Sustainability Meets Eco-Spirituality: Using a Qualitative Multi-Methods Approach to Explore the Philippine Catholic Church's Potential for Watershed Governance Partnership in the Angat River Basin, Bulacan, Philippines

by

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Abstract

The literature of Integrated Water Resource Management argues collaborative watershed partnerships between state agencies and civil society are crucial for water governance. They bring stakeholders together to facilitate dialogue, reduce competition and negotiate on complex water related issues. However in newly independent states, like the Philippines, local state agencies are still struggling to adopt collaborative governance approaches that offer stronger stakeholder engagement, due to poorly implemented decentralizing policies, resource constraints and a lack of political will. Thus, the need to identify and explore alternative institutional arrangements that are capable and willing to support local government is the first step towards developing culturally appropriate and feasible solutions within the Philippine context. Using the Angat River Basin, located in Bulacan, Central Luzon, Philippines, as the focal area for investigation, this research presents a shift in thinking about mainstream watershed group-agency partnerships. As such, the research suggests that the Philippine Catholic Church, a key faith-based organization possesses the necessary skills, experience and trust to facilitate and support a potential partnership for the 63,000 hectare Angat River Basin. The findings from this research, which were collected using a qualitative multi-method approach, highlight how the Diocese of Malolos and the wider Philippine Catholic Church are not only actively responding to environmental advocacy and management, but that their strengths of transformational leadership, political acuity and moral authority compensate for the deficiencies of the local government.

Preface

The research in this thesis is the original work of Katherine O'Callaghan and was conducted under the supervision of Dr. Nora Angeles at the University of British Columbia. This thesis research is part of a larger research project entitled, "Collaborative Governance of Urbanizing Watersheds: Integrated Research, Institution – and Capacity Building for Sustainability and Climate Risks Adaptation in Angat River Basin, Bulacan, Philippines" under Dr. Angeles as the Principal Investigator.

It has received ethics approval from the University of British Columbia Behavioral Research Ethics Board under the project title, "Water Is Life". The Certificate Number is (H13-00848).

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AMRIS	Angat-Maasim River Irrigation System
AMRSP	Association of Major Religious Superiors
APECO	Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority
AR	Action Research
AS	Action Science
BCC	Basic Christian Communities
BEC	Basic Ecclesial Communities
BENRO	Bulacan Environment and Natural Resource Office
BREB	Behavioural Ethics Review Board
BBS	Basic Bible Seminar
BulSU	Bulacan State University
CBCP	Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines
CCC	Commission on Climate Change
COP21	Climate Change Conference in Paris
CPCP	Committee of Pastoral Care for Priests
CSA	Commission of Social Action
CSO	Civil-Society Organization
CWL	Catholic Women's League
CWP	Collaborative Watershed Partnership
DCLM	Diocesan Council of the Laity
DEEP	Diocese Ecological Environmental Program
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DLSU	De La Salle University
DMI	Daughters of Mary Immaculate
DSAC	Diocesan Social Action Centres
ECSA	Episcopal Commission on Social Action
FBO	Faith-Based Organization
IAR	Institute of Asian Research
ICMAS	Immaculate Conception Major Seminary
IMF	International Monetary Fund

IWRM	Integrated Water Resource Management
JHS	Jubilee Housing Subdivision
LGU	Local Government Units
MBCP	Manila Bay Clean-Up Rehabilitation and Preservation Program
MISSA	Mindanao-Sulu Secretariat of Social Action
MPDO	Municipal Planning and Development Offices
MWSS	Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System
MQVNCC	Mary Queen if Vietnam Catholic Church
NASSA	National Secretariat of Social Action
NIA	National Irrigation Administration
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPC	National Power Corporation
PAKISAMA	The National Confederation of Small Farmers and Fisher's Organizations
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PCC	Philippine Catholic Church
PCP-II	Second Plenary Council II
PCY	Parish Commission on Youth
PFFP	Philippine Farmers for Food Project
PI	Principal Investigator
PO	People's Organization
PPC	Parish Pastoral Council
PPCRV	Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting
PPDO	Provincial Planning and Development Office
PYO	Parish Youth Organizations
RCAM	Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Manila
SCARP	School of Community and Regional Planning
SSHRC	Social Science and Humanities Research Council
SSM	Soft-Systems Methodology
SSMNA	Save Sierre Madre Network Alliance Inc.
TDCSB	Toronto District Catholic School Board
UBC	University of British Columbia

UN	United Nations
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

Acknowledgements

Chapter One: Introduction

Worldwide, fresh water is growing scarce. Rapid population growth, urbanization, intensive agricultural practices and rising temperatures from climate change are reducing groundwater supplies faster than they can regenerate. In response, government agencies have adopted Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) as a theoretical concept for reframing complex water resource issues and for coordinating management plans across jurisdictional borders (Bakker 2010; Global Water Partnership 2010). Traditionally, water resource management, within public sector agencies, was driven by centralized "expert" knowledge that offered limited information to the public regarding water conservation and human-driven concerns and exercised command and control policies of compliance rather than engage upstream and downstream communities in meaningful consultation processes (Sabatier et al 2005). Recognizing that water issues are also social issues, public sectors and civil society organizations (CSOs) who subscribe to IWRM models are now increasingly incorporating collaborative approaches to bring stakeholders together to create genuine dialogue, establish platforms for local knowledge sharing and build civic participation – one such approach is through collaborative watershed partnerships (CWPs).

CWPs are defined as, "assemblies of stakeholders who periodically convene to discuss or negotiate the management of streams, rivers or watersheds. Partnerships can be highly formal processes commissioned by government agencies, but they are frequently informal organizations without bylaws, minutes or officers" (Leach and Pelkey 2001: 378). CWPs are designed to bring stakeholders together to raise awareness around water use, address governance and policy issues, facilitate cooperation among competing users, operationalize water programs and more importantly, improve environmental outcomes. As one solution to address the world's complex water problems, CWP research and case studies have emerged in North America, across the Great Lakes and in the Pacific Northwest, focusing on topics such as partnership structure and member composition (Moore and Koontz 2003; Chaffin et al 2015; Sabatier et al 2005), "lessons learned" for implementation (Leach and Pelkey 2001) and organizational challenges (Margerum and Robinson 2015). Thus far, the collective findings suggest that although CWPs are unique, based on local and political contexts, their effectiveness is prefaced on the following four key factors: 1) strong leadership; 2) balancing financial resources with the scope of activities; 3) access to

baseline data and technical information; 4) a committed partnership structure built on trust (Leach and Pelkey 2001; Chaffin et al 2015).

While CWP processes are being celebrated for holding local governments accountable, addressing political gridlock, increasing citizens capacity for active engagement and supporting better decision-making processes their use and applicability in countries such as the Philippines, where water resources are scarce and poorly managed, is less understood. One of the most recent studies, conducted by Chaffin et al (2015) suggests government support of and active involvement in collaborative partnerships, between government agencies and civil society arrangements, have shown to foster successful outcomes. One reason is that public sectors have both resources and time to support these organizations as well as provide valuable funding and watershed group-agency data; however, this work raises important and unanswered questions around power sharing, cooptation and stakeholders being underutilized by public sector staff. It also sheds light on the limitations of the field to address situations where governments have little capacity for engagement and sometimes lack the political will, especially in countries like the Philippines that is challenged by corruption and devolution politics. Thus, Chaffin et al (2015) research ends where this project begins, with a recommendation that as the field of CWPs develops, "there is a significant opportunity for expanding group-agency partnerships" (55). One significant partnership expansion involves faith-based organizations (FBOS), more specifically the Philippine Catholic Church, the key institutional focus of this thesis.

As climate change and urbanization threaten precious water resources in the Philippines and elsewhere, there is a need to understand CWPs and their potential to bring multi-stakeholders together to address complex water issues. To contribute to the literature, this thesis examines one significant body of water - the Angat River Basin, located in Bulacan, Central Luzon, Philippines to explore, the potential role of the Philippine Catholic Church (PCC) as a partner in environmental advocacy and management. The role of the Catholic Church, a trusted and long-standing institution, will be analyzed, using a qualitative multi-method approach, for its potential to support the local government in meeting environmental mandates effectively and mobilizing citizens in support of sustainable water basin development through the promotion of eco-spirituality, "a manifestation of the spiritual interconnection between human beings and the environment" (Lincoln 2000: 228). While the Bulacan Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO) has no formal plans to

establish a CWP in the region, investigations for collaborative governance approaches and initiatives are underway at regional and municipal levels of government and through an international research project funded through the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). To support these endeavours and create a placeholder for future investigation of CWPs, this thesis seeks to not only deepen one's understanding of the role and influence of FBOs for environmental conservation but to emphasize why the PCC is a desirable, indispensable and culturally feasible partner for the Angat River Basin.

1.1. Context of the Research Problem: The Angat River Basin

Despite having many lakes and rivers, reports indicate that the Philippine groundwater sources will be depleted by 2050, as a result of human derived demands that show no signs of slowing down (Ella 2011). More than half of the Philippines' 105 million residents rely on groundwater for human and sanitation needs, especially in rural areas, but their use of the available domestic water supply suffers competition from industrial use, saltwater intrusion, e-coli bacteria and chemical contamination due to inadequate wastewater management and treatment facilities (Greenpeace 2007). Adding to the severity of the water crisis, the Philippines has been ranked the third most vulnerable country worldwide for biodiversity loss and impacts of climate change (United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security 2011) and has over 27 million Filipinos living below the poverty line, often residing in places of vulnerability like environmentally stressed riverbeds and on contaminated soils (Quevedo 2009). The Angat River, the largest freshwater river in Bulacan, which supplies water to Metro Manila, is one example of a watershed region, demonstrating these alarming and complex trends.

The Angat River is located in the province of Bulacan, located north of Metro Manila, bordering on Pampanga to the west and Aurora to the east. Bulacan has 21 municipalities and is home to over 3,000,000 residents making it the most populous province in Central Luzon (Provincial Government of Bulacan 2007). Aside from its strategic location near Metro Manila, Bulacan has an abundant supply of natural resources that provide water and land for fisheries and farmers in addition to a well-developed infrastructure making it a desirable place to work and live. As a product of its success, Bulacan has experienced a significant spike in population growth and industrialization that has shifted the province from its subsistence agricultural economy into a growing agribusiness, tourism and manufacturing region, "Today, Bulacan is among the most progressive provinces in the Philippines. Its

people –the Bulakeno (or Bulakenyo) - are highly educated, enterprising and industrious" (ibid: 2007). But this development has not come without significant costs.

In the last two decades, the 63,000-hectare Angat Watershed and River Basin, a multipurpose reservoir, supplies power and 90% of all water needs to Metropolitan Manila, irrigates 27,000 hectares of farmland in the peri-urban regions of Pampanga and Bulacan and serves as a residential landscape for informal settlers. As a result of increased strain, the Angat River Basin is currently experiencing widening environmental problems due to human driven demands such as growing competition for water, population growth and conspicuous consumption. Studies have also shown that resource depletions from unregulated mining, quarrying and overfishing have led to significant water scarcity and that, coupled with steady in-migration along the riverbanks and poor solid waste management, the problems will continue to intensify in light of climate change impacts (Fresco 2012; Tabios and David 2004; Urbanizing Watersheds 2014).

Despite the Angat River Basin's significance, provincial government staff and stakeholders from the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), The Angat-Maasim River Irrigation System (AMRIS), Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), National Power Corporation (NPC) along with Local Government Units (LGUs) (e.g. provinces, regions, municipalities and barangays), continue at best, to provide centralized and technical approaches to water resource management that address singular rather than complex problems. As a whole, these stakeholders do little to coordinate plans or water resource decision-making with one another or with citizens, especially at the local level. As the situation worsens, academics at Bulacan State University (BulSU), De La Salle University (DLSU) and planners at the Bulacan Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO) are focusing attention on building the capacity of LGUs to adopt more collaborative governance approaches that offer stronger stakeholder engagement and a broader spectrum of civic participation (Fresco 2012; Urbanizing Watersheds 2014). Thus far, their efforts remain poorly implemented as staff in these roles lack the capacity, time and often willingness to do so. This is a result of decentralization and the direct implications of decentralization policies in public service delivery adopted in the Philippines and in other parts of Asia (Laquian 2011; 2002).

Under the 1991 Local Government Code (LGC), Republic Act No. 7160, the Philippines

National Government devolved power and responsibilities to LGUs to protect and manage natural resources, including streams, lakes and watersheds (Rola and Francisco 2004; Laquian 2011). The rationale was that in shifting strategic areas of centralized decision-making onto local governments, local staff would increase responsiveness to residents' needs quicker and more effectively. In reality, many LGUs were ill equipped to deal with these administrative changes. In particular, the Municipal Planning and Development Offices (MPDO), that are responsible for managing municipal waters, lacked the financial aid and technical skills to respond to the complexities of river basin management and collaborative processes. As a result, there has been slow uptake by MPDO and other municipal offices to implement and enforce environmental protection, to draft climate change adaptation plans and to adopt decentralized and collaborative approaches for stakeholder engagement, which have shown success in other parts of the world (Chaffin et al 2015; Leach and Pelkey 2001; Moore and Koontz 2003). In addition to the aforementioned challenges, the pressure to act has been further exacerbated by rapid urbanization in peri-urban cities, the growth of informal settlers located along the riverbanks, and the country's susceptibility to natural disasters that have intensified in light of climate change.

If recent findings in the CWP literature suggest government agencies are the key to facilitating sustainable and productive partnerships with civil society in order to address deteriorating water quality, then what can be said of places like Bulacan and river regions like Angat? In this particular region, the plethora of policies and conservation laws to support the sustainability of the Angat River Basin seems adequate (Fresco 2012: 27-31; Guerrero 2001), but the implementation of these policies and the support for collaborative processes remains fragmented and unknown at the local level. Is it possible then that there are institutional arrangements such as the PCC, more specifically the Diocese of Malolos, with a willingness and passion to support LGUs in environmental advocacy and management of the Angat River Basin?

For secular thinkers, the idea of an FBO partnering with a democratic government on a collaborative watershed initiative seems controversial because it blurs the lines between the separation of church and state, thus presenting challenges to modern social thought (Taylor 2007). However, in the Philippines the influence and leadership of the Church is so commonplace that it largely goes unquestioned. For centuries, the PCC has played an active role shaping public life, championing human rights, challenging dictatorial

governments, and lending a hand in development areas, including: livelihood attainment; health; education; housing and civic capacity building. Similar to other places around the world where religion sets the rhythm and pace of daily life, the Catholic Church in the Philippines provides some of the best social and physical infrastructure, especially to vulnerable populations, and plays a quasi-governmental role as political watch-dogs, yet acknowledgement of their work remains poorly documented and misunderstood by rationalist schools of thought.

This is especially true for religious leaders, many of whom also contribute to local empowerment efforts by encouraging participatory action, establishing communities of practice and offering skills training beyond the pulpit, bema or minbar, yet receive little credit or academic attention beyond the local contexts where they work (Cochrane 2013; James 2011; Moreno 2008). Despite the stigmatized and negative connotations that 'religion', as a spiritual and cultural meaning-making system, receives in western literature, it is neither productive nor contextually appropriate to minimize the significance and functionality of the PCC, as a trusted and historically rooted institution in the Philippines. In doing so, the scholarly literature and public discourse overlook the Church's potential for building trust and collaboration with local communities, as well as with local government officials, to present alternative options, especially for complex and overwhelming ones like the Angat River Basin governance.

1.2. Problem Statement and Research Questions

1.2.1. Problem Statement

This qualitative and exploratory research is interested in how the Philippine Catholic Church particularly the Diocese of Malolos, can offer significant opportunities for furthering collaboration, watershed management, and inter-jurisdictional governance for the Angat River Basin in Bulacan, Philippines. Currently, there are many water resource policies and plans to address the sustainability issues plaguing the Angat River; however little attention has been paid on how to operationalize, monitor, and enforce these plans at the local level by tapping into pre-existing organizations and actors working in the region. Since less is known about this topic, and whether there is interest among the diverse stakeholders to work together, the specific purpose of this investigation will be to generate a deeper understand of the internal and external relationships between the Diocese of Malolos, local municipal officers and lay community members and assess their role in future CWP

opportunities. Due to the scale of the research area, the investigation has been restricted to two sites, the river-fronting towns of San Rafael and Plaridel, among the eleven municipalities that touch the Angat River, which are both overseen by the Diocese of Malolos.

1.2.2. Research Significance and Objectives

As a graduate student at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) and the Institute of Asian Research (IAR), I was invited to participate as a co-collaborator on a research project entitled, "Collaborative Governance for an Urbanizing Watershed: Integrated Research, Institutions and Capacity-Building for Sustainability and Climate-risk Adaptation in the Angat River Basin, Philippines", funded by SSHRC. This research project was led by a principal investigator (PI) Dr. Nora Angeles, who is a faculty member at UBC and my thesis supervisor in the Comparative Development Planning Stream at SCARP. The project team was comprised of student academics and organizations from the Philippines and Canada, including: The University of Northern British Columbia, The University of Guelph, UBC, The Fraser Basin Council, DLSU, BSU and the Bulacan Provincial Government with the intended goal to work together to bring about transformation and enhanced learning for the Angat River Basin. Under direction from the PI, the research project was guided by two primary objectives:

(1) To identify and analyze the system of relationships among political, economic, social and cultural factors supporting (or hindering) the regional institution-building and collaborative governance needed in urbanizing watersheds.

(2) To generate knowledge about the kinds of remedial or preventative collaborative action that could be taken by governments and civil-society organizations to strengthen inter-jurisdictional governance for watershed sustainability and climate-change adaptation.

As part of my participation in the SSHRC project team, this thesis contributes chiefly to the second primary objective which involved generating a deepened understanding of the role and potential of the Diocese of Malolos and its capacity for environmental advocacy and strengthening inter-jurisdictional governance for the Angat River Basin. While the thoughts and opinions of this research are my own, the overall insights and knowledge generated

from this qualitative and exploratory research contribute to the wider goals of the SSHRC project.

1.2.3. Research Questions

This thesis addresses the following primary and secondary research questions:

Primary Research Question:

What is the role of the Diocese of Malolos in developing local partnerships to address the sustainability, governance and management of the Angat River Basin?

Secondary Research Questions:

1) In places where local government lack the capacity or the political will to initiate collaborative processes for watershed management, what are the potential opportunities and constraints for FBOs, such as the Catholic Church to expand their activities to include environmental advocacy and management?

2) What role do religious institutions and leadership play in the local culture of two municipalities in Bulacan and how do these affect citizen's participation?

3) If alternative institutional arrangements, such as FBOs, present a shift in thinking about CWPs, what would be the additional value of their role and how does that contribute to the literature?

1.3. Clarification on Religion and Spirituality

Often in academic literature the terms 'religion' and 'spirituality' are used interchangeably; however one can identify as being spiritual, but not religious or vice versa (Lunn 2009; McGrath 2006). For some, religion, is understood as an institutionalized system of practices shared amongst a community and can be defined by, "notions of faith, beliefs and practices that nurture a relationship with a superior being, force or power" (McGrath 2006: 226), whereas, spirituality is more individualistic and can be broadly defined as, "an individual's quest for existential meaning" (ibid: 226). To address this issue of conflation, I would like to draw on Ver Beek (2000) who suggests that while 'religion' and 'spirituality' have very different meanings, in practice, the two are commonly intertwined as people experience and describe their spirituality through a religious perspective" (32). This is especially true in the

Philippines where there is strong overlap between the two terms, as Filipino Catholics considered themselves both 'religious' and 'spiritual', making it difficult to separate the two. Therefore, while I have elected to use the term religion when discussing this research, I have consciously done so with an understanding that Filipino Catholics are not homogenous in their spirituality and are constantly engaged in interpreting meaning and shaping their own attitudes towards Catholic social teachings. This is especially true in regards to eco-spirituality, which is being promoted by the Catholic Church to cultivate an appreciation for the natural world, a sense of responsibility to care for creation and the need to act responsibly for future generations.

