is to develop community-based coastal management models which can eventually be adapted more widely to other coastal villages in the Province as well as within Indonesia. Three field sites have been selected in the province for intensive implementation activities. One field site, consisting of the two villages of Bentenan and Tumbak located on the east coast of the Minahasa District and bordering on the Maluku Sea, exhibits several examples of destructive and unsustainable fishing and coastal resource use patterns found elsewhere in the Southeast Asian region and within Indonesia. Bomb and cyanide fishing, mangrove conversion, use of fine meshed nets for collection of milkfish fry, use of fish aggregating devices (FAD) for seasonal harvest of pelagic species in spawning aggregates, harvest of mangroves, capture of several rare and endangered species of marine animals, among other issues, all raised concerns about the long term sustainability of these coastal ecosystems to provide livelihoods to the coastal residents. While many of the coastal ecosystems adjacent to these communities are still in good condition, evidence of degradation and trends towards increasing degradation and over-harvesting are present. The Coastal Resources Management Project is attempting to reverse this degradation, while at the same time sustaining or improving the quality of life of coastal residents, through community-based planning and implementation strategies that have been applied successfully in others areas of the Asian region. A soft approach to rehabilitation by transforming current unsustainable and destructive use practices into more sustainable forms of development is the primary emphasis of the project at this field site. Public education activities, community based monitoring and enforcement, formation of local marine resource management committees and the development of village-level ordinances among other things, will be implemented to encourage changes in the values and behaviors of local residents concerning how resources are currently exploited. Since the marine resources are still in relatively good condition, if destructive and unsustainable practices are abandoned, it is likely the ecosystems can be rehabilitated through natural regeneration. This is considered the most cost-effective solution.