

# Land use in *Barangay Bacusanon*

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**B**arangay Bacusanon is one of the biggest villages in Pangantucan, Bukidnon, both in terms of land area and population. Based on the 2016 Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS), the *barangay* had 1,193 households.

Bacusanon is the northernmost village of Pangantucan, located 21 kilometers from the town center. It bathes in the grandeur of Mt. Kalatungan. It enjoys warm sunshine in the daytime and cool breezes at night. The village

can be reached either through the 174-kilometer national highway traversing the cities of Cagayan de Oro, Malaybalay, and Valencia, or the shorter 61-kilometer route via Talakag towards Dominorog highway.

The village's main source of livelihood is agriculture, with its farms producing bananas, sugar cane, rice, vegetables, as well as raising livestock.

Most of the structures in the village are made of concrete and wood. However, the CBMS data also showed that 423 households (35.5%) live in makeshift housing units.

Health of the residents is being looked after by its Health and Birthing Center, managed by two midwives and assisted by the 28 Barangay Health Workers. They provide the following health services to the *barangay's* 1,193 households: immunization, counseling, first aid, health life, tuberculosis treatment, pre-natal check-ups, and normal birthing.

Councilor Jessie P. Arroyo describes the socio-economic status of the *barangay* as “competitive and caters to the needs of its residents and provides the necessary commodities to the community.”

Everyone can make their land more productive as a source of food and means of livelihood. Even the youth have opportunities in the village as sometimes land is already transferred to them at a young age and it is up to them to make it productive using the latest farming innovations and techniques.

A number of landowners leased their land to the Bukidnon Plantation Service

Cooperative (BPSC), from which they receive monthly rental payments.

A huge chunk of the village's land is also leased to Sumifru Philippines, one of the country's biggest producer of bananas.

Bacusanon villagers are mostly indigenous peoples, belonging to the Manobo tribe, and some parts of the village still closely adhere to the indigenous traditions. In the *sitio* of San Guinto, visitors still need the permission of the tribe's council of elders for tours and such.

For a community in which land is very important, it is not surprising that most inter-village conflicts arise from it. The most common cause of conflict are boundary disputes or encroachment. Some lands have been abandoned or neglected by their owners.

The Barangay Local Council solves these problems mostly through dialogue. A number of cases, unfortunately, cannot be settled through dialogue and reach the judicial courts.

However, *Kagawad* Jessie Arroyo emphasized that land disputes and conflicts have been thoroughly resolved through the support of the Council of Elders as “natives of the land” who are more acquainted with the history of the land as well as the rightful owners of the lots and parcels in the community.

The Council of Elders share a crucial role in the decision-making processes. Especially on instances of overlapping claims in the ancestral domain, our elders are able to communicate more effectively with the IP claimants using their language.

Furthermore, in *Kagawad Arroyo's* words, *“Nakatabang ang proyekto pinaagi pud sa Landscape Governance Training para sa comprehensive land use plan sa among lungsod. Napasabot saamo ang importansya og saktong pag gamit sa mga kayutaan labi na para sa mga umaabot nga panahon. Dapat pud aduna’y pagsinabtanay ug koneksyon ang matag-usa sa kinatibuk-an.”*

(The project, through the Landscape Governance Training contributed relevant knowledge as for the community’s land use plan. We also gained a better understanding and awareness on the importance of the proper use of land resources most especially for the coming years - and that requires collective action).



Government agencies such as the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) provide support to farmers in the community through livelihood programs, animal dispersal, and fish culture. Non-government organizations such as Xavier Science Foundation Inc. (XSF) help the community in land mapping and tenurial concerns. ■