1.4. Religion as the "Missing Link"

For centuries, religious institutions have provided basic social services, shaped ethnic identities, influenced arts and culture, fostered values about well-being and defined the moral psyche of citizens (Deneulin and Rakodi 2011; Hollins 2009); yet, until recently, it has been a taboo topic within academia, particularly within the applied sciences. Therefore, religious organizations and religious leaders' potential for engaging in urban governance and environmental initiatives have either only rarely been explored in single case-studies or, for the most part, ignored in Western academia. To better understand why this is so, especially for the purpose of this study, requires, first of all, examining how religion (i.e. book religions, polytheism, animism, superstitions, indigenous beliefs and religious expressions) is and continues to be negatively associated with the theories of secularization and modernization - two social paradigms that have influenced rational ways of knowledge in Western culture (Clarke 2008; Lunn 2009).

The secularization thesis, popularized during the Age of Enlightenment, predicted that the influence of religion and religious authority would gradually disappear into the private sphere, or altogether, in favour of secular institutions, and scientific investigations (Fox 2013: Jones and Peterson 2013; Norris and Inglehart 2004). From this, individuals believed that to obtain rational thinking they had to disassociate themselves with religious values and social teachings. By the 1960s, secular attitudes were widespread and the influence of monastic authority was restricted in Western Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand (Casanova 1994; Chadwick 1975; Taylor 2004). This trend intensified in light of the modernization theory, which gained prominence as a social paradigm in the 1950s - 1960s.

Modernization refers to a growth trajectory, outlining how countries must transition from "pre-modern" to "modern" to obtain a higher standard of living and access to material goods (Robertson and Turner 1991; Rostow 1960). An important condition for this theory to work was that countries viewed as "pre-modern", by Western standards, required a gradual shift away from traditional religious beliefs and cultural traditions (Kohli, Shah and Chowdhary 1997). According to Rostow (1960) these ancient beliefs were deemed "backwards" to modern progress and the cause of their stagnation. During this period, many governments around the world defended the principle of separation of church and state, creating policies that further delineated religion's role from public life and secured its banishment to the private sphere (Clarke 2007).

After decades of industrialization, rapid city building, and policy efforts on urban social reform, the rise of countercultural movements became prevalent. During the late 1990s, deconstructive and post-modern thought in the fields of gender studies, environmentalism, international development and sociology broke barriers and challenged dominant forms of power, racialization and sexism (Beaumont and Baker 2011; Sandercock 1998); however, religion and the important role it plays in shaping and influencing society garnered little attention beyond philosophy and religious disciplines within academic institutions (Audi 1989; Casanova 1994; Turner 2013).

The absence of religious-based activism and community development - a functional way of looking at religion, was also missing from development studies. Ver Beek (2000) conducted a content analysis of three well-respected development journals: *Journal of Development Studies*, *World Development* and the *Journal of Development Areas,* and found that over a period of time between (1982-1998) there was only a rare reference to the terms 'religion', 'faith' and 'spirituality' reflecting a major gap in the literature to use these topics as an analytical lens to understand the world (ibid: 36). Jones and Peterson (2013) found a similar pattern among development agencies like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the United Nations (UN) who blamed weak adoption of development interventions on religious beliefs and religious leaders. The latter should not be surprising considering the "project of development" is also rooted in Western introspective ideas about what development should resemble (i.e. secularism) and who should be left out (i.e. non-Christian religions).

Despite global attempts to downplay the importance of religion, the theories of secularization and modernization have failed to describe many things, including: how countries like the United States remained overtly religious, that over 1/3rd of the world's population identifies as religiously affiliated, the global rise in faith-based activism, the de-privatization of religion in contemporary democracy and an increase in religious-based identity politics, post 9/11 (Asad 2003; Casanova 1994; Pew Research Centre 2011). It has also failed to acknowledge how FBOs - congregations, pastoral ministries and faith-based coalitions - have been at the forefront of service delivery and material assistance by providing an "invisible helping-hand" to some of the most vulnerable members of society (e.g. immigrants, women, incarcerated individuals and the homeless) in countries around the world (Cnaan and Boddie 2001). Many of these vulnerable social groups are struggling through experiences such as job loss, poverty, lack of transit and housing equality - direct results of Western development ideals like neo-liberalism that have produced uneven levels of wealth, excessive capitalism and broken social security nets.

Thus, the need to study and understand religion has never been greater, particularly since more than half of the world's population has become concentrated in cities placing multi-faith and multi-racial societies side-by-side. However, as a complex category of analysis, religion is difficult to describe without sounding essentialist to human agency, historical conditions, the differences between 'spirituality' and an institutionalized set of ritual practices (Asad 1983; Ver Beek 2000). For many, 'religion' serves a meaning-making purpose but for others it can be functional (like an FBO), having a set of beliefs and practices, symbolic or even superstitious, and unless one has a deep grasp of theology it becomes a daunting task to define.

The most commonly borrowed, cited and adapted definition of religion comes from anthropologist Clifford Geertz in "Religion as a Cultural System". He provided a good starting place to understand religion in a social scientific way. According to Geertz (1966), there are five key points for understanding religion as a framework that guides members behaviour and beliefs: (1) a system of symbols which acts to; (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by; (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and; (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality and; (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic" (ibid: 4). During its original release, Geertz's definition of 'religion', which included a profound association with

symbols and culture was widely popularized among students of anthropology, theology, religious studies and other social-science disciplines. However, over the years, critics have argued that the definition has become too narrow and deterministic of religious practice and does not make clear distinctions between 'faith', 'spirituality' and 'organized religion', which are not synonymous. More so, the definition is ignorant of the inherent power imbalances that construct religious ideologies and symbolism, that are rooted in Western liberalism i.e. Medieval Christianity (Asad 1983: 237).

Talal Asad (1983), a distinguished professor of anthropology, known for his alternative theoretical contributions to the study of religion, Islam and secularism, moves away from Geertz's approach by positing that instead of approaching 'religion' in such a prescriptive way, by focusing on doctrines and practices, it is more effective to understand and discuss:

> What are the historical conditions (movements, classes, institutions, ideologies) necessary for the existence of particular religious practices and discourses. In other words, let us ask: how does power create religion? To ask this question is to seek an answer in terms of the social disciplines and social forces which come together at particular historical moments, to make particular religious discourses, practices and spaces possible. What requires systematic investigation therefore are the ways in which, in each society, social disciplines produce and authorise knowledges, the ways in which selves are required to respond to those knowledges, the ways in which knowledges are accumulated and distributed (ibid: 252).

Applying Asad's advice to avoid an imposing and static view of religion, researchers and those interested in religion must look "from the bottom up" to grasp how religious practices and spiritual beliefs shape a people, a place and its culture. In attempting to define what we don't fully understand, it becomes easy to miss out on essential learning which is important for unlocking a deeper understanding of power dynamics, political development and silenced voices. A former professor at Queen's University, Dia Di Costa, taught me that, "context is the key in development planning" a mantra I hold close to my heart in *thinking* about and *doing* development outside my lived experience. Her words, like Asad's, followed me throughout the fieldwork and into the writing stages of this thesis to ensure that I constantly self-reflected, listened and learned from those around me in the Philippines to fully embrace and appreciate the rich Catholic tradition and spirituality that exists therein. Although different from my own institutionalized Catholic upbringing in Canada, the unique Filipino Catholicism that I experienced and participated in during my fieldwork was a way of life, one that I will explore more deeply in Chapter Four. For now, the use of the term religion throughout this thesis was written within the context of Asad's critique and should be

understood as a contested word that has no universal meaning or definition but reflects the historical process of being culture-bound and syncretistic to some degree.

1.5. Research Design: Approach and Methodology

For this research, I adopted an action-research (AR) paradigm of inquiry that emphasized learning, listening and participating with, and not, on behalf of respondents who participated in the research. An AR approach was adopted over other research paradigms as it was open to new ideas, incorporated participative involvement and emphasized an iterative design process that reflected the values and objectives of the SSHRC project. To collect data, I relied on a broad church of qualitative social science methods including participant observations, semi-structured interviews, and soft-systems methodology (SSM) during two months of fieldwork in Bulacan, Central Luzon, Philippines. To capture multiple perspectives for the case study in San Rafael and Plaridel, I interviewed a total of 26 respondents from the following three categories: lay members, clergy and the professed religious and municipal staff and an additional 3 interviews, outside the research area, but within the study criteria (e.g. members of the PCC, residents of San Rafael or Plaridel) to obtain further insight and clarification. See Table 1.1. for a sample of interviewees.

Table 1.1: Sample of Interviewees

Type of Respondent	Workplace	Mixed-Method Tools	Gender Breakdown	Total
Laity/Community Members	San Juan de Dios Parish (San Rafael)	Informal discussions; semi-structured interviews; participant observations.	Women: 4 Men: 1	5
Laity/Community members	Saint James the Apostle Church (Plaridel).	Semi-structured interviews; participant observations; participant observations	Women: 2 Men: 4	6
Municipal Officers	City government office San Rafael	Semi-structured interviews; participant observations.	Women: 1 Men: 2	3
Municipal Officers	City government office Plaridel	Semi-structured interviews; participant observations; participant observations	Men: 5	5
Clergy Members	Diocese of Malolos	Semi-structured interviews; informal discussions; participant observations	Men: 5	5
Professed Religious (e.g. nuns, pastors, seminarians)	Catholic educational institutions, DOM seminary, RCAM offices	Informal discussions; participant observations	Women: 2 Men: 3	5

The inclusion of multiple perspectives was done to acknowledge that there are different ways of knowing how to understand and address the Angat River as well as describe the human lived experience from different scales of power and gender representation. In recognizing this, and attempting to understand a culture, politics and people, allowed me to better understand the subtleties of the local water situation and the underlying power dynamics between the citizens, the Catholic Church and the local government in both municipalities. A more detailed description of the sample and data collection techniques can be found in Chapter Four of this thesis.

To elaborate on the role and influence of the PCC in providing environmental advocacy and management, four case studies: the Ministry of Ecology at the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Manila, the Anti-APECO Movement, the Diocese of Malolos Jubilee Housing Subdivision and the Save Sierre Madre Alliance Inc. were selected for this thesis. The findings were collected through participant observations, active-engagement and informal discussions with individuals who were involved or helped organize the activities. A detailed description of each can be found in Chapter Six, along with a broader discussion of the PCC's role in environmental advocacy and management. The purpose of this chapter is to supplement the findings of the case-study conducted in San Rafael and Plaridel to showcase the breadth and complexity of the PCC in social action, which in many ways, is already delivering on environmental causes by providing education, coordination on land rights issues, offering financial resources for demonstrations and a commitment to sustainable development and environmental leadership. A layout of my thesis research design is outlined in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Multi-Method Approach to the Thesis
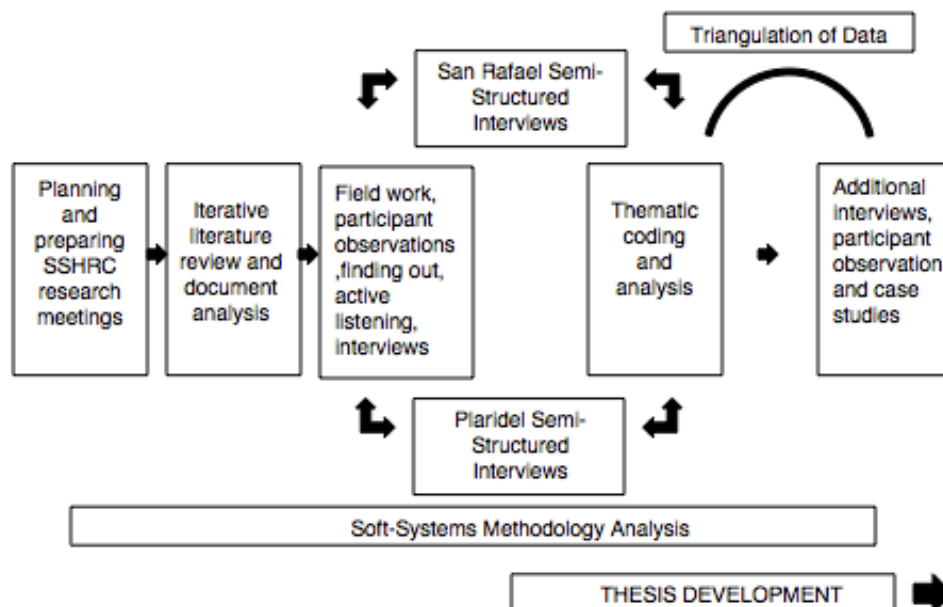
In summary, this thesis seeks to better understand the role and relationship of the Catholic Church in environmental matters and how they can be utilized to support LGU initiatives to preserve and protect the Angat River Basin. Since the literature in IWRM suggests that CWPs have been successful in bridging gaps, improving public consultation and reducing fragmentation across jurisdictional watershed boundaries, this research intends to illuminate new and more creative approaches to address partnership potential within the region. While largely exploratory, the findings will be used to support the objectives of the SSHRC research project and further expand the possibilities of CWPs and FBOs in contexts where little research is available.

1.6. Thesis Road Map

The structure of this thesis is laid out in the following chapters: Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the research problem, the methodology and a justification for examining religion as a functional (e.g. FBO) and spiritual category of analysis. Chapter 2 presents a literature review on FBOs, highlighting their emergence in community development, their relationship with government and their role and influence in environmental concerns, as it relates to the Philippine context. Chapter 3 situates this thesis in an understanding of the historical and socio-political context of the PCC needed to understand the unique relationship between the Church and the State, as well as, the internal divisions within the PCC and lay members. Chapter 4 provides a background on the action-research literature and inquiry process and how it was selected as the framework for this research. This chapter also describes the multi-method research and data collection procedures, limitations and personal reflections that defined how I went about my research. Chapter 5 presents a discussion of the primary data collected in San Rafael and Plaridel, regarding the capacity of the Diocese of Malolos to provide support for environmental advocacy and management. Included in this section are key findings from the three categories of respondents: 1) lay community members, 2) clergy and the professed religious and 3) municipal officers. Chapter 6 provides insight into the work currently underway to address environmental advocacy and management within the PCC. Four case studies documented through participant observations, document analysis and semi-structured interviews will be explored. Chapter 7 directly addresses the research questions, summarizing the various themes, opportunities and constraints that the research revealed and the role that the Philippine Catholic Church plays in the daily lives of the Filipino people. Chapter 8 discusses the implications that this research has on the

SSHRC research project, CWP and FBO literature and some suggestions for how to move forward in light of the new learning.

Chapter Two: Opportunities for Collaborative Watershed Partnership Expansion – Building the Case for Faith-Based Organizations

This chapter offers a broad discussion of FBOs and their role in planning and international development. While the literature review highlights various components of FBOs – their elusive nature, historical development, typologies and relationship with government - the focus will be on capturing stories and examples of how FBOs have become key civil society actors in environmental education and advocacy.

2.1. Opportunity for Partnership Expansion: Faith-Based Organizations

Since we now know that, "religion is by no means disappearing in the modern world" (Asad 1999:1) our understanding of it, along with spirituality, needs to be deepened so that we may tap into whatever strength, power and hope that this dimension gives people and at times deprives them of opportunities (Ver Beek 2000). FBOs have gained considerable interest in academia and development circles as they are seen as avenues for religious institutions and faith-traditions to carry out their religious-based activism. According to Clark (2006), although FBOs can take many forms, including: faith-based representative organizations or apex bodies, faith-based charitable or development type organizations, faith-based socio-political organizations, faith-based missionary organizations and faith-based illegal or terrorist organizations (849-843), a common thread among them, is their ability to articulate how religion and faith can be translated into practical and on-the-ground action.

While religious leaders have been carrying out social service type activities for decades their importance as partners and providers is finally being recognized and celebrated by governments, businesses and other areas of civil society. For instance, many health sector agencies are increasingly forming partnerships with religious organizations to address local health issues and the attainment of public health objectives (Allen and Heald 2004; Kumanyika and Charleston 1992; Stillman, Rand, Bone, Levine, Becker 1993). According to Simpson and King (1999), when health agencies establish partnerships with religious organizations they are able to effectively reach vulnerable populations, understand cultural influences on health care and empower faith-leaders to teach their captive audiences about disease prevention or the treatment of illnesses. Although the correlation between individuals who seek meaning when experiencing illness has been cited as a reason why

these partnerships work well, the notion of appropriateness and cultural relevancy also have important roles to play (Graber, Johnson and Hornberger 2001).

To further the research on FBOs and their implications for collaborative watershed management, which is rarely considered, the remainder of this review will explore the most salient research on FBOs, using a variety of sources including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, grey literature and online sources. While much of the originating research comes from Western Europe and North America, considerations were made to capture FBOs operating in Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia and Melanesia to offer new insights about religious communities and faith-based groups in other parts of the world working in environmental areas.

2.2. Defining Faith-Based Organizations

While congregations and religious organizations have been providing charitable work and social assistance for many decades, the term FBO has recently been coined by governments and development agencies to include a much broader cross-section of religious organizations who provide services, including but not limited to: humanitarian assistance, HIV/AIDs awareness, conflict resolution, disaster relief, social movements and environmental protection (Bielefeld and Cleveland 2013). The term FBO has gained momentum in development theory and practice, yet no simple definition captures the complex sets of actors who have their own organizational attributes, religious sects and branches, and different methods of incorporating religion:

> The term FBO is highly problematic. For some people FBO smacks of right-wing American politics. For others, it is the foreign language of the aid industry. For many, the term 'FBO' conceals much more than it reveals. It gives the impression FBOs are the same. Yet FBOs are extraordinarily heterogeneous in the ways in which their faith identity plays out in their work" (James 2009:4).

Despite this, there have been numerous attempts by politicians, bureaucrats and other development actors to lump FBOs together as one or generalize them in their own terms, signalling that, "faith-based language is out there" (Wilson 2008: 212). While this reductionist approach may be true of the development sector, a slow trickle of non-Western voices from Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, Asia and Southeast Asia have brought to light case studies of FBOs that are demystifying the language of what "faith-based" is and is not, within local contexts (Adedoyin 2013; Rivera-Hernandez 2015; Wilson 2008; Lunn 2009). Since many scholars question what is meant by the term, "faith-based" and if it adequately

captures the diversity and distinctiveness of religious organizations and their development activities around the world, I am cautious to accept one definition. While there is no simple or agreed-upon definition, the term FBO is generally understood in the literature as, "any organization that derives inspiration and guidance for its activities from the teachings and principles of the faith or from a particular interpretation or school of thought within that faith" (Clarke and Jennings 2008; 6). This description, more so than others, captures the FBO's diversity and provides a suitable definition that is not precise or limiting, as one's frame of mind should be, when exploring the way religion and faith shapes and inspires people to act.

2.3. Typologies of Faith-Based Organizations

Since FBOs are difficult to define, it presents numerous challenges for funding decisions and the need to correct language in public policy. Sider and Unruh (2004) assert that, "the lack of clear analytical categories hampers comparative research on the effectiveness of service programs" (ibid: 104). To address these gaps, a small handful of studies have emerged to decipher the differences among FBOs and create a framework for classifying them. A general survey of the research reveals FBOs operate at local, national and international levels and can range from small community-based organizations to nation-wide religious coalitions and international faith-based development organizations. Table 2.1 outlines key distinctions among them.

Understanding typologies of FBOs is useful to assess their scale and scope; but it is also advantageous to be aware of "cognitive and linguistic biases" (Dovidio and Gaertner 2010: 1090). The distinctions in Table 1.1 illuminate three important facets of our understanding of FBOs. The first is that FBOs should not be understood as static concepts. They reflect the religious ideas, values, and shared interests, of a group of individuals at one moment in time. Second, a majority of studies confine their scope to Christian-based FBOs, with the exception of Clarke (2006) and Bradley (2009). According to Clarke (2006) this limited perspective overlooks the more contentious and historically sensitive FBOs, including: socio-political, local or grassroots, missionary, and illegal or terrorist organizations. Third, the inclusion and exclusion of the term congregation points to a much larger debate in the literature. Jeavons (2004) argues while it may seem obvious a congregation would be understood as one type of FBOs, as it has in various typologies (e.g. Tadros 2010; UN 2014; Vidal 2001), those involved in the volunteer work of their congregation would not typically refer to their own parish as one. Hence, there is a need to acknowledge the simple

fact that FBOs are not immune to context. What language makes sense in one place may not make sense elsewhere. Other authors (see Berger 2003; Tyndale 2006; Tomalin 2012) have identified similar concerns, particularly within non-Western contexts where FBOs are not as clearly defined and often used synonymously with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or to describe the service arm of institutionalized religions, such as a Catholic social ministry and other smaller initiatives like the Knights of Columbus, which is a Catholic-based non-profit organization.

2.4. Contested Histories: An Overview of FBOs in Development Practice

The majority of studies investigating the role and influence of FBOs are slowly being explored in development literature and practice. While it may seem odd, considering the controversial role religion has played in historical memory, Kessler and Arkush (2009) assert that studying and evaluating FBOs in development theory has been beneficial. According to the authors, FBOs are effective in building social capital, in providing long-term sustainable commitments as well as service delivery, which presents new ways of *thinking* and *doing* development differently. Similarly, James (2009) argues FBOs have always been active in development practice, but neglected in academia, and that the renewed interest stems from a willingness to understand faith as both a valuable and flammable contribution.

To address the field's lack of historical knowledge, Clarke (2006) contends that six global factors have contributed to FBOs prominence in development literature: (1) Ronald Reagan's presidency, which sparked the rise of the Christian Global Right and the evangelical churches' involvement in US politics; (2) neo-liberalism and austerity policies that led to the rise of civil society; (3) Islamic conflict in the Middle East that stimulated pan-Islamic identity; (4) the rise of identity politics after the decline of communism, the Iranian Revolution and the end of the Cold War; (5) a global re-entry of religion into the public sphere particularly in faith-based activism (e.g., the Jubilee 2000 campaign and during post-authoritarian transitions to democracy); (6) immigration to Western countries that fuelled the growth of other multi-faith identities that have close-ties with their homeland and their national faith-community (ibid: 837-839).

Table 2.1: Typologies of Faith-Based Organizations

Study and Author	Typologies of FBOs	Methodology
Castelli and McCarthy (1998) Religion-sponsored social service providers: the not-so-independent sector (US study)	*Congregations:* affiliated with a physical structure of worship or geographical grouping of worshippers, can vary in size and membership; *National network of congregations*: includes national denominations and their social service affiliates, as well as other networks of related organizations, such as the Young Men Christian Associations (YMCA); Habitat for Humanity and Young Women's Christian Associations (YMCA); *Freestanding religious organizations*: are incorporated separately from congregations and national networks but maintain a religious basis similar to a non-governmental organization (2-3)	Literature review of annual reports, academic journals and think tanks documenting religion-sponsored institutions in the 1990s.
Sider and Unruh (2004) Typology of Religious Characteristics of Social Service and Educational Organizations and Programs. (US study)	*Faith-permeated organizations:* the connection to faith is self-evident; *Faith-centered organizations:* founded for a religious purpose, remain strongly connected with the religious community through funding sources and affiliation, and require the governing board and most staff to share the organization's faith commitments*; Faith-affiliated organizations:* retain influence of religious founders (such as their mission statement) but do not require staff to adhere to religious beliefs or practices, with the possible exception of some board and executive leaders; *Faith-background organizations*: appear and act secular, but have historical ties to a faith tradition; *Faith-secular partnerships*: when a secular entity joins with one or more congregations; *secular:* have no reference to religion in mission or founding history, and they regard it as improper to consider religious commitments as a factor in hiring or governance (120).	Literature review, evaluation of case studies from 15 congregations in the greater Philadelphia areas and interviews from 21 churches.
Clarke (2006) Faith Matters: Faith-based organizations, civil society and international development.	*Faith-based representative organizations or apex bodies*: hierarchically organized faiths with representative bodies and associated organizations that promote development and charitable work; *Faith-based charitable or development type organizations*: entities that play a direct role in tackling poverty by funding and	Historical analysis, literature review and empirical research.

Study and Author	Typologies of FBOs	Methodology
(Int study)	managing programs to support the poor; ***Faith-based socio-political organizations***: political parties, broad-based social movements, professional associates and secret societies; ***Faith-based missionary organizations***: provide social support while engaging in active proselytizing, and conversion tactics. This group is largely confined to Christianity and Islam; ***Faith-based illegal or terrorist organizations***: engage in dangerous activities and religious nationalism directed against other religious communities or conservative religious politics (840- 843).	
Bradley (2009) (US study)	***Community-grassroots organizations:*** shaped by their spirituality and strong desire to closely relate to local communities*; **Intermediaries:*** denominational organizations who use their religious affiliation to raise money*; **Missionaries:*** concerned with achieving the goal of religious salvation for all (103).	Comparative analysis.
Tadros (2010) Faith-Based Organizations and Service Delivery Some Gender Conundrums (Int study)	***Faith-based and/or faith-inspired development organizations***: Islamic relief, Christian Aid, Catholic Relief Services, and their national, regional and international chapters (7); ***Interfaith- or multifaith-based organizations***: organizations that come together for a common cause and who are driven by shared values. These groups provide services that are beyond the scope of a single congregation; ***Local congregations***: people who worship together and engage in social works by organizing food drives, clothing donations, in-home visits and assistance to the elderly; ***Ministries of religious affairs***: typically exist in countries where other NGOs and registered faith-based groups have difficulty registering and operating (7-8).	Literature review, ethnographic research in Cairo, interviews in Yemen and Cairo.
United Nations Development Program (2014) Guidelines on Engaging with FBOs and Religious Leaders. (Int study)	***Religious congregations***: churches, mosques, synagogues and temples; ***Charities***: sponsored or hosted by one or more religious congregations; ***Non-profit organizations***: founded by a religious congregation or based upon faith and spiritual traditions; ***Coalitions***: includes organizations described above (5)	Literature review and institutional content analysis.

While other scholars cite one, two, or all of the abovementioned factors, for the most part, these critical moments in history have contributed to a modern day understanding of why FBOs have become fashionable in development. However, the work of religious organizations involved in community development, dates as far back as the 16th century, during periods of contested colonialism and missionary activities. The FBO phenomenon should not be understood as something "new", but as something poorly documented by contemporary academia and "invisible" within modern development agendas. In development practice, many international development institutions like the United Nations (UN), World Bank and other bilateral agencies, credit themselves for bringing religion back to the table (Thomas 2004a; Berger 2003). While hotly debated by critics of the global aid industry (Clarke 2006; Jones and Peterson 2013), it is hard to deny the influence that these large-scale and high profile forums, such as the World Bank's World Faiths Development Dialogue series (2000 - 2005), UN's Focus on Faith Series (2008 - 2016), and the UN's Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders (2000) have had in shining light on the importance of engaging with and understanding religion and the power of religious leaders and organizations, which for a large segment of the world's population is the centre of life (Thomas 2004a; Berger 2003; James 2009). While past reluctance to include religion in development was the norm, the acceptance of FBOs by the UN and the World Bank signals that religion has re-emerged as an important and legitimate part of civil society (Clarke, Charnley and Lumbers 2011).

However, polarized narratives of international development exist and academics are concerned that FBOs risk becoming another development buzzword (McDuie-Ra and Rees 2008; Clarke and Ware 2015). In the past, international development institutions claim to have excluded religion on the basis of its incompatibility with funding protocol and the possibility of competition among religious groups. But in actual fact, some of the largest and most successful NGOs, including: World Vision, Aga Khan Foundation, Christian Aid, Catholic Relief Services, Caritas, American Red Cross and the Salvation Army, who maintain a faith-based origin, have been receiving funds from the UN and World Bank long before FBO became popular in development circles (Jones and Peterson 2013: 1302). So what can be made of this contradiction?

Clarke (2006) reports that donor funding for these large-scale organizations has been substantially high and in 1999, the United States reported 18% of NGOs, with a faith-based

ethos, had a combined budget of US $17 billion, "equivalent to the annual GDP of Sri Lanka" (841) and in 2009, World Vision International reported a US income of $2.57 billion (Wrigley 2011: 2). As in life, things are not always as they appear and in some cases, FBOs have become avenues for international development agencies to spread their own economic and ideological interests. Clarke (2006; 2007) asserts that major biases continue to exist among development agencies and donors who prefer working with and funding certain faith organizations (i.e. Christian) that align with secular discourse and democratic values. On the contrary, James (2009) study reports how some European FBOs downplay their religious content to appear more secular as a tactic to gain access to donor funding (Clarke 2006; James 2009) thus presenting further challenges to understand biases in funding and how FBOs differ from NGOs.

This situates FBOs within the larger context of the global aid system where development takes place and how foreign aid is distributed (Figure 2.1), as popularised in documentary films like Poverty Incorporated (Miller 2014). Under this system, of the anti-poverty development industry, foreign monies flow between countries from the North to the South in the range of US $150 billion annually (De Haan 2009: 1).

Figure 2.1: The Global Aid Industry

(Source: Miller 2014)

While the money is typically spent providing various goods, services and much needed infrastructure it comes at a high cost for local governments in developing nations. Like the popular adage, "there is no such thing as a free lunch", the funds coming from donor nations, large corporations and private philanthropists wield significant influence forcing local politicians and service providers to accept conditionalities that allow foreign influence in decision-making processes and impose uneven rules on local producers and citizens (Gunder Frank 1991; Wallerstein 2011). As a result, the global aid industry has stagnated growth in parts of Southeast Asia, Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa, creating a culture of dependency and establishing a relationship of Western paternalism (Abbott and Pollard 2004; Miller 2014). As the landscape of NGOs becomes oversaturated and competitive, some critics have argued that FBOs are a new gimmick in which to channel funds and perpetuate the aid cycle (Tyndale 2006; Tomalin 2012).

Here lies the crutch of the problem: there are conflicting ideas about FBOs and their place in development. The bulk of the literature, driven by Western academics, public-policy scholarship, and actors in international development agencies view FBOs in one way - as extensions of civil society that subscribe to Western models of development. From this perspective, religious organizations can play positive roles in the development process shaping local customs and beliefs, providing essential service-delivery, offering disaster relief in times of emergency and strengthening social networks if and when they play by the rules (Thomas 2004a; James 2009; Jones and Peterson 2013; United Nations Development Program 2014). However, as the field grows and more research emerges "from the bottom-up", studies are finding that the relationship between religious organizations and local communities is much more complex and often adversarial with local governments and other faith traditions (Taylor 2007; Hassall 2012). Some authors argue that the mainstream literature on FBOs simplifies and limits their study to those compatible with NGO-type activities and ignores the ways FBOs have been involved in development in both constructive and contentious ways such as through electoral reform, pro-life debates and anti-LGBTQ progress. In addition, homogenizing FBOs as part of the international aid schema ignores the agency of FBOs to resist attempts to be 'scaled-up' by Western donors and pressured into Eurocentric ideas about development and progressive growth (Tyndale 2006; Tomalin 2012).

Fortunately, recent trends to understand FBOs in both theory and practice are moving away from the interests of development institutions and Western academics by presenting alternative approaches based on local contexts, historical relationships and favorable political cultures. For example, single case-studies emerging from sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, Asia and Southeast Asia are providing unique insights into the merits, strengths and dangers of these organizations to provide leadership, advocacy and mobilizing support for HIV/AIDs (Agadjanian and Sen 2007; Kloos, Wuhib, Mariam and Lindtjorn 2003), landless farmers (Wolford 2005), community development projects (Austin 2014; Bradley 2009; Clarke 2013), and more recently environmental management and disaster recovery (Airriess, Li, Leong, Chia-Chen Chen and Keith 2008; Cochrane 2013; De Cordier 2008). While it is beyond the scope of this review to capture all of the stories documenting the effective or ineffective work of FBOs, at a higher level it is becoming clearer, that FBOs are key stakeholders for building community trust, bridging and bonding social capital, supporting long-term sustainability and community engagement, especially in areas where there is weak government and high vulnerability to political corruption, climate change and environmental pressures.

2.5. Exploring Differences Between NGOs and FBOs

A common approach in the literature has been to disassociate FBOs from their secular counterparts by focusing on the way "faith" (i.e. divine duty, calling, spiritual practices, beliefs) shapes behaviour and inspires participants call to action differently than a traditional NGO. To that point, authors have been making inferences about the way "faith" motivates participation (Tyndale 2006; James 2011; Berger 2003; Cochrane 2013), how it influences organizational behaviour (Jeavon 1998; Sider and Unruh 2005; Smith and Sosin 2001), and taps into "cultural power" - cultural resources such as symbols, ideologies, and moral authority - to affect political outcomes" (Demerath III and Williams 2014:170); however these findings are often based on single-case studies that draw little from religious teaching and eschatologies and offer limited empirical evidence. In some instances, authors do not define what "faith" means or provide an analysis of NGOs, making it difficult to compare where the two diverge or relate with one another on ethical grounds (Clarke and Ware 2015; Ebaugh et al 2003).

In one of the first comparative studies to do so, Ebaugh et al (2003) assessed how FBOs differed from secular organizations in the following five categories: 1) identity 2) staffing 3)

funding sources 4) culture and 5) organizational practices. Interestingly, the authors found despite minor differences in mission, many FBOs in the United States shared similarities with NGOs and other CSOs. For instance, the author found that both relied on local congregations to recruit volunteers, they were not opposed to religious-oriented interactions with respondents, and they both equally valued and relied on business leaders, secular data, and in-kind contributions. Additional similarities that emerged from the data included internal management problems and being scrutinized for evangelizing their own missions.

While Ebaugh et al (2003) provided a rational foundation for exploring FBOs and comparing them with NGOs, the study offered little in terms of a deeper look at the role and influence of faith and how it shapes decision-making and staffing within FBOs. In a more recent attempt, Clark and Ware (2015) reviewed 50 relevant studies published (2000 – 2013) to explore the differences between FBOs and NGOs. The authors found that while both relied on donor funds, programming goals and an interest to address poverty and marginalization of the poor, "there is yet little clarity as to the similarities and distinctiveness of FBOs in contrast to NGOs and also how they are positioned in regards to the wider civil society" (ibid: 46). While the authors suggest more work is required to fully understand the various manners of contrast, given their heightened importance in international and local development projects, they offer a new typology to understand FBOs as constitutive (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2: FBOs as Constitutive

(Source: Clarke and Ware 2015)

Based on their analysis, FBOs are a unique amalgam - distinct in their own right that may or may not share similarities with NGOs, that draw on aspects of other institutions and contain elements of NGOs within them (ibid: 46). Despite this, FBOs continue to be portrayed as alternative and important stakeholders in the development process, regardless of whether they offer the same benefits as NGOs or other secular organizations

The following are two good examples of how FBOs are being socially constructed in mainstream literature to offer something "new" and more culturally relevant within the development sector:

> Faith matters to people, and matters to development. In many parts of the world, faith-based organizations (FBOs) and religious leaders (RLs) are influential in both the political and social spheres, and have a broad following in society. Their presence in local communities, coupled with their capacity to deliver critical services, allow them to mobilize grassroots support, earn the trust of vulnerable groups, and influence cultural norms – all of which make them vital stakeholders in development (United Nations Development Program 2014).

> Religious communities are, without question, the largest and best-organized civil institutions in the world today, claiming the allegiance of billions of believers and bridging the divides of race, class and nationality. They are uniquely equipped to meet the challenges of our time: resolving conflicts, caring for the sick and needy, promoting peaceful co-existence among all peoples (World Conference on Religion and Peace 2001, cited in James 2009: 7)

While some argue, this is an attempt by the international aid community to justify its own existence (Miller 2014), it, nonetheless, suggests there is an area of research that remains largely unexplored but important for understanding the way that religion motivates and shapes human behaviour. A large part of this problem not only goes back to the issues of rationalist research and the overall denial to accept religion in secular environments, but the need for scholars of religion and religious studies to engage with other academics as a way to bridge knowledge, foster collaboration and build understanding.

2.6. Faith-Based Organizations and Government

For many decades, the separation of church and state legislation has influenced the exclusion of religion and religious expression from public policy and government decision-making (Casanova 1994; Clarke 2006). However, with the renewed interest in FBOs, bureaucrats and politicians have been quick to play "catch-up" in hopes of partnering with FBOs in social service provision and other areas of civic importance. The majority of

research in this area has emerged from the United States against the backdrop of *Charitable Choice* legislation, which was popularized by the Bush administration in 2001:

> I believe in the power of faith in people's lives. Our government should not fear programs that exist because a church or a synagogue or a mosque has decided to start one. We should not discriminate against programs based upon faith in America. We should enable them to access Federal money, because faith-based programs can change people's lives, and America will be better off for it.
> (The White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives 2008 n.p)

As outlined in *Charitable Choice* legislation, FBOs cannot be excluded from competition for federal funds or discriminated against because of their beliefs, religious environment, nor their human resource practices (White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives 2008; Bielefeld and Cleveland 2013; Brooks and Koenig 2002). While controversial for many reasons, Chaves (2003) research on *Charitable Choice,* suggests that critics of the legislation perceive issues of publicly funded proselytization, employment discrimination and the privileging of some religious organizations (i.e. Christian) over others. Tomalin (2013) contends this legislation reflects a, "political culture that increasingly encouraged the involvement of FBOs in social welfare provision and introduced legal changes to make this possible" (217). In response, a proliferation of western academics (Jeavons 1998; Sider and Unruh 2004; Smith and Sosin 2001) have attempted to define, categorize and understand the organizational characteristics of FBOs to help governments make better decisions when partnering and providing advice on how and where federal funding should be spent.

While the United States is one of the few Western countries to be forthright in supporting FBOs, several authors have highlighted places like the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia where governments have engaged with faith-based groups and religious charities through arms-length government agencies (Clarke 2007; Vander Zaag 2013; Dalton and Butcher 2014). This suggests collaboration with faith-groups is increasingly becoming the norm. Chaves (2003) claims the reason governments have warmed to partnering and funding FBOs is because they have proven their capacity to facilitate development based on, "organizational features such as their historical rootedness, popular legitimacy, infrastructure, networks and motivation" (ibid: 1296).

In addition, FBOs are increasingly also being viewed as key partners in network governance, policy reform and for easing the financial burden of governments to provide services in newer areas like substance abuse, HIV/AIDs, employment assistance, disaster

recovery and environmental protection (Bielefeld and Cleveland 2013; Brooks and Koenig 2002; Aijazi and Angeles 2014; Heist and Cnaan 2016). In some cases, governments have supported major research projects to better understand the opportunities and challenges in partnering with FBOs. Wrigley (2011) points out that in 2005, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) launched a €3.5 million five-year research programme hosted by the University of Birmingham (2017) to better understand:

1) How religious values and beliefs drive the actions and interactions of individuals and faith-based organizations?

2) How do religious values and beliefs and religious organizations influence the relationships between states and societies?

3) In what ways do faith communities interact with development actors and what are the outcomes with respect to the achievement of development goals? (ibid n.p.)

While efforts to partner, fund and research FBOs have largely been supported and for the most part encouraged by governments and academics in western countries, that view them as the "missing-link" in civil society, there is far less research available to assess the role of FBOs in places with weak governance, particularly from the vantage point of the governments themselves.

In 2000, the World Bank released findings from *Voices of the Poor,* a qualitative project that consulted thousands of women and men living in economically disadvantaged communities, "from Georgia to Brazil, from Nigeria to the Philippines" (Narayan-Parker and Raj Patel 2000: 3). One of the key findings from this report, that is also important for this study, is the finding that in places with weak government (e.g. the Philippines) individuals placed higher degrees of confidence in their religious leaders and local religious institutions (ibid). Building from that knowledge, single case studies (e.g. Moreno 2008; Hassall 2012; Rivera and Nickels 2014; Thomas 2004b) support these findings and have shown that the relationship between governments and FBOs fluctuates based on political authority, public sector failures or if politicians themselves feel threatened. The authors point out that in places with weak governance, which often tend to be places where economically disadvantaged people live, many FBOs serve quasi-governmental functions taking on leadership roles, serving as watchdogs, condemning political corruption, providing advice on key policy issues and helping to address conflict resolution amid civil tensions. Therefore, this suggests an

expanded understanding of FBO functions is needed, "The issues faith communities must deal with in the developing world are complex, and include gender and reproductive issues, HIV/AIDS, religious approaches to work, wealth, and poverty, usury and interest, corruption, state privatization, inter-faith cooperation, and good governance" (Thomas 2004b: 142).

To an outside observer, the work of FBOs in places with weak governance blurs the lines between church and state, but within local contexts, the role of religion and religious leaders has become a part of everyday life. In many cases, FBOs are taking important leadership roles and offering coping tools to individuals that contribute to local empowerment, sustainable development and notions of citizenship (Cochrane 2013; James 2011; Moreno 2008). However, the relationship between FBOs and state officials is not always amicable.

For example, in central Senegal, Cochrane's (2013) study sheds light on diverging interests between state officials and FBOs over organic farming practices and rural livelihoods. According to Cochrane, state officials were pressuring farmers to produce "fast-results" using modified seeds at the expense of long-term organic farming practices, which were having a positive impact on rural livelihoods. In reaction, farmers and local residents were mobilized under the guidance and direction of religious leaders to advocate against the government's plan for short-term profits and the risks associated with over-farming environmentally stressed soils. In this case study, it becomes easier to see how faith groups can sometimes be more effective than state officials in meeting locals' needs, but highlight the often volatile and complex power dynamics that exist between local politicians and religious leaders over economic growth and sustainable development.

In the Philippines, no example is clearer than when the Philippine Catholic Church (PCC) led a non-violent resistance movement speaking out against authoritarian oppression, democratic unfairness and unjust land reforms during the Martial Law period from 1972-1981. Franco (2001) documents how during this period, when president Ferdinand Marcos turned himself into a dictator shutting down media outlets, suspending public assemblies and arresting over 60,000 people, including 62 priests, with political dissent, the PCC successfully rallied the masses in an unprecedented feat. Under the charismatic leadership of Cardinal Jaime Sin, the Archbishop of Manila, the PCC voiced their opposition to the government and condemned its widespread violence and corrupt practices. Using its strength in numbers, the PCC worked with Cory Aquino, wife of the late Benigno Aquino Jr.,

to mobilize "People's Power" through various Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) pastoral letters, training seminars, Radio Veritas, and the pulpits during mass to take a non-violent approach to successfully oust the Marcos government after electoral fraud allegations (Rapatan 1997). On February 22, in 1986 over two million supporters of the People's Power Revolution came out to major Manila streets to show solidarity and restore the county's democratic process. These efforts offer strong indication of the Philippine Catholic Church's historical tradition and commitment to stand alongside the Filipino people, offering unfaltering support and solidarity during times of social and political unrest.

However, animosity between religious organizations and government is not limited to the majority world. Rivera and Nickels (2014) expose failed governance in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina left civil society, such as the Mary Queen of Vietnam Catholic Church (MQVNCC), answerable for post-disaster recovery and redevelopment. During this time, MQVNCC - one of the largest community resources for Vietnamese Americans, responded quickly to post-disaster response, relocation and recovery during a time of inefficient implementation of recovery efforts at the local level, and a political system that felt no responsibility for providing critical response units, resulting in the death of several citizens. While Rivera and Nickels (2014) commend MQVNCC for the years of interpersonal trust, reciprocity and social capital built, prior to Hurricane Katrina, they also point out the shortcomings of the local government in recognizing and supporting their work to serve Vietnamese Americans living in Versailles and the wider New Orleans community. To make matters worse, the Mayor of New Orleans threatened the same community with a toxic landfill to store debris from the hurricane, resulting in protests, legal battles at the state and federal level, and community sit-ins of Vietnamese and English speaking neighbours who were once again led by local religious champions at the MQVNCC.

Since there are limited studies documenting the relationship between FBOs and governments in situations with weak governance structures, the examples drawn from Senegal, the Philippines and the United States help advance an understanding of the often contentious relationship between religious organizations and local governments. While the examples are helpful, albeit risky to generalize meanings, case studies can be a useful source for identifying patterns for future investigation into complex situations, like the Angat

River Basin where the political system is fragmented and the role and influence of civil society remains unknown.

2.7. Faith-Based Organizations and the Environment

In an unlikely match, FBOs and religious leaders are finding synergies with science and public policy regarding environmental issues. Available research suggests that this occurs especially since those living in economically disadvantaged places are often the most vulnerable to natural disasters and climatic impacts (Kreft et al 2015). According to the UN Climate Partnerships for the Global South (2016), "Climate change is the defining challenge of our species, and has extensive implications on economies, societies and ecosystems. The Global South is at risk of negative outcomes from a changing climate due to their high vulnerability and low resilience. Climate change threatens to reserve the development gains that these countries have made in previous years (ibid: n.p.). Yet, since we know FBOs are among some of the most trusted and capable groups perceived by individuals in the majority world their potential to bring change and comfort to some of the world's poorest inhabitants in this area remains high.

While there are some notable initiatives to engage faith-groups in discussion around biodiversity loss such as *Sacred Earth*, operated by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and climate negotiations like the UN's Interfaith Summit on Climate Change, for the most part, little is known about the role of FBOs and how they are responding to environmental issues and behavioural change within local contexts. Despite the amount of research on the direct impacts of pollution, solid waste management, ocean acidification, natural resource depletion and climate change, from both human and natural causes, the available research on FBOs has a limited focus on themes such as: ethics-based environmentalism, natural disasters and environmental justice. The following subsections will explore these three themes in more detail.

2.7.1. *Faith-Based Organizations, Eco-Spirituality and Ethics-based Environmentalism*

Just as environmental challenges are alarming, addressing behavioural change, a contributing factor to this scenario, is equally cumbersome. Fortunately, studies have shown that narratives and storytelling can positively impact behavioural change and bind people to one another and to their sense of place (Lejano et al 2013; Smith and Pulver 2009). Since communicating stories and lessons is a core function of many religions, research suggests

FBOs involved in the environmental movement are having success using their religious doctrines and scriptures (e.g. Genesis Story, Bhagavad Gita, Dharma, Hadith), as bases for drumming up interest and action in the communities where they work.

Several case studies and edited books document this approach. Cochrane (2013) and Moyer, Sinclair and Diduck (2014) capture how biblical examples are being used by Christian FBOs, in Senegal and Kenya, to encourage participation in reforestation, organic agriculture and land reclamation. In an edited collection of stories selected from around the world, Tyndale (2006) highlights how religious-based social movements like the *Swadhyaya*, in India and the *Sarvodaya Movement* in Sri Lanka draw on environmental themes inspired by the Bhagavad Gita, Buddhist and Gandhian principles to unlock one's personal and collective power as a method to inspire followers to engage in devotional works such as tree planting, watershed management, home repairs, and temple cleaning. Similarly, Tucker and Williams' (1997) edited collection of stories explores Buddhist perspectives on ecology and the work of monks who draw on the environmental wisdom of the dharma to educate members on conservation principles and practices.

While most studies either describe or highlight how religious texts can be used to inspire action for the environment, authors rarely point out or discuss how scientific data is weaved or contested alongside religious belief. One example where issues-based and ethics-based environmental theory has been appropriately blended comes from Sheikh (2006) who captured the work of Imams in Western Karakorum, Pakistan. According to Sheikh (2006), Imams serve as mediators between scientists and the local community by combining Islamic teaching about earth stewardship, farming practices and ecological awareness. Through their advocacy, Imams in this region have shown success in educating local residents about deforestation and natural resource depletion and have built trust between farmers and local scientists, diminishing skepticism towards science-based research and climate change evidence. While understudied in academia, this area of research presents opportunities to highlight how religion and faith-groups are progressive, malleable, and evolving with modern society to acknowledge that climate change is real and rooted in scientific facts.

2.7.2. *Faith-Based Organizations and Natural Disasters*

As an alternative to the "doom and gloom" approach of environmentalism, a few studies documenting FBOs emphasize themes of hope, self-transcendence, individual

empowerment and action for the environment. Moyer et al (2014) argues that the morbid representation of environmental destruction and climate change in media and by politicians are poor motivators for transformative change. Thus, an approach, as seen by FBOs, which places a heavier focus on spirituality and religious teachings to provide comfort, inspiration and a focus on faith-based values (e.g. tolerance, compassion, caring for others) can better equip those in need. While Moyer et al's (2014) study looks specifically at Christian FBOs in Kenya, similar findings have been found following catastrophic events elsewhere in the world.

Rivera and Nickels' (2014) study on community resilience in New Orleans found individuals turned to local FBOs in search of a "higher power" to help rationalize what had happened following the traumatic events of Hurricane Katrina. From their research, the authors proposed six areas where FBOs could "add-value" during times of natural disaster beyond the more tangible aspects of social service delivery. The six areas in which FBOs could add value included: (1) providing coping tools (2) as a way to explain and understand disaster events (3) for guidance and decision-making (4) providing a positive worldview (5) by allowing personal empowerment and (6) giving a sense of control. Taking these ideas further, Forsyth-Vail and York's (2012), Aten and Boan (2016) and Koenig (2006) offer books and guidelines on how to operationalize these ideas by helping Christian faith communities prepare for their critical role as advocates, counsellors, spiritual caregivers, donors and support networks during times of calamity and natural disasters. While these books are welcome additions to the FBO literature, they only offer a limited perspective on Christian communities that leaves much to be desired and explored for other faith communities grappling with similar existential questions following a catastrophic event.

2.7.3 *Faith-Based Organizations and Environmental Justice*

Although environmental devastation occurs worldwide, there is no denying that natural disasters and unsustainable farming and logging practices strike areas of vulnerability the hardest. Moreover, this occurs especially in places with weak governance, poverty, crumbling infrastructure, and ecosystem decline all of which delay regeneration efforts and post-disaster normalcy. In these precarious situations, the poor are often blamed for unsustainable development practices, ineffective public sector management and slow adoption of sustainable policies as a result of their own survival needs. As Tulloch (2010) reports, "the poor - through ignorance and desperation - sometimes contribute to their own

downfall by deforesting hillsides or over-cultivating farmland, leading to new cycles of flood, drought or landslides" (n.p.). This raises serious concerns around victimization and the denial of consumers and elite interests to accept their role in the environmental burden. To this point, there has been a slow trickle of examples documenting FBOs as becoming the voice of the voiceless, speaking out against environmental injustice and dispelling assumptions that the poor value the present over the future. Instead, these FBOs and religious leaders are advocating that it is a confluence of factors such as poor governance, lack of sustainable livelihoods, export-led growth, global aid conditions and corruption that scapegoats the poor and marginalize them as perpetrators when they are often the victims.

In Hassall's (2012) study of FBOs in Melanesia, he contends that Catholicism has not only played a role in administering control and governance in the region, but that church leaders and priests have publicly shamed corrupt officials for engaging in destructive development and abuse of power over local residents. Similarly, Ondetti (2010) captures the progressive efforts of the Brazilian Catholic Church in mobilizing landless farmers and rural workers to fight against dictatorial regimes and to advocate for agrarian reform. In addition, Pepela et al (2015) studied the effectiveness of Christian FBOs in Kilifi County, Kenya, where governments were negligible in empowering rural residents to reduce relief-food dependencies and in encouraging community participation in food security and ecosystem management for long-term sustainability.

While Christian FBOs dominate the literature, other authors (Abdul-Matin 2010; Veldman et al 2013; Tyndale 2006; Tucker and Williams 1997) are capturing stories and positive examples of other faiths' traditions, including: Muslim, Buddhist, Baha'i and Hindu, who are speaking out against environmental injustice and uneven development practices in local communities that show positive signs for change. For example, Aijazi and Angeles' (2014) study on the extra-religious and community development functions of *madrassas* (Islamic schools) in Pakistan, challenges how, despite their exclusion from the national project of development and modernity, these schools serve as important social safety nets for marginalized communities. According to the authors, *madrassas* present opportunities to better understand how those surviving on the margins of Pakistani society are accessing education, health care, social capital and support during times of economic and environmental crisis. The research also suggests lessons for planners, and policy professionals about the importance of recognizing and involving locally validated social

institutions, particularly religious ones like *madrassas*, to better understand their contributions to public and social life, which often get overlooked within modern development models.

2.8. Faith-Based Organizations and Challenges Moving Forward

The current literature on FBOs has established a good starting point for recognizing religion's historical and contemporary contributions to social service provision, advocacy and in some cases quasi-governmental functions. From the available research, we know that FBOs: are diverse entities that can operate at both the local, national and international levels; are disproportionately expressed in the literature as Christian-based; are increasingly more important in areas with weak government and stronger levels of religious adherence; and have shown success working in areas, such as, HIV/AIDS prevention, food security, community development, disaster preparedness as well as environmental advocacy and management. FBOs have potential to enhance community learning and engagement, build stronger ties with local partners, provide advice and guidance on neighbourhood priorities and serve as coping tools during times of natural disaster. They are not only being legitimated and valued by some of the world's poorest, but their benefits to communities on the ground, especially those with weak governance structures, have become increasingly recognized and celebrated within the international development community and in academia as alternatives to secular models of development.

In returning to earlier discussions around CWPs, this chapter has illuminated important factors concerning the potential for local governments to partner with FBOs. While the literature overwhelmingly suggests FBOs are unique and contextually specific, a growing body of evidence suggests that their relevance and usefulness in places with weak governance and vulnerability to natural disaster is paramount. That said, more research is needed to assess whether partnerships between local governments and FBOs can serve local constituents more effectively, or if there is willingness on behalf of FBOs to carry out service delivery or environmental leadership in support of local government mandates and political objectives. In most case-studies, local religious groups have been important for bringing community members together through their social networks and reciprocity, which are proving beneficial for local governments who lack the resources, capacity and often political will to do so on their own. But this does not mean that these relationships are mutually beneficial or that governments and religious organizations and leaders reflect the

interests of the local communities or serve as the best local champions (Lyons, Walters and Riddell 2015).

Despite the positive findings on FBOs, there remain important obstacles to overcome as their field of influence expands. Opponents of FBOs cite the lack of longitudinal data and evidence-based research, proselytization risks, conflicts across faiths, and the potential for one religion to become privileged over others (Chaves 2003; Heist and Cnaan 2016; Lunn 2009; Tyndale 2006). Additionally, little attention has been given to the role of leadership within FBOs and how development pressures may influence these organizations and their values (Olson 2008; Clarke and Jennings 2008). What is certain is that FBOs are incredibly diverse under the weight of history and that efforts to categorize and fit FBOs into distinct groups and Western frames of reference remains skewed. What is needed, is a view of development that is historically rooted, culturally relevant and open to the power of faith, religion, spirituality and their influence in motivating individuals to make change within their local communities. To address this, FBOs must be studied within the context of where they operate and who they engage with to ascribe meaning and purpose to their work.

As a Catholic majority nation, the Philippines has earned international status as the third largest Roman Catholic population in the world, after Mexico and Brazil, with over 80% of the population adhering to Roman Catholicism (Pew Research Centre 2011); yet it remains one of the most contradicted and misunderstood religious traditions in Southeast Asia because it is one of the few places in the world where the religion of the colonizer has been so widely adopted, defended and localized by the colonized (Bautista 2011). With over 600,000 churches, the PCC or simply the "Church" is organized into 72 administrative dioceses, 16 ecclesiastical provinces, 7 apostolic vicariates and 5 prelatures, spanning the entire country with localised research and historical rootedness unparalleled to any civil society actor in the country. However, all too often, planning and development discourse has been overly equated with NGOs and People's Organizations (POs) overlooking the significant role laity, religious, clergy, bishops and Catholic organizations – faucets of FBOs, actively contribute to democratization and defend human liberties such as: social justice, health, land disputes and more recently sustainable development in the Philippines.

Thus, the potential for the PCC to be involved in areas, such as, environmental advocacy and collaborative watershed management have largely been unexplored outside the Filipino

context. As a starting point, the next chapter will provide more context into the politically charged and influential role of the PCC, highlighting and also indicating where and how the Church is well positioned to provide advocacy, mobilization, education and awareness for the environment.

Chapter Three: Understanding the Historical and Socio-Political Influence of the Philippine Catholic Church

This chapter highlights the significant contributions that the PCC has made to society and politics in the Philippines so as to deepen one's understanding of the Catholic Church as a community actor, a quasi-governmental organization and a "Church of the Poor" (Dionisio 2011:5), well positioned and rooted to take on environmental action and advocacy. To frame the discussion, I will begin with a historical background of the PCC, followed by a contextualization of the Church-State relationship and a brief discussion on the dual role of the PCC, as both a local and global religion, and a look at some of the key organizations therein.

3.1. Historical Background on the Philippine Catholic Church

While Filipino Catholicism has, for the most part, been understood as a product of Spanish colonialism, Bautista (2011) assets that, "while there are many aspects about the Filipino 'brand' of Catholicism, in its practice, in its belief, in its expression, that show respect to the authority of Rome, there is something unique about the experience of the faith in a country far-flung from the grand Basilicas of the Vatican" (31). To that point, Filipino scholars (see Moreno 2006; Rafael 1988; Ileto1979) have argued that in looking more deeply at the conversion period, we see Filipino Catholicism less as a product of Hispanic "Christianization" and more a concerted attempt by indigenes to accept a faith that had cultural links with Austronesia, an affinity for animism, and pre-existing beliefs in polytheistic practices often expressed in anting-anting (amulets), superstitions, miraculous healings, ghosts and spirits and enchanted places and beings (Strobel 1997). Niels Mulder (1992) refers to this as a process of localization, when a receiving culture shapes and alters foreign elements and ideas to its own image allowing it to blossom within the local context (ibid: 240). This is not to say that Filipino Catholicism is any less "Catholic", or that it is not "genuine", rather it displays unique features that reflect a spirituality of the past mixed with elements of the new giving it its own unique Filipino characteristics (Bautista 2011).

With that in mind, it is important to acknowledge how western colonialism has played a major role in representing and constructing "primitive" or "less-developed" societies in history (Said 1989: 207) and how these privileged accounts inaccurately represent the colonized as 'uneducated' and 'backwards' in their developmental processes - striped of agency and pre-

contact way of life (Escobar 1995). By denying the colonized their own voice, privileged accounts of history deny the primary their own culture, and thus relying on Spanish source material to describe the early colonial period in the Philippines presents no exception. Portrayals of the Spanish conquest (Phelan 1959; De la Costa 1961; Coleman 2011) depict the conversion period as the "Christianization" or "Hispanization" of native culture that romanticize Catholic conversion and ignores the limits of translation, especially the way that Filipino peoples have adopted Catholicism as a way of life (Rafael 1988). The following section provides an overview of the historical events, inspired mainly by Filipino accounts of history that led to the development of a uniquely Filipino brand of Catholicism.

Contact Period: Arrival of Roman Catholicism
Roman Catholicism was first introduced to the Philippines, in 1521, under the auspices of Ferdinand Magellan, a Portuguese explorer famous for leading the Spanish expedition to the East Indies. During his stay, Magellan performed the first baptism in Cebu and associated the acceptance of this new faith with the *Santo Nino* icon, which remains one of the most revered figures of Jesus across the Philippines, and a symbol of the country's relationship with Catholicism (Rafael 1988; Mulder 1992). Under the second Spanish expedition, led by Miguel Lopez de Legazpi, in 1565, a more committed attempt was made to spread the Christian faith across the archipelago. Augustinian friars continued the Christian civilizing mission by establishing control over the barrios, establishing educational institutions and learning the language of the local indigenes, which played a large role in conquering the land for Spain through persuasion rather than might. Following the Augustinians were the Franciscans (1577) and the Dominicans (1587) who covered specific areas of the island to accelerate conversion - erecting Manila into an Episcopal See as early as 1579. Vicente Rafael (1988) claims that by learning Tagalog, friars were able to spread the Christian mission through the dissemination of oral and printed catechism, which defined to an important degree the limits of interpretation and conversion to Catholicism.

During this period, religious orders were merciless in gaining land and positions of power taking over rural properties and valuable holdings in towns and cities that led to misrule, corruption and oppression of the people (Ileto 1979). During the 1880s, many Filipino natives, who had been trained as priests, were still being denied their right to the pulpit, which led to intense clashes between the colonized and the colonizer. Ileto (1979) asserts this signified a monumental change in the agency of the indigenous clergy who were

beginning to demand clerical equality with the Spanish friars and spoke out against injustice that inadvertently sowed the seeds for a nationalist uprising. By raising the national consciousness of the masses towards colonial injustice, indigenous clergy and the professed religious (including nuns and seminarians) began accumulating followers by relating their struggle to Christ's suffering and the Fall of Eden (ibid) precursors of contemporary Liberation Theology.

Reynaldo Ileto's famous book *Pasyon and Revolution* (1979) provides a detailed account of how the *Pasyon*, a piece of popular religious literature and culture, composed in 1704, was utilized to articulate class struggle through the singing and re-enactment of the life and suffering of Jesus Christ and provided a spiritual dimension for revolutionary movements like the *Katipunan* (1892) and the Santa Iglesia of Felipe Salvador (1900). According to Ileto, the lessons of the *Pasyon* not only inspired the masses but also galvanized them to fight for Philippines independence in the latter half of the 19th century. Although the *Pasyon* was viewed as blasphemous by the official Roman Catholic Church, Ileto's analysis remains a piece of nationalist history important for understanding Filipino's early connection to Catholic social teachings and how the life and suffering of Jesus, a poor and landless shepherd, related to the early indigenes temporal lived experience. It is also believed to have provided the spiritual basis needed to overthrow Spanish colonial rule with the official declaration of independence from Spain on June 12th 1898, thus, laying the groundwork for future resistance to US colonialism and setting the tone for the PCC's active role in Philippine society (ibid).

Following a brief period of Philippine independence from Spain, the American colonial period (1898 - 1946) reorganized Philippine political systems to align with American democracy, implemented the public school system, improved transportation and provided basic sanitation and public health (Giordano 1988). During this time, Americans increased the Philippines openness towards charitable giving, disassociated welfare with religious meaning, and encouraged the establishment of foreign organization like the American Red Cross to expand in the Philippines (Clarke 2013: 64). Cariño (2001) suggests this was done to reduce the capacity and influence of the Catholic Church in providing welfare services and allowing Protestant churches to undertake similar activities as part of their evangelizing mission (12-13). During this period, civil society also started to flourish and make room for farmer's unions, women's groups, labour organizations, underground Catholic prayer groups

and the early beginnings of the communist and liberation theology movements. While the American colonial period has been characterized as being both imperialistic and justified, for the most part, it left untouched the deeply rooted tradition of Filipino Catholicism. This was not out of respect, since missionaries tried to convert the masses to Protestantism, but because the Filipino peoples were united under their faith, they fought tirelessly to keep their spirituality intact (Gaspar 2010). After the brief occupation of Japan, during World War II, the Philippines eventually gained independence on July 4th 1946, and began their path to reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Post-Colonial Period: Changes in the Church

As the Philippines gained post-war independence, some major changes were also underway within the official Roman Catholic Church that had significant impacts on the PCC. Following the aftermath of WWII, Pope John XXIII created the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II), on October 11th 1962, as a platform to unite bishops, priests and professed religious, from around the world, for the first time in over 100 years to discuss how and where to make improvements to the Catholic social mission (O'Collins 2006). From this historic event the Council produced sixteen documents addressing where the Roman Catholic Church could foster solidarity and reconciliation amongst human beings through co-existence between other religions, permitting the use of vernacular languages during mass, encouraging lay participation and embracing new forms of music and art that reflect Indigenous values and motifs (ibid). In addition to these initiatives were important discussions around social progress the relationship between rich and poor and a call for bishops, clergy, lay members and professed religious to take an active part in public life particularly amongst the suffering (ibid).

Within the Philippine context, Shoesmith (1979) asserts this led to a rethinking of Catholic social teaching as having more solidarity for the poor, a mission focused on human liberation and an emphasis on local communities as prophets of change, but it also resulted in the "politicization" of the Church and turbulence with the hierarchy (249). According to Shoesmith (1979), many bishops, priests, religious and laity struggled to find a balance between establishing a pro-poor church and avoiding socio-political activities that did not align with official Catholic Church doctrine. Thus the PCC became divided among three camps: 1) *conservatives* – laity, religious clergy and bishops who upheld and defended more traditional values and Catholic teaching; 2) *mainstream* "liberal" - laity, religious, clergy and

bishops who accepted a mix of traditional with support for social causes and 3) *radicals* – laity, religious, clergy and bishops who became swept up in Marxist and Latin American liberation theology, launching themselves in support of the poor and oppressed, sometimes at the displeasure of local authorities and the PCC hierarchy (ibid: 251-252).

While leadership struggled to find a solid footing due to internal divisions (Cartagenas 2010; Mendoza 2016; Shoesmith 1979) the "leftist" changes to the social mission presented by Vatican II offered, "strong moral encouragement to progressive church leaders to support social action in their diocese and to pursue the strategy of building Christian Communities as social bases for overcoming inequalities in the exercise of power and the control of wealth" (Shoesmith 1979: 249). In some cases, this translated into drastic action by clergy, laity and the professed religious to establish a "Church of the Poor", through non-violent resistance movements speaking out against uneven development, legacies of colonial oppression, democratic unfairness, natural resource extraction such as mining and land reform that blurred the lines between Church and State that fuelled tensions among politicians and hierarchal church leaders (Dionisio 2011). During this time, some important commissions were also established to promote social action, "in the form of self-help projects, community development and cooperatives" (Giordano 1988: 22). Some examples include: the National Secretariat of Social Action (NASSA), the Mindanao-Sulu Secretariat of Social Action (MISSA) and the Association of Major Religious Superiors (AMRSP), which will be discussed further in Section 3.3 in this chapter.

Although the PCC has become divided, these differences were temporarily put aside during the Martial Law period (1972-1981), when the PCC unified under the leadership of Cardinal Jamie Sin to oust President Ferdinand Marcos and restore democracy in the country (see Section 2.6. Faith Based Organization and Government). While the "People's Power Revolution" is recognized as one of the most successful examples of carrying out the vision of Vatican II, the aftermath resulted in on-going discussions and debates internally and externally around how the PCC should exercise its power and influence in the country (Giordano 1988; Moreno 2006). It was also around this time that civil society in the Philippines started to boom. According to Wurfel (2006), by the end of the Marcos period, over 3,000 development NGOs existed in the country, suggesting the suppression of civil rights created a stronger incentive for citizens to find new ways to organize and exercise

their democratic values. It also presented further opportunities for radical clergy and professed religious to find allies among the non-profit world.

State of Filipino Catholicism in the 21st Century

In the post-authoritarian context, the PCC has maintained a vested interest in community activism, defending social justice causes and restoring democracy, including the right to a fair electoral process. During every election season, the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), a Church-mandated organization, galvanizes human and institutional resources to partake in non-partisan voter education, canvass monitoring and poll watching (Cartagenas 2010: 852-853). The purpose of PPCRV is to ensure honest and accurate elections through voter's education, providing legal assistance, coordinating audits and volunteer poll-watching, as well as, reporting on fraudulent activities (I. Samson, personal communication, May 13, 2013).

Serving as watchdogs, the PPCRV has been instrumental in improving democratic process and advocating for fair elections that reflect the electoral support of the people (D.Espejo, personal communication, May 10, 2011). However, some critics argue that many Filipino bishops within the highest ranks remain committed to the procedure but not the substance of democracy, "as church leaders have yet to change the axis of their discourse. No amount of political education, preparations for political leadership, conversion to values, structural change, and organizing for effective change can dislodge the structures of elite democracy so long as the axis of their prescriptions is the moral integrity of electoral contest" (Cartagenas 2010: 852-853), suggesting little has been done at the hierarchical level to address the root cause of the corruption and that bishop authority has subdued its radical stance in comparison with the Marcos era towards a more modified policy of "critical collaboration" (Dionisio 2011: 3).

That said there is no denying that, at the local level, the outcomes of the election rely on the support of committed laity, religious and local parish priests. For instance, the PPCRV found that, "barangay polls have become breeding grounds for bad politics" (CBCP News 2013) further suggesting that elites and political dynasties have penetrated the barangay captains, the smallest political units, through rampant vote buying and unauthorized entry of candidates into the polling race after it has closed. Needless to say, the PPCRV serves a worthy purpose in overseeing nonpartisan electoral education, fairness and audits in the

Philippines, which continue to be stagnated by corrupt electoral process and illegal vote buying.

Other notable areas where the PCC has modernized, post Vatican II, has been through the establishment of Basic Christian Communities (BCCs), now known as Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC). Emerging out of the Second Plenary Council II (PCP-II), in 1991, to promote a more egalitarian Church, BECs provide lay-faithful with opportunities to take an active role in the prophetic and priestly mission of the Church by formalizing small community gatherings with neighbours to worship, discuss religious teachings and engage in charity works (Moreno 2006). As active components of the Church, BECs often appear as grassroots organizations, at the local neighbourhood and barangay level, working to alleviate poverty, defend the environment and campaign for good-governance (Lugay 2006; Quevedo 2009). Although still operating on a small scale and found mostly in rural areas, BECs are beginning to grow in strength and numbers in every diocese across the country.

The creation and support for BEC's has also been promoted to counteract the growth of Pentecostal and Evangelical styles of religious worship that preface more individualistic spirituality and have been gaining popularity across the United States and in South American countries (D.Espejo, personal communication, May 10, 2011). Known in the Philippines as, "Charismatic Christianity" or the "Popular Church" the born-again movement has roots in the US American Holiness Movement and entails a Pentecostal style worship that emphasize the Holy Spirit, the biblical gifts of the Holy Spirit, the charisms and the individual spiritual experience (Kessler and Jürgen 2006). In the Philippines there has been an explosion of these forms of religious practice, which initially created concerns that, similarly to Latin America, it would reduce the strength and authority of the hierarchical Church (ibid). However in the Philippines, the existence of Catholic Charismatic renewal groups such as the largest sect El Shaddai, headed by Brother Mike Velarde, and Light of Jesus headed by Bo Sanchez also signals, that these new movements have not replaced the Filipino preference for Catholic leadership, Christian teachings and clan relations, but rather present new ways of expressing faith in the modern world (ibid). Further, it reflects that Catholicism in the Philippines is never static, as it is always changing and evolving with the individuals who answer its spiritual calling.

In briefly exploring how the PCC has historically been tied to the decolonization and democratization of the Philippines, one must acknowledge that the PCC has played a key role in community development, colonial resistance and social activism long before Vatican II. While often condemned for its religious impurities during Holy Week and through the veneration of saints, religious articles (e.g. crucifix, rosary) and *anting-anting*, one must disregard preconceived notions of what Catholicism is and understand that Filipino Catholicism is active, evolving and rooted in the nation's history. In doing so, we will begin to understand the significance of the Church in the life of Filipinos who look up to it for guidance, moral virtue and support in times of social and political uncertainty. In the next section, I will elaborate a bit further on the relationship between the Church and the State, within the context of broader social forces that shape contemporary Philippine society.

3.2. Problematizing Church-State Relationship

While there are many things that undermine the Philippines progress and path to sustainability, three of the most detrimental are weak governance capacity, corruption and the patron-client system that controls the bureaucracy. Wurfel (2006) claims that a strong democratic country can be characterized as one that has found a good balance between placating elite interests with a robust civil society that challenges excessive favouritism and competing interests. Therefore, a political system that is strong, is one that accurately balances the forces attempting to influence and control it by upholding and abiding by the fundamental principles of the rule of law, which are that individuals and businesses are held accountable under the law, the law is applied evenly, the process of law is fair, and justice is timely and ethical (ibid).

Wurfel argues that the Philippine government, like other Southeast Asian countries, is notoriously weak in the sense that it lacks self-confidence, is inefficient, and has no commitment to the rule of law (ibid:8). Under this system, politicians and political parties are easily manipulated by elite interests because they receive bribes and "political donations" trapping them in cycles of corruption and patron relations, a colonial legacy known as clientelism (Scott 1972). In short, clientelism refers to an interpersonal system in which an individual with higher power (patron) uses their influence or resources to provide a benefit or good to someone of lower socioeconomic status (client), who in turn offers allegiance and support to the patron in return for their personal benefit (Scott 1972; Teehankee 2012). This system in the Philippines continues to threaten the country's ability to defend itself from

corporations, graft and the ruling elite who use their wealth to break environmental regulations and dictate development objectives. It also creates dangerous situations for activists and leaders who become threatened by large corporations for their involvement in protests against polluters, particularly mining corporations who break the rules and engage in unsustainable deforestation practices (Karaos 2011).

While there are notable exceptions of politicians who have committed to anti-corruption campaigns and have attempted to address clientelism within the bureaucracy, such as Benigno Aquino III (Quah 2011), public sector corruption and patron-client relations remain a common and widespread issues in the country that continue to shape party politics and political will:

> Filipino political parties are still largely built around vast networks of well entrenched political clans and dynasties that constantly switch their affiliation from one administration party to another in order to gain access to state resources and patronage. Far from developing into vehicles for programmatic citizen–party linkages, Filipino parties have evolved into patronage- based, office-seeking organizations largely built around dominant local political clans and warlords and anchored on clientelistic, parochial, and personal inducements rather than on issues, ideologies, and party platforms (Teehankee 2012: 208)

So what does this mean for the Church in the Philippines? Alagappa (2004) asserts that the relationship between political parties and civil society is characterized by cooperation and competition, meaning, when weak political systems and patron relations stagnate the government's ability to address major social and economic issues, civil society also becomes constrained so as to avoid conflicts and periods of turmoil. While for the most part, this has been true for CBCP hierarchy to maintain an amicable relationship with the government so as to preserve church interests and a favorable business climate (Cartagenas 2010: 862), the same cannot be said for the progressive activist Church below, many of whom often display an acrimonious relationship with politicians suggesting, "the Roman Catholic clergy remains a force in the politics of the Philippines" (Pangalangan 2010: 560).

As previously noted, it is not uncommon to see clergy, nuns and the professed religious – particularly the more radical and mainstream of the bunch, to self-organize, lead protests and openly criticize corruption and illegal wrong-doings of politicians and political parties that support mining corporations, illegal logging, dishonest elections and political manipulation

(Dionisio 2011; Karaos 2011; Moreno 2006). However, these activities are not always supported internally by the Church leadership because they challenge Canon Law, the Philippine Constitution, a legacy of the American colonial period, which outlines strict separation of Church and State policies, and threaten the privileges of having alliances with elites and dominant power structures (Cartagenas 2010; Dionisio 2011).

According to Cartagenas (2010), the PCC struggles to achieve radical social transformation because Church leaders, like the government and the economy, still prefer to work within the old framework of authoritarianism and patron relations that fail to express solidarity with the lower members of society, as the case of the failed Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) and the lack of improvements to democratic institutions and Filipino political culture. Furthermore, Cartagenas points out that, "Church leadership support in education-organization of marginalized sectors is very marginal, especially if these are seen as leaning towards or influenced by those at the left of the political spectrum" (854); suggesting the legacies of the Marcos era and the communist theology have had a lasting influence on the actions and decision-making power of the CBCP hierarchy. While he posits that the arrival of CSOs in the Philippines and the growth and development of BEC's in their idealized form, present new and exciting opportunities for active clergy to partner with non-profit actors to promote transparency, good governance and sustainable development, the benefits can only be realized if and when the Church in the Philippines applies its social teachings to its internal structures, governance and ethos.

Thus, it is important to recognize and acknowledge the tension and diversity that exist within the PCC. Although the Catholic Church operates within a hierarchical system, for centuries, debate and conflict over some issues, or some set of issues, internally among Church leaders, clergy, and the professed religious have become common practice. For the most part, this type of diversity is understood as something not to overcome, but to be understood, negotiated, and accommodated in light of achieving unity or "oneness" of the church, a Catholic social teaching based on the gospel of grace. To that point, tensions within the PCC can be tricky as they often stagnate progress, but they are important for enriching the Church's mission and incorporating new ideas, especially in modern times.

3.3. Organizational Structure of the Philippine Catholic Church Although unique in its localized traditions and rituals, the PCC remains part of the global Catholic Church, bound by Canon Law, and under direction from the Supreme Pontiff, more commonly known as the Pope. Within this structure, Pope Francis the 266th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church, provides direction on liturgical and social issues to Cardinals, the senior ecclesiastical leaders, who then relay important information to ordained Archbishops, which is then disseminated through the archdiocese and diocese networks, and carried out by clergy, deacons and lay, at the local level (Figure 3.1). These directions ensure consistent messaging within the Catholic Church and coordination on political issues and ecclesiastical duties (personal communication, O. Paris, April 18, 2013). To ensure consistency between the PCC and the official Catholic Church, the Holy See lawfully recognized the Catholic

Figure 3.1: Hierarchy of Catholic Church Structure
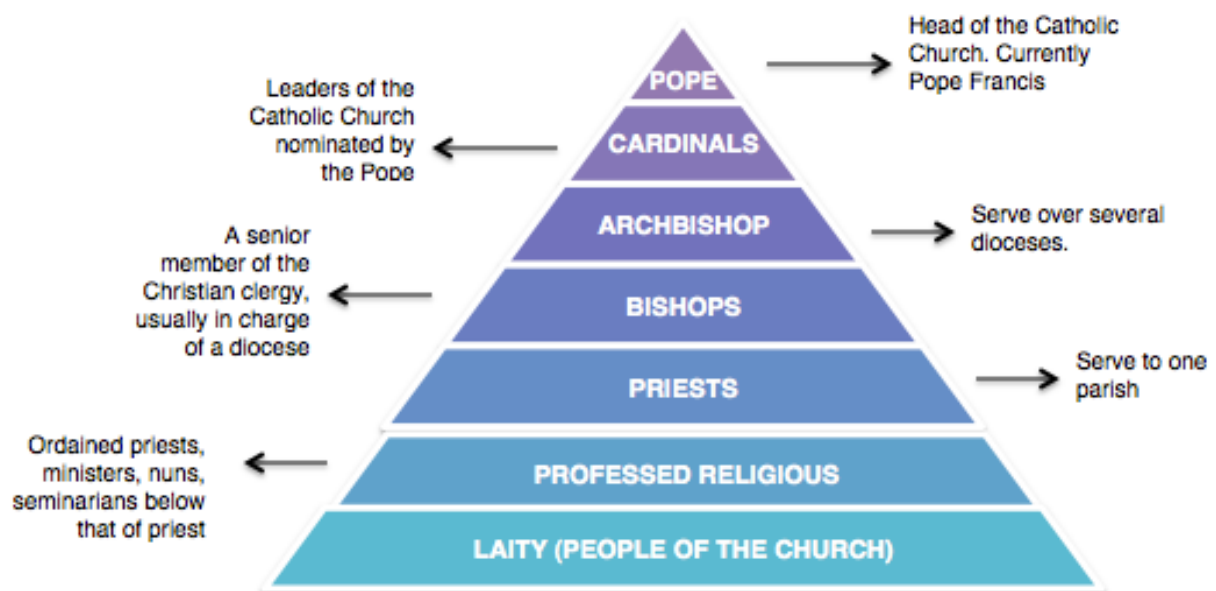
(Adapted from: Religion Eight Aspects n.d.)

Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), formerly the Catholic Welfare Organization (1946), on January 31, 1968 as the formal and highest Catholic Church organization in the Philippines (Moreno 2006). To provide further information for understanding the structure and function of some of the PCC's key organizations, especially those that relate to social action, the remainder of this chapter will discuss the objectives and activities of the CBCP, AMRSP and the NASSA.

The Catholic Bishop's Conference of the Philippines

The CBCP has played a crucial role unifying Filipino Catholics under Canon Law and ensuring that pastoral policies and programs are upheld in a consistent fashion. The CBCP is made up of diocesan bishops across the country that form a Plenary Assembly, twice a year, to discuss topics on liturgy, catechism, Catholic education, social action, lay formations and various political issues pertinent to the Philippines (Moreno 2006). When the Plenary Assembly is not activated, the CBCP Permanent Council acts on behalf of the Conference and prepares pastoral letters and joint statements to be widely disseminated across the local clergy network. The CBCP also runs a media office that utilizes radio, print and social media to inform clergy and adherents on important news stories and the institution's stances on governance issues and the direction of the Church.

While the CBCP maintains the highest authority, the Church leaders support a variety of Catholic organizations and institutions organized on a church-by-church basis through the initiatives of Bishops, parish priests and the local lay community. The CBCP official website lists 33 episcopal commissions available to support both the liturgical and social activities of the Church some examples, include: Commission on Canon Law; Commission on Culture; Commission on Inter-Religious Dialogue; Commission on Liturgy; Commission on Clergy; Commission on Youth; Commission on the Laity; Office of Women; Commission on Social Action, Justice and Peace; Commission on Pastoral Care for Migrants and Itinerant People; Commission on Indigenous Peoples and Commission on Health Care.

The National Secretariat for Social Action

To respond to Vatican II, the CBCP created NASSA, known locally as Caritas Philippines, to foster a more democratic and decentralized Filipino church. NASSA functions as the social arm of the CBCP that addresses a variety of community development initiatives, including: sustainable agriculture and rural development, ecological protection, political education for democratic governance, women's and children's rights, disaster relief and HIV/AIDs advocacy and campaigning (Caritas Philippines 2016). One of NASSA's core functions is also empowering Diocesan Social Action Centres (DSACs) as hubs for social action and community development.

DSACs are found within each diocese across the Philippines and are pastoral departments that take a localized approach to engaging people of good faith to advocate for social issues

around health, livelihood, farmer's rights, education, electoral process and disaster risk reduction and management. The DSACs are supported financially from their own diocese, but receive technical assistance, capacity building and funding support from CBCP-NASSA and their international partners for larger development projects.

In recent years, NASSA has also focused heavily on relief efforts and emergency preparedness to shelter and support Filipinos from the country's costliest and most fatal natural disasters (Asia News 2014; Abello-Bulanadi 2016). During the aftermath of Typhoon Yolanda, the CBCP-NASSA recovery program REACH Philippines, collectively raised $12 million dollars (PHP 565 million) in dioceses throughout the country that was put towards assisting 141,000 people in 118 communities, 35 municipalities and 9 dioceses on rebuilding shelters, ecosystems recovery, sanitation, hygiene and material aid. Not only does this reflect the mobilizing capacity of CBCP-NASSA to respond quickly and effectively to natural disasters, but proves how during times of calamity, the PCC is committed to serving Filipinos from all walks of life who are in need (Asia News 2014).

The Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines
In addition to the CBCP and NASSA, there is also the less hierarchical AMRSP. Since the 1960s, AMRSP has worked to enhance the consecrated and religious life of Christians and the Filipino society through conferences, dialogue sessions and by improving communication and cooperation among the Church hierarchy, clergy, religious organizations, civil society and the laity (AMRSP 2017). The organization focuses on four key areas: 1) mobilization; 2) education; 3) advocacy and 4) networking and partnerships, and is involved in a variety of social causes such as:
- Promoting good governance and fighting corruption
- Helping the urban poor and urban workers
- Managing the Indigenous People Desk to defend the rights of indigenous people throughout the Philippines; and the Women and Gender Commission to ensure women their right to life, human dignity and development
- Defending the rights of political prisoners and victims of human rights abuses
- Responding to national disasters by offering material and spiritual aid

Unlike the former two examples, AMRSP has a large portion of women and takes a more radical stance condemning political corruption and championing the PCC's challenges of

becoming the "Church of the Poor" as envision by PCP II. In addition, the AMRSP often engages with other groups such as POs and NGOs to work together on common projects, share information, resources and time. To help respond to situations of human rights abuses and injustice towards Filipinos, AMRSP has also created a social arm known as the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission (JPICC) to uphold the integrity of creating and providing support for justice, peace and ecological integrity (ibid).

With entire departments dedicated to the delivery of basic services, livelihood programs and human rights, the PCC has a proven capacity to respond and provide effective leadership beyond communication through print, social media and radio, to empowering others to take active roles in their communities and during times of calamity. Therefore, it is not surprising that, "there is no advocacy group of civil society that can match the reach of the Catholic Church to cover all government institutions down to the barangay level" (Lugay 2006: 9), When thinking about the local context of the Angat River Basin and the strong presence of Catholicism in the country, it becomes clear why an assessment of the relationship between local residents, the local churches, and municipal officers is needed. By gaining a deepened understanding of their different worldviews and relationship dynamics, it may "generate new knowledge about the kinds of preventative collaborative action that could be taken to strengthen inter jurisdictional governance and climate-change adaptability", as well as point out any factors supporting or hindering partnership development for watershed management. In the next chapter, I will explore the specific research methodology that was utilized for this research and how it framed my thinking and critical reflection in the field.

Chapter Four: An Inquiry into the Angat River Basin Using Multi-Method Qualitative Approaches

In the Introduction, it was clear that addressing water sustainability is more complex than providing technical solutions. Often, water issues are interrelated with other social and economic problems such as poverty, climate change, solid waste management, urbanization and uneven resource distribution making it difficult to employ command and control management and conservation policies. As in the case of the Angat River Basin, top-down approaches for addressing competition among competing water users, unregulated groundwater withdrawals and poor land use planning practices have not worked and a holistic approach that considers multiple voices, power dynamics and local culture is needed; however in attempting to understand these component parts the complexity of it all becomes overwhelming.

To that point, I relied on an inductive and exploratory approach to this thesis research that drew on action-research (AR) and a variety of qualitative strategies to help develop insights, collect data and analyze subsets of human activity where "things could be improved" through iterative learning. To help readers understand the non-linear and cyclical approach that I took with respondents, this chapter first provides an overview of relevant AR literature, why it was selected as the framework for this research, followed by a description of the research procedures and data collection methods. Lastly, this chapter discusses the limitations and personal reflections that shaped and defined how I went about collecting the raw data for the case studies and interviews in San Rafael and Plaridel.

4.1. What is Action Research?

Action Research (AR) emerged as a field of academic inquiry, post WWI, to understand intergroup relations and social organization, which could not adequately be described through scientific achievements alone. Kurt Lewin (1946) a seminal theorist on race relations, organizational behaviour and experiential learning coined the term "action-research" which he described as a cyclical process of inquiry (Figure 4.1). According to Lewin, AR tries out ideas in practice with participants in the social world, as a means of improving or increasing knowledge and linking that learning to bring about change. It has the dual aims of research and action and pays particular attention to power relationships, blurring the lines between the researched and the researcher and taking what was observed

and values gained, into the analysis and theory creation process (Madge 1993; McNiff and Whitehead 2011; Rose 1997). AR is often qualitative and participatory in nature, which provides practitioners and their client's opportunities to increase learning through deliberate and ongoing reflection that seeks to create social and cultural transformations (Sankaran, Hase, Dick, Davies 2007; McNiff and Whitehead 2011).

Figure 4.1: An Example of Lewin's Cycle of Learning
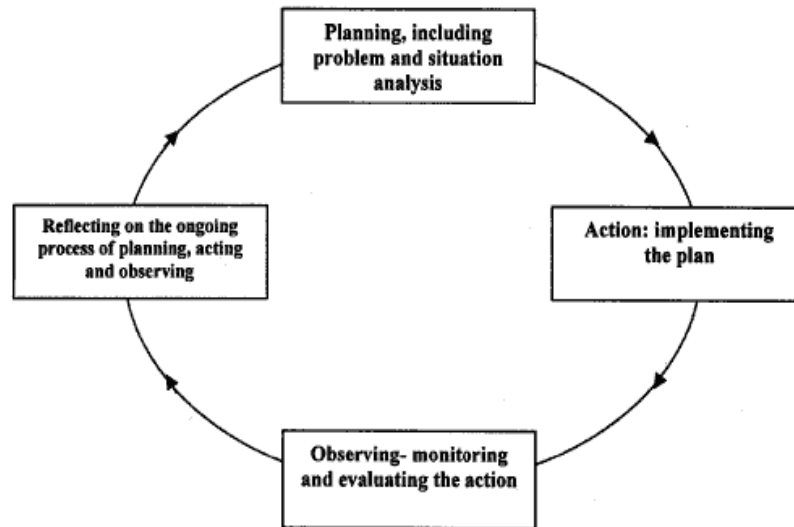
(Source: Rossouw 2009: 9)

In the social sciences, AR is believed to bridge the gap between theory, research and practice. According to Checkland (1981), AR offers flexibility and responsiveness in the data collection process that can fit a situation more appropriately than conventional types of research that focus heavily on control, standardization, objectivity and statistical procedures. McNiff and Whitehead (2011) also assert that like other forms of research, AR shares similar goals of identifying a research aim, generating evidence from the data, making a claim about new knowledge and linking that claim within pre-existing knowledge to generate a theory; however, the authors believe that AR brings "added value" to the social sciences that can be summarized into the following four points:

1. AR is conducted from an insider's perspective to interact in company with others rather than observe what people are doing.

2. AR practitioners decenter themselves and are not regarded as "the experts" and only contribute to the theory not own it.

3. AR practitioners are constantly learning and reflecting with participants in a cyclical method to understanding how people think.

4. AR focuses on improved learning to create change and not on improved behaviour to create new knowledge.

In its simplest state, AR is a change program and has gained momentum in the fields of 'education' (Kemmis and McTaggart 1988) 'business management' (Argyris, Putnam and Smith 1985; Checkland 1981) and more recently 'community development' (Freire 1972; Fals 2006), showcasing its relevance and diversity in the social sciences. As a reflexive approach to research, AR offers contextual and responsive outcomes because the findings capture a people, their history and political context in one moment in time and can dig deeper, wrestle with the data, and spend more time on conflicting issues.

Even within AR, certain methodologies are better than others for carrying out the data collection, which also depends on the researcher's level of interpersonal skills, level of facilitation and strength as a qualitative researcher (Kemmis and McTaggart 1988). As a less conventional type of research, AR has also been criticized for its time commitment to collect and interpret data, for being less rigorous as a scientific method, and for the difficulty examiners experience to judge its merits (Checkland and Holwell 1998; Dick 1993; Gronhaug and Olson 1998). This is not to say AR is inferior or that it does not have it's own methods of validity, but that in certain situations where understanding, learning and change is the ultimate goal – such as the SSHRC project on the Angat River Basin, an AR paradigm that relies on adaptability and learning from the local context is considerably more suitable.

4.2. Overview of Action-Research Methodologies

Three of the commonly used methodologies, a way of *doing* AR, include: Action Science (AS), Participatory Action Research (PAR) and Soft Systems Methodology (SSM). While they tend to overlap in their values-based approach and include Lewin's cycle of learning, each method offers different ways of carrying out AR philosophy and displaying data (Dick 1993). Although I have been explicit in using SSM for this thesis, a brief overview of the other approaches will highlight contributions to the field of AR and provide more insight into why SSM was justified in this research over other methods.

4.2.1 *Action Science*

Chris Argyris and his colleagues (1974; 1985) created AS as a way to solve practical problems in the workplace by looking at how human beings designed their thinking in challenging and complex situations. According to Argyris (1985), there is a mental model behind every action occurring in one's mind that creates barriers to thinking and overcoming conflict in the workplace. To help individuals overcome these barriers, an AR practitioner can use group exercises, such as the "ladders of inference" and "reflection in action" to identify the dynamics of a situation, reveal the unstated assumptions people form about each other and determine the way problems are concealed in group and office settings (Argyris and Schön 1992). Since inception, this approach has been widely used in businesses to generate organizational change and business effectiveness through double-loop learning by improving problem-solving skills, correcting threats, and establishing new frameworks for management (Argyris 1980).

AS theories have also been applied in seminal management books, such as *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (Senge 1990) to teach companies how to transform businesses into learning organization by placing an emphasis on team learning, personal mastery and mental modes. While the application of AS has evolved to cognitive psychology, cognitive neuroscience, philosophy, sports science and developmental psychology (Prinz, Beisert, Herwig 2013) the AS approach was not suitable for this particular research because of its focus on business dynamics and identifying and dealing with unstated rules within an organization. While a large component of this research dealt with the intricacies and delicate relationships of the Diocese of Malolos and the LGUs, this approach would have required a skilled Tagalog facilitator and more time in the field to develop a deeper understanding of the organizational power dynamics.

4.2.2. *Participatory Action Research*

The PAR approach is a "bottom-up" method to data collection that places a heavy emphasis on empowerment of respondents in the research, activism of the research-practitioner and maintaining a high degree of participation in the entirety of the research process (Whyte 1991; McTaggart 1997; Freire 1972). PAR has been used to understand cultural, religious and familial beliefs in the fields of education, social work, health and community development. One of the earliest examples of using PAR can be traced to Paulo Freire (1972) who sought to understand vulnerable communities and structural oppression in Brazil

and Chile. Other notable contributors include, Fals Borda (1987) who use PAR to enable local knowledge sharing in Colombia among a groups of workers, farmers and indigenous peoples, subject to capitalist expansion, to gain insight into their class struggle and McIntyre (2008) who worked with women in Belfast, Northern Ireland to understand their silence during periods of civil unrest.

In recent years, PAR has increasingly been used by public sectors to support citizen focused programming, which has spawned new uses and innovative engagement processes. Two excellent examples of this are: 1) the surge in participatory budgeting projects being piloted in cities around the world such as New York, London, La Plata, Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver that seek to empower and educate residents about municipal spending and 2) a youth-led collaborative non-profit called Voices of Youth in Chicago Education (VOYCE) who have been using PAR to understand racial injustice, increase Chicago's graduation rates and influence district and federal level guidelines on school discipline and student achievement (Nelson-Dias Organization 2014; VOYCE 2014)

As a grassroots inquiry, PAR was the initial choice for this thesis. However, due to extenuating factors like a limited time frame in the field and challenges with the local language I knew early-on that it would be too difficult to keep respondents involved in the analysis, report writing and recommendation stages. That said, there are many aspects of this thesis that overlap and share similarities with a PAR approach, but because I could not guarantee complete involvement of the respondents I selected the SSM methodology that reflected my limitations but stayed true to my preference for reflexive planning and participatory involvement.

4.2.3. *Soft-Systems Methodology*

The SSM approach develops models of the world as it might be and compares them with the world, as it is, to restructure one's thinking and bring about new understanding of a problem that can lead to change. It was first envisioned by Peter Checkland (1981) as an inquiry process to solve real-world problem situations by capturing the true essence of reality and not the researcher's description of it thereby avoiding the reductionism of traditional science. SSM is defined as, "an organized way of tackling perceived problematical (social) situations. It is action-oriented. It organizes thinking about such situations so that action to bring about improvement can be taken" (Checkland and Poulter 2010: 192).

The application of SSM is achieved through a seven-stage learning process (Figure 4.2) that encourages research-practitioners to focus on structured and unstructured modelling (e.g. rich picture drawings, root definitions and holons) as a way to improve thinking, problem solving and critical reflection in an on-going and cyclical pattern. Similar to other AR methodologies, Lewin's cyclical learning approach is at the core of SSM and therefore iterations of the seven stages should remain ongoing once relevant systems (e.g. a practitioners perspective of the issue) are tested in the "real-world" and new data is gathered to allocate meaning and produce change.To that point, the methodology does not need to be followed in a linear format allowing research-practitioners to make use of the tools and stages as they fit the context of the problem situation being investigated (Checkland and Poulter 2006).

Figure 4.2: Soft-Systems Methodology Learning Process
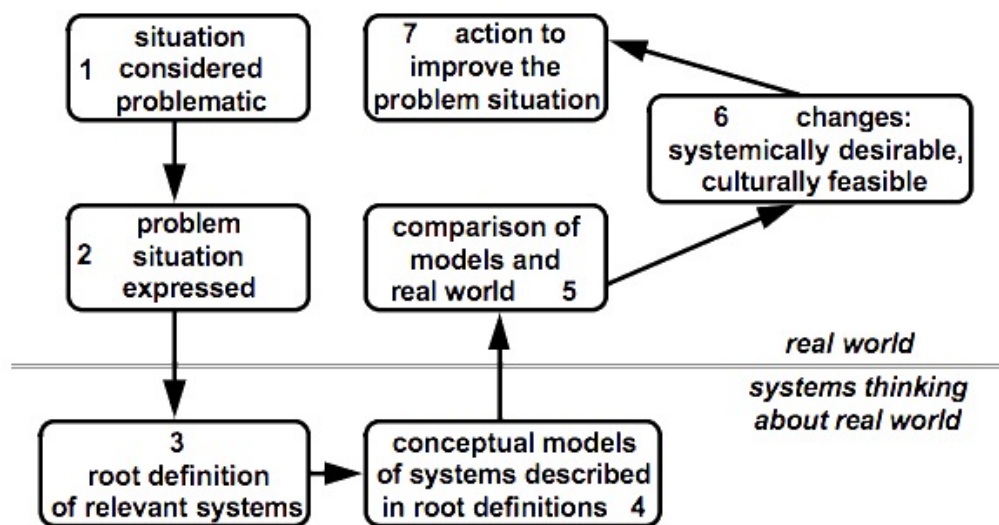
(Source: Rose 1997: 5)

In later editions of his work, Checkland (1981; 1999; 2010) presented a more mature version of SSM, because he felt the original was too mechanistic and prescriptive. The following presents his revised and condensed seven-stage version:

1. Finding out about a problem situation, including culturally/politically
2. Formulating some relevant purposeful activity models;
3. Debating the situation, using the models, seeking from that debate both
   a. Changes which would improve the situation and are regarded as both desirable and (culturally) feasible, and

b. The accommodations between conflicting interests which will enable action-to-improve to be taken;

4. Taking action in the situation to bring about improvement

While very similar to the original, Checkland placed a heavier emphasis on getting to know and understand the historical, cultural and political situation in which the problem situation operates and then how to use that knowledge to make inferences, build models, and engage with respondents. His revised approach also acknowledges the importance of presenting solutions that are both feasible and desirable for those involved (Dick 1993).

As SSM undergoes revisions and more research-practitioners apply iterations of the framework for messy, complex and ill-defined problems (Ghosh, Roy and Sanyal 2016; Mehregan, Hosseinzadeh and Kazemi 2012; Por 2008) the methodology has become less rigid and more reflective of cultural values, power dynamics, political dimensions, prejudices and biases amongst stakeholders and how to use that knowledge to make better recommendations. While the methodology faces criticisms and scholars call for more fairness and diversity (Torlak and Müceldili 2014), SSM offered a rigorous way to help me think through my learning and focus on my role as a self-reflexive researcher, a value I hold dear in both my planning practice and in my personal life, which was useful when combined with other social science research approaches.

4.3. Rationale for Action Research and Soft-Systems Methodology as a Reasoning Strategy

As a curious and reflexive person by nature, an AR approach aligned with my values over other conventional research paradigms because it was exploratory, open to new ideas, placed an emphasis on participatory involvement, interpersonal skills, and encouraged an iterative design process. But above all, AR was selected because it is focused on learning to produce change, which is an empowering experience for all involved. Since the participants in the study played a role supporting the research, driving the data collection highlighting new and important pieces of local knowledge, the use of AR had a lot of relevance to them and their lived experience. In this hopeful, and maybe naïve way, I believe that an AR approach is not only responsive to the needs and views of respondents by letting raw data, not a researcher's preconceived notions, decide the outcomes but also because the

research occurs at the local scale and thus the outcomes are more likely to spark social transformation.

As a problem solving tool, the use of SSM was suited over AR and PAR because, "it is designed as a means of moving from 'finding out' about a given situation to 'taking action'"(Packham and Roberts 1988: 110), which is especially useful in messy situations, like the Angat River, where action is desperately needed to help improve the problem situation. For instance, a SSM practitioner may start by asking: How does the current system work? Who are the players? What are the power dynamics? Is there an allocated budget? By doing so, they are focused on finding a feasible and culturally appropriate solution or "way-forward" that has buy-in and support from not just the top-down but also the bottom-up. Another key quality of a SSM modeller is that they are consciously engaged in thinking about his or her own thinking (Checkland 2010).

While largely interpretative, the SSM method was useful to help me overcome my own socially constructed perspectives and spend more time in the field engaging, listening and reflecting with respondents to understand the system under investigation. According to Packham and Roberts (1988), because SSM is experiential and flexible in nature it also allows researchers to draw on other methods within the social sciences, like a triangulation tool, to help strengthen understanding and move towards change. The following section describes in more detail the various qualitative methods and procedures such as participant observations, semi-structured interviews and coding that were applied in this research.

4.4. Description of Research Procedures

To familiarize readers with relevant information regarding how I went about my selection criteria, data collection and research activities, the following sub-sections will describe how these methods and procedures were applied to demonstrate rigour and engagement within the research setting.

Selecting the Research Setting

To manage the scope of my thesis, I narrowed the investigation to two municipalities: San Rafael and Plaridel from the eleven municipalities that touch the Angat River. The two municipalities were selected based on the following three criteria:

1. Both municipalities are served under the Diocese of Malolos, offering opportunities to explore differences and or similarities and assess the Church's capacity for environmental advocacy and management.

2. Both municipalities have been experiencing industrialization at different paces, thereby, presenting unique opportunities to assess rural and urban difference, development pressure, and the impact on the time and resources available to address fragmentation and inter-jurisdictional governance at the LGU level.

3. Available research in IWRM literature suggests activities of upstream communities can negatively or positively impact the health and sustainability of water quality and environmental conservation efforts in downstream communities (Gregersen, Ffolliott and Brooks 2007; Conservation Ontario 2013). Therefore, in selecting San Rafael (upstream) and Plaridel (downstream), the intention was to see if there were any major differences in respondents' perceptions of the water quality and environment concerns and whether that had any impact on community involvement and conservation initiatives in the area.

To assess the partnership potential of the local Church for the Angat River Basin, I selected one diocese – the Diocese of Malolos, out of the 58 dioceses within the PCC, because it oversees the entire province of Bulacan, where the Angat River is located. Additionally, the Commission on Social Action (CSA), a Church-mandated commission across the PCC is located in Plaridel providing further opportunities to explore the working arm of the diocese on social concerns, human rights and environmental concerns.

Profile of San Rafael

San Rafael is located in the north-western part of Bulacan province (Figure 4.3). The municipality is ranked 1st in income class, has approximately 85,921 residents and is politically subdivided into 34 barangays, small administrative divisions that oversee a largely rural population (Republic of Philippines Statistics 2010). San Rafael's main industries include farming, poultry and food processing, local sweets and delicacies, metal craft, and small-scale tourism (Provincial Government of Bulacan 2003). According to the Bureau of Agriculture, in 2003, there were approximately 4,200 registered farmers in San Rafael, more than double Plaridel at 1,900 (ibid). Needless to say, unlike other areas of Bulacan who

have experienced rapid urbanization, San Rafael is still considered only partially urban since many residents rely heavily on their subsistence agricultural livelihoods.

Figure 4.3: Map of San Rafael

(Source: Wikimedia Commons 2004a)

Profile of Plaridel

Plaridel is located within the mid-western section of Bulacan province (Figure 4.4) and is also ranked 1st in income class with approximately 101,441 residents (Republic of Philippines Statistics 2016). Plaridel is subdivided into 19 political barangays and its major industries include; farming, livestock, garments and food processing. As a major transportation hub for Metro Manila, Plaridel is considered peri-urban and has been experiencing rural to urban transition at a more rapid pace than San Rafael. While historically Plaridel has had a strong agricultural base, its growing industrial and commercial industry has been attracting residents from all over the province contributing to higher levels of in-migration, air pollution and the growth of informal settlers along the riverbank.

Figure 4.4: Map of Plaridel

(Source: Wikimedia Commons 2004b)

Profile of the Diocese of Malolos

In a country where Catholicism sets the rhythm and pace of daily life, the Diocese of Malolos is a key stakeholder in the Bulacan region. Established by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Manila (RCAM), on November 25th 1961, the Diocese of Malolos oversees the entire province of Bulacan and the City of Valenzuela in metropolitan Manila. As an offshoot of RCAM, the geographic region served by the Diocese of Malolos covers a total of 4,135,215 residents, of which 94% are Roman Catholic (Cheney 2017). The diocese is currently led by Bishop Jose Francisco Oliveros, who oversees the parish priests, full-time staff and educational institutions. An organizational snapshot of the Diocese of Malolos is found in Table 4.1 and a chart outlining the hierarchical structure is provided in Appendix 1.

Table 4.1: Diocese of Malolos Snapshot

Organizational Information	Numbers
Population of Catholics	2,998,988
Parishes in the Dioceses	107
Priests in the Dioceses	215
Educational Institutions	103
Students	68,593
Professed Religious Women Belonging to Religious Institutions (orders) and Societies of Apostolic Life	251
Religious Institutions	12
Public and Private Organizations	33
Full-time staff	12
Volunteers	3,065

(Source: A. Reyes, personal communication, May 15, 2013)

Within the Diocese of Malolos, there are a variety of Catholic organizations and extra liturgical commissions. Some of the most popular include: the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Group (12, 200 members); Apostolado ng Panalangin (8,153 members); Legion of Mary (7,812 members) and the Catholic Women's League (6,280 members). Of relevance for this research are two key advocacy agencies within the diocese; the first is the Commission of Social Action (CSA) and the second, the Diocesan Ecological Environmental Program (DEEP). Both are significant for this research because they present opportunities to explore and better understand the social action arm of the Diocese, particularly DEEP, which has a specific focus on the environment.

As a legacy of the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II), the CBCP, established the Episcopal Commission on Social Action (ECSA) and NASSA, in 1966, to coordinate Diocesan Social Action Centres (DSACs), in every dioceses within the Philippines. While DSACs are unique and operate at the parish level, they typically involve a multiplicity of self-help programs for poor farmers, fisher folk, agricultural workers and other vulnerable segments of the population focusing on things like housing, strengthening democracy, job attainment, providing education on human rights, natural disaster preparedness and sustainable development (Domenico and Hanley 2006). At the Diocese of Malolos, they have the CSA that focuses on three key areas which are: 1) Community Building Services 2) Social Development Services and 3) Livelihood Development Services (D. Espejo, personal

communication, April 10, 2013). A chart outlining the Diocese of Malolos CSA is found in Appendix 2.

Unlike the SACs, the Diocesan Ecological Environmental Program (DEEP) is not a Catholic hierarchy initiative. The program emerged from the coordinated efforts of Bishop Rolando Tirona and Fe. Jun Roxas (two leaders in the Diocese of Malolos) in 2000, and has since grown in interest and capacity from concerned residents and clergy. Initially, the program emerged in opposition to a sanitary landfill near the Sierra Madre buffer zone after residents raised concerns regarding improper waste and tillage. Since its information, DEEP has evolved into an environmental advocacy, training and awareness program that uses videos, books, lectures and homilies to teach parish priests, nuns, seminarians and parishioners about sustainability principles, solid waste management and ecology. Every year, DEEP organizes activities to celebrate Earth Day and raise awareness about environmental concerns in Bulacan and Valenzuela.

Iterative Analysis and Literature Review

To lay a foundation for my understanding of the research area, above and beyond what was known from my participation in the SSHRC research project, I consulted academic books, government reports, grey literature and studies about CWPs, FBOs, and civil society in the Philippines. Through this initial investigation, step one in SSM, I acquired a familiarity of the themes, gaps, criticisms and opportunities in these subject areas. Whereas in most thesis formats, the literature review and context chapters are completed prior to the data collection, my approach to these chapters was a recursive process that occurred prior, during and after deep reflection in the field. In approaching the literature in this way, I was able to spend more time in the field researching and learning about ideas, themes and topics through rounds of interaction with respondents of closer relevance and that sparked new lines of thinking.

Participant Observation

While commonly used in ethnographic research, participant observation (Maykut and Morehouse 1994; DeWalt and DeWalt 2011) is a research method that aims to better understand a group of individuals by spending an extended period of time in their cultural environment to gain insight into how their lives are lived and to formulate opinions about what shapes and motivates behaviour. To use this method, I relocated to Bulacan,

Philippines, for the months of April – May, in the spring of 2013. During this time, careful consideration was made to build trust, gain access and learn from the communities, in both Plaridel and San Rafael, about the local context, the Catholic Church, and the broader social and political processes at play.

To achieve this, I spent afternoons walking through both neighbourhoods, taking in the sights and sounds of the bustling town centers, engaging in informal conversations, locating important public spaces and cultural artefacts, attending mass, and volunteering with CSA run through the Diocese of Malolos. During my time in the Philippines there was a municipal election and I was fortunate enough to shadow a lay volunteer with the PPCRV to observe how the Catholic Church played an active "watch-dog" role through poll canvassing and vote counting. In addition to this, I assisted CSA feed and provide shelter for the Anti-APECO resistance march from Aurora to Manila and participated in the RCAM 2013 Youth Leadership Training for Climate Change, in Tagaytay. To keep track of this information, I took photos and kept a pocket book of my questions and notes. In drawing on this method, I was able to practice active listening, develop a better understanding of the influence and mobilizing capacity of the Catholic Church, map out key actors, and find research participants for semi-structured and informal interviews.

Client Selection and Interview Process

To find individuals willing to participate in the interviews, I initially relied on Dr. Angeles (the SSHRC PI) to grasp a better understanding of the region's diversity and demographics. Dr. Angeles is a former resident of Bulacan and has engaged in numerous studies and research projects within the province, affording her the trust and support of the local community and government. Based on her previous experience and knowledge of the issues surrounding the Angat River, she was able to direct me in utilizing a purposive sampling strategy to identify some key informants that would be relevant to the particular research focus and align with my selection criteria:

1. Resident of either San Rafael or Plaridel
2. Active volunteer within the Diocese of Malolos
3. Ordained clergy or professed religious who worked in the Diocese of Malolos
4. Municipal staff member with knowledge of the Angat River Basin (e.g. planning, engineering, environment)

While in the field, I also relied heavily on a second type of sampling, snowballing (Bailey 2008) which is a type of purposive sampling that relies on individuals, known to the PI, to recruit subjects and identify additional participants. Since this research contributes to the larger SSHRC initiative, there was significant community and bureaucratic buy-in to assess the region for its institutional capacity and willingness to improve the water governance situation. As a result, some respondents had pre-existing knowledge of the studies underway and were aware of the benefits to the investigation. This afforded me an advantageous position because participants in all three categories expressed enthusiasm to engage in dialogue about the water situation and what they considered to be a desirable and feasible system of partnership and collaboration between the local governments and the Diocese of Malolos.

The study was deemed to be of minimal risk to participants, based on UBC's Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB) approval; however provisions were taken by the researcher to ensure the data collection was accurate and reflective of the respondents. Prior to each interview, a discussion was held between the interviewee and the researcher about how the interview would precede, the length of time allocated and an opportunity to ask any clarifying questions about the project's goals. Consent forms (see Appendix 3.) written in English and Tagalog were administered to each interviewee to provide information about how the data would be used, to get permission to record the interview (take notes) and offer follow-up contact information regarding the study. After each interview, respondents were asked to review the notes to ensure validity of their answers and were encouraged to ask questions about the SSHRC project and my thesis research.

In taking careful consideration of time, one-to-one semi-structured interviews were held in locations convenient and appropriate to the respondents (e.g. in their homes, offices or place of worship). When semi-structured interviews took place, the questions were loosely designed to gather themes and comparisons, but reflected a degree of flexibility as emerging interpretations became clear and new lines of thinking were established. A sample of the interview guides produced for each category can be found in Appendix 4, Appendix 5, and Appendix 6. During the fieldwork, there were times when respondents were re-engaged in informal discussions to ask follow-up questions and to gather opinions on new lines of thinking. This was typically done after I (the research-practitioner) refined my thinking through periods of deep reflection and the use of the SSM tools. In approaching the

research in this non-linear way, it allowed me the opportunity to be more responsive in the field and investigate ideas and discoveries, as the participating respondents made them apparent.

Semi-Structured Interviews

To engage in personal encounters with the respondents and develop a deeper understanding of particular topics and themes relevant to the research questions I relied on semi-structured interviews. While there are different types of interviews, semi-structured was preferred over more structured styles because of its flexibility to allow new ideas to be raised and additional questions to be asked (Galletta 2013). To enhance comparative efforts and create dialectic, I interviewed counter-subjects in San Rafael and Plaridel. In both places, the research respondents were grouped into the following three categories: 1) lay members: 2) clergy and the professed religious and 3) municipal officers. To offer insight into the types of interview questions proposed to respondents, I have provided a sample from each of the following three categories:

Lay Members

To assess the opportunities of the Diocese of Malolos' engagement in environmental advocacy and management in Bulacan, among lay member respondents, the interviews were guided by the following sample questions (a more detailed description can be found in Appendix 4):

- How much influence does the parish priest have on social action in the community?

- Does the success of the church's social action and service offerings largely depend on priests who are strong leaders? Explain

- How do you think the Catholic Church could assist the local government address the sustainability of Angat River?

Clergy and the Professed Religious

To assess the role, leadership and influence of the PCC, more specifically the Diocese of Malolos, in environmental advocacy and management, among clergy and the professed religious, the interviews were guided by the following sample questions (a more detailed description can be found in Appendix 5):

- In what ways do you think priests/nuns or lay leaders across the Diocese could play a stronger role in environmental advocacy or management?

- What are the various knowledge bases, skills, attitudes and capacities that the Catholic Church/church based groups can offer to protect the environment?

- Is there an interest in bridging a relationship between the Catholic Church in Bulacan and the local government to protect the environment?

Municipal Officers

To assess the opportunities of the Diocese of Malolos' engagement in environmental advocacy and management in Bulacan, with municipal officers, as well as, to acquire a better understanding of the Church-State relationship, the interviews were guided by the following sample questions (a more detailed description can be found in Appendix 6):

- How do you see the Catholic Church in Bulacan as a key stakeholder for the engagement of the community in environmental advocacy?

- What do you perceive the benefits (if any) for the municipality to support the Catholic Church's efforts to address sustainable development?

- What do you perceive the consequences (if any) for the municipality to support the Catholic Church's efforts to address sustainable development of the Angat River Basin?

The following describes each category and a list of respondents in more detail:

Interactions with Church Lay Members ("laity"): The laity is comprised of active individuals responsible for ensuring the smooth operation of Church activities and processions across the Diocese of Malolos. Under the direction of the parish priests, lay members form volunteer committees which are varied by region, but typically include: Catholic Women's League (CWL), Parish Commission on Youth (PCY), and a Parish Pastoral Council (PPC). As members, the laity host weekly and monthly meetings to discuss social activities organize fundraisers and community events. These committees are also opportunities for parishioners to get involved, learn new skills, strengthen relationships and build social capital (Putnam 2000).

In being considerate of the hierarchy of the Church structure, and the power and authority that exists within, I sought lay respondents in both San Rafael at the *San Juan de Dios Parish* and *Saint James the Apostle Church i*n Plaridel. The rationale behind interviewing respondents from these two churches was to see if there were any substantial differences in service, leadership and capacity for collaboration across the Diocese and support for the

Angat River Basin. Out of the 11 interviews held with lay members, three respondents from San Rafael elected to participate but not have their names released. To protect their identity, all laity names have been withheld in this study to ensure confidentiality among the respondents. The list is described as follows:

- Lay Member A, Saint James the Apostle Church, Plaridel, Diocese of Malolos
- Lay Member B, Saint James the Apostle Church Plaridel, Diocese of Malolos
- Lay Member C, Saint James the Apostle Church Plaridel, Diocese of Malolos
- Lay Member D, Saint James the Apostle Church Plaridel, Diocese of Malolos
- Lay Member E, Saint James the Apostle Church Plaridel, Diocese of Malolos
- Lay Member F, Saint James the Apostle Church Plaridel, Diocese of Malolos
- Lay Member G, San Juan de Dios Parish, San Rafael, Diocese of Malolos
- Lay Member H, San Juan de Dios Parish, San Rafael, Diocese of Malolos
- Lay Member I, San Juan de Dios Parish, San Rafael, Diocese of Malolos
- Lay Member J, San Juan de Dios Parish, San Rafael, Diocese of Malolos
- Lay Member K, San Juan de Dios Parish, San Rafael, Diocese of Malolos

Clergy and the Professed Religious: Clergy and the professed religious (pastors, nuns and seminarians) in the PCC serve the people they represent. As social activists, they teach, empower, and provide parishioners with skills to serve God and the wider community. As political campaigners, they ensure the government is financially responsible, enforcing ordinances, and involving the community in decisions that affect their future. Under the guidance of the diocesan bishop, Rev. Jose F. Oliveros, ordained priests (clergy) are required to proclaim the teachings of the Lord, act as messengers of the Holy See and remain in line with the international Catholic Church community. In the Philippines, parish priests and the professed religious are viewed as extensions of one's family and maintain a high degree of respect and authority particularly from political leaders and Filipino elites.

To supplement the findings of the subjects in Plaridel and San Rafael, I conducted additional interviews with clergy and laity members outside of the research area to make comparisons ask clarification questions on the history of the Church-State relationship and to gain a broader understanding of the PCC's institutional stance on environmental advocacy and natural resource management. To protect their identity, all names have been withheld in this study to ensure confidentiality among the respondents. A list of respondents is described as follows:

- D. Espejo, Parish Priest, Saint James the Apostle Church, Coordinator of Jubilee Housing Subdivision, Diocese of Malolos
- A. Pila, Parish Priest, Saint James the Apostle Church, Diocese of Malolos
- F. Cenon, Parish Priest, San Juan de Dios Parish, Diocese of Malolos
- E. Basco, Parish Priest, Saint Elena Parish, Coordinator on Ecology of the Diocese of Malolos Ecological Environmental Program (DEEP)
- Fr. Talaban, Parish Priest, Nuestra Senora dela Salvacion Parish, Territorial Prelature of Infanta, leader of the "Fight for Casiguran" social movement against APECO development in Aurora
- L. Arsenio, Sister, Coordinator of the Archdiocese of Manila's Ministry on Ecology
- E. Lalantacon, Nun, Principal of St. James Academy, Diocese of Malolos
- A. Reyes, Seminarian, the Immaculate Conception Major Seminary, Diocese of Malolos
- O. Paris, Seminarian, the Immaculate Conception Major Seminary, Diocese of Malolos
- C. Fulgencio, Seminarian, the Immaculate Conception Major Seminary, Diocese of Malolos

Interviews with Municipal Officials: Municipal officials in the Philippines enact and enforce local policies, laws and governing power over a particular jurisdiction. Based on provincial legislation and the Local Government Code, municipalities have a high degree of autonomy to determine guidelines on local policies and direct development plans, however they remain under the supervision of the National Government. Within municipalities in the Philippines the following positions are generally required: Treasurer, Accountant, Budget Officer, Health Officer, Assessor, Engineering Official, Planning Official, Civil registrar but the elected mayor can appoint additional positions such as Agriculturalist, Environmental Officer, Architect and Social Welfare Officer.

To assess the capacity and opinions of public staff regarding public sector fragmentation, problems with public participation and the role of the Diocese of Malolos in San Rafael and Plaridel, the following counterpart municipal officers in Planning, Engineering, Agriculture and the Environment were interviewed. In San Rafael the Municipal Officer of Agriculture elected not to participate and in Plaridel the Tourism Officer was interviewed, which had no counterpart in San Rafael. The list is described as follows:
- R. Alvaro, Municipal Planning Officer, Plaridel

- T. Borja, Municipal Engineering Officer, Plaridel (formerly solid waste officer)
- J. Carrillo, Municipal Agricultural Officer, Plaridel (formerly environmental officer)
- A. Cervantes, Environmental Officer, Plaridel
- L. Lucas, Tourism Officer, Plaridel
- E. San Rogue, Municple Planning Officer, San Rafael
- R. De Castro, Municiple Engineering Officer, San Rafael
- Z. Villanueva, Municiple Environmental Officer, San Rafael

Thematic Coding

This research dealt with a large amount of unstructured data needing to be condensed and reviewed for themes, patterns, and new learning. To co-create a story with the data, the qualitative interviews were analyzed and interpreted using a system of thematic coding (Bryman 2015; Boyatzis 1998; Saldana 2015). Coding is just one way of analyzing qualitative data which involves reading over interview transcripts, field notes and participant observations to capture the essence of the language, including emotions and stories, to find meaning and interesting pieces of information. To make use of this method, I first read over each transcript, reviewed my field notes and observations and labelled key words and phrases, which I felt were relevant to the research questions. As I engaged in iterative learning cycles, re-reading the data in light of new learning, I continued to condense the valuable information into themes and patterns, which could be summarized into categories for the final writing stages. Once I felt that the summarized results appropriately addressed the rich findings that emerged from the respondents, the research questions and sub questions guiding this thesis, all non-relevant data was discarded.

Soft-Systems Methodology

The use and application of SSM in this research occurred in an iterative and on-going fashion alongside other methods. It was used in various stages to help me define the research problem, understand the processes, people and issues, and engage in reflexive thinking about how the problem could be changed. In some instances, I drew on Checkland's (1981) concepts like the drawing of a rich picture to express the problem situation in all its richness (e.g. structures, power dynamics, conflicts, processes etc.) (Checkland 1981). By drawing a rich picture (Figure 4.5), it helped me to capture the various viewpoints, main entities in Bulacan, power structures, in both San Rafael and Plaridel, and how the various stakeholders interacted with one another.

During the fieldwork, I also used Checkland's tools to generate perspectives of the problem and conceptual models about how things ought to be, referred to in the literature as holons, "plausible relevant purposeful perspectives that can describe real world activities" and ran them through the CATWOE models. While these are often "throw-away products on the route to learning" (Rose 1997:7), I have provided some examples in Figure 4.6. While the use of SSM occurred alongside my immersion in the field, it was limited in its application because participants were not equally involved in the use of Checkland's tools and modelling processes (see Research Limitations in Section 4.5).

Figure 4.5: Rich Picture of the Angat River Basin in San Rafael and Plaridel
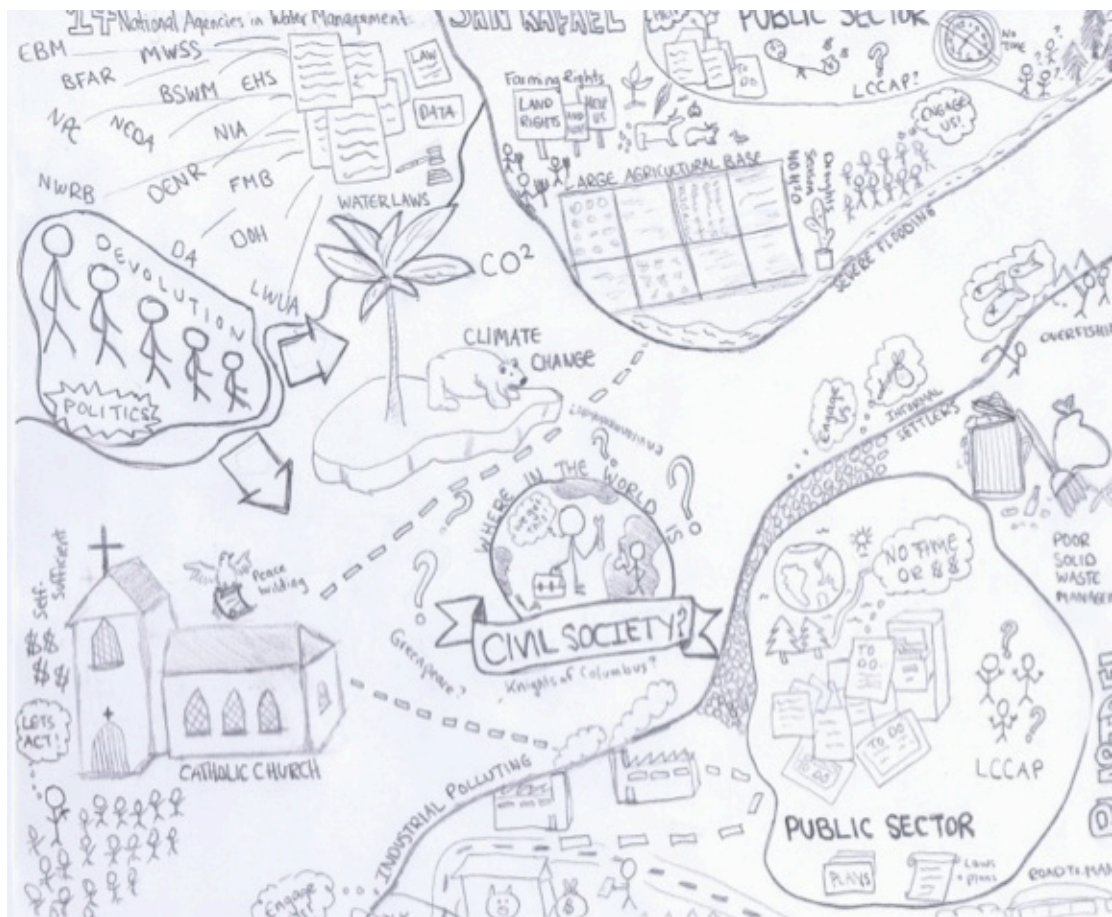
(Source: Katherine O'Callaghan 2013)

Because of this, my application of SSM served largely as a vehicle for helping me craft probing questions, delve deeper into the competing uses of water resources and think through interrelated social and political issues along the Angat River Basin both during the fieldwork and in the analysis stages. Unlike other SSM studies, where the rich picture, holons and CATWOE models become focal point of discussions with respondents, my use

of the methodology was more introspective to help me learn, reflect and talk through issues and opportunities as they emerged in a more informal and conceptual way. To add to the richness of the SSM, I also drew on other qualitative methods such as participant observations and semi-structured interviews, as previously discussed in this chapter.

Figure 4.6: Examples of Modelling in Stage Three of Checkland's SSM

Example A: Stage Three Modelling

Holon: A system where institutional arrangements can create their own opportunities for engagement with residents regarding environmental advocacy and management.	
Customers = residents "the public" **A**ctors= institutional arrangement X staff **T**ransformation= support government to create opportunities for public consultation and community decision-making **W**eltanschauung= the public should have a say in decision that affect their future but the government lack capacity. **O**wners= institutional arrangement X, government **E**nvironment= residents see community involvement as crucial for good governance and true democracy, government staff lack the capacity and financial resources.	Description of a possible system (a root definition expressed in the form P,Q,R): A system owned by institutional arrangement X, where institutional arrangement X staff create opportunities for public consultation to engage the public, for the public, on behalf of the government, because the government lacks capacity and financial resources to do so.

Example B: Stage Three Modelling

Holon: A system where the Church works with local government to address the Angat River Basin	
Customers = residents "the public" **A**ctors= municipal staff, local clergy and the professed religious, laity **T**ransformation= weak government replaced by strong government **W**eltanschauung=partnering with the Church will bring new resources, expertise and skills for environmental advocacy and management **O**wners= municipal government **E**nvironment= devolution politics, resource shortages (e.g. time and money), no political will, political culture of patronage and pork barrelling	Description of a possible system (a root definition expressed in the form P,Q,R): A system owned by the municipal government, where municipal staff partner with the local Church to gain access to new resources, expertise and skill which strengthens governance and improves environmental advocacy and management for residents. This system will operate under the constraints of resource shortages, devolution policies and a culture of patron relations.

4.5. Research Limitations

To the best of my ability, the theories and application of the various qualitative multi-methods were used to reflect the voices and opinions of the research respondents who participated in this study. However, due to limitations such as language, scope, time constraints and the inability to keep respondents involved in the final stages of the analysis and report writing, I fell short of my methodological and personal ambitions. Below is a description of some of the challenges that I encountered and an acknowledgement of my potential research bias and data collection pitfalls.

Language Considerations

In the Philippines, the official language is Tagalog and as a native speaker of English, this presented various communication challenges during the fieldwork component of this study. Since language is the key to a personal self-identity – giving them the capacity to express themselves through emotion and story telling, it was important to recognize and overcome these intercultural obstacles and honour the local language of the respondents. While the sample did not involve any non-English speaking participants, which afforded me the opportunity to conduct the interviews in my native tongue, I was keenly aware that for many, English was their second language and so I arranged for translators to assist me during the semi-structured interviews. Prior, during and after each interview, I was vigilant with my translators in double-checking with respondents to ensure they properly understood the research questions, study objectives, interview procedures, and provide information where they could contact me with follow-up questions so that there were no misunderstandings or confusion. In an attempt to avoid bias in the translation process (Squires 2009), I also enlisted the help of three different translators over the course of my fieldwork.

Scope of Fieldwork

By limiting the research to two municipalities: San Rafael and Plaridel, the focal area presents only a sub-set of views regarding public sector fragmentation and the overarching authority of the Diocese of Malolos to support local government to address the sustainability of the Angat River Basin. While the study was largely exploratory and sought to describe and explain the relationships between local residents, the Church and municipal staff, a larger study mapping out all eleven municipalities that touch the Angat River would present a more holistic picture and capture the different local politics and intersection of grassroots initiatives in the region. The same can be said for the Diocese of Malolos, which looked at

only one diocese, within the 58 available, across the PCC. I would also like to recognize that the data reflects the opinions and voices of those who lived in San Rafael and Plaridel during the time of the fieldwork and the opinions of these individuals may change or shift over time based on new political and social changes. Fortunately, to both of those points – the SSM is rooted in a philosophy of ongoing learning and constant iterations meaning that there is rarely a "completed" stage to the investigation. Thus, I do not consider this research finished but rather open to new contributions, opinions and alternative paths of thinking by the PI, respondents in the research, other members and future co-collaborators of the SSHRC research project or students at SCARP.

Religious Considerations

While Catholicism makes up a majority of the religious population in Bulacan and the Diocese of Malolos was a known stakeholder in the region; the Philippines is also home to a thriving evangelical and charismatic Christian culture and Islamic autonomous region, referred to as Muslim Mindanao. Although these religions have fewer adherents, for example there are approximately 4.7 million Islamic Filipinos, which makes up about 5% of the total religious population in the country (Pew Research 2011), their concentration in certain areas presents unique opportunities for future research. While less relevant for this particular investigation, it remains important to recognize and acknowledge other religious-based groups in the country and how they too can provide insightful ideas and perspective into the social and political life of the Filipino people and ways on how to further environmental protection and sustainability.

Furthermore, due to the hierarchical and contentious history of women's involvement in the Catholic Church, there was less participation of females in this study. While efforts were made to address the gender imbalance by seeking out female respondents at the lay and professed religious level by coming to their homes and places of worship, there remained historical and deeply rooted power and gender dynamics at play. For instance, even though large percentages of laity were women, at both churches, many were overburdened with their volunteer efforts, family life and serving the Church that they were unable to participate or felt that they did not have the knowledge to add-value to this research. As these issues came to light, it suggested to me that more research is needed to offer a deeper insight into women's collective experience in the Church and how or why they lack the confidence to speak out on issues of relevance to them.

Application of the Soft-Systems Methodology

To ensure a level playing field among the respondents, many of which had no previous knowledge or understanding of "systems thinking", the application of SSM tools and modelling were limited to my own analysis and report writing stages. While I would have preferred more participatory involvement of the respondents, it appeared early on in the research design that to teach Checkland's tool (e.g. the creation of root definitions, CATWOE framework, holons etc.) over a short time span proved challenging, especially in overcoming bias as some respondents may have been more familiar with systems modeling than others. While I recognize the shortcomings, especially for the later stages of this investigation, I am aware that SSM modellers should always be consciously engaging in thinking about his or her own thinking (Checkland 2010). To that point, my fieldwork was driven by constant reflection, active engagement and co-learning with respondents that allowed me to tap into local knowledge, develop new insights into the complexity around the Angat River Basin and participate in cycles of reflexive thinking, with and not for, those involved in the research.

Furthermore, the final outcome of this thesis did not result in simultaneous action and implementation of changes (re: Stage 7 of Checkland's SSM approach). However, the data collected help illuminate new lines of thinking around the role of the Diocese of Malolos that offered exciting opportunities for thinking about and re-imagining democratic problem-solving, broader public participation and institutional collaboration for the Angat River Basin that can add-value to the SSHRC project. Furthermore, as client involvement in the research was a key element in this research design, the hope is that through their participation, respondents will engage in further discussions around the idea of a partnership between the Church and the local government, through continued rounds of iterative learning, to support initiatives underway for the Angat River Basin.

4.6. Cross-Disciplinary Research and Positionality

Cross cultural research and exchanges are important, particularly "in generating new knowledge about the structural problems between the North and South which cannot be solved by the South alone" (Potter 1993: 294), but they require careful consideration of the role of the research-practitioner and the identity of 'others' in relation to oneself (Madge 1993: 296; Mikkelsen 2005). From this perspective, there is much to be gained from being touched by a different reality and engaging in fieldwork that is outside one's race, social

class and culture because it provides a space to challenge ethnocentrism and universalistic views that can contribute to political and theoretical debates about power and representation between cultures (Scheyvens and Storey 2003: 6).

With a background in Global Development and Religious Studies at Queen's University, Community and Regional Planning and Asian-Pacific Policy Studies at UBC, I, a Caucasian, female, cisgender, English-speaking Canadian recognize my position in conducting human-centered research in the Philippines, as that of an outsider (Madge 1993: 294) and furthermore acknowledge the nature of power relations between researched and researcher in the production of this knowledge (Katz 1994; Rose 1997). Seeking to avoid paying 'lip-service' to reflexivity, my fieldwork was driven by constant learning, questioning, evaluating and explaining with others, who participated in this study, my own personal revelations to gain feedback and gather new understandings. While at times I felt like I did not know where the research was headed, where I was going, or how the final product would reveal itself, I was confident that the questioning, probing and learning with respondents would lead me to a new understanding of the Angat River Basin and the role of the Diocese of Malolos in environmental advocacy and management. In taking this leap of faith, it helped destabilize my self-identity, question dominant forms of power and seek new understandings that were true, to the best of my ability, in capturing the essence of the participants lived experience. While I accept this work as my own and take full responsibilities for any inaccuracies that may reveal themselves, I would like to acknowledge and thank the many voices and stories that have shaped and inspired this research.

The utilization of self-reflection to derive meaning from participants and their experiences, perceptions and motives, as well as my own, was an important component of the thesis. Since qualitative methods deal with human subjects and interpersonal relationships, it is common for research-practitioners to become susceptible to researcher bias and prejudice on account of the emotional connections made with respondents. To mitigate this and be aware of the interviewer-interviewee dynamics and the politicized nature of my research, I placed a heavy emphasis on generating a heightened sense of self-awareness towards my own ego, agenda and positionality in the research and how that was playing out in the field, in the analysis, and in the report writing stages. While it is near-impossible to achieve complete neutrality, I felt that it was important to be honest and open with my own emotions

to gain a better sense of the limitations of the research, how knowledge is constructed, and areas where I may have avoided further questioning and learning as a way to reduce bias.

For example, to avoid secrecy about my research and my role in it, I identified as a 'liberal' and 'cultural' Catholic, someone who identifies with Catholic traditions but does not actively practice the religion on a consistent basis (Matthews 2000), which shaped and defined my experience in the Philippines. As a research-practitioner disclosing this information it allowed me access to the community to participate in Church-led activities, attend regular mass service and engage in sensitive conversations about topical issues within the Church, as well as the ability to connect with respondents, less as an outsider, and more as a person of faith. While very cautious of my 'outsider' positionality and views on Catholicism, I took extra precaution to be transparent about my religious upbringing in the Toronto District Catholic School Board (TDCSB) and growing up in a religious household in Canada. While I felt revealing my 'outsider' status and religious position as a cultural Catholic was both beneficial to the respondents and myself in this research, I am aware of my subjectivity and how this may have affected others perspectives on me and this research. To that point, considerations were made early on during the ethics approval process to address any potential risks and data errors that could arise and through a process of my own self-reflection, I was constantly engaged in thinking about my thinking and how it impacted the research to avoid any biases.

Chapter Five: A Case Study on the Diocese of Malolos and their Potential for Environmental Advocacy and Management along the Angat River Basin in Bulacan, Central Luzon, Philippines

To address the specific research question guiding this thesis "**What is the role of the Diocese of Malolos in developing local partnerships to address the sustainability, governance and management of the Angat River Basin?"** a combination of perspectives from local government actors, lay community members, and local clergy and the professed religious were assessed through semi-structured interviews, participant observations and informal discussions and then interpreted using a process of thematic coding and analysis. In pulling from multiple sources, the goals of this chapter were three-fold: 1) to better understand the political and social barriers challenging collaborative watershed governance in Bulacan; 2) to examine the relationship between respondents and identify the tensions and opportunities that exist within; and 3) to explore potential areas where bridges could be built for addressing the sustainability of the Angat River Basin. Taken together, these perspectives provided a diverse understanding of the social, political and religious landscape in Bulacan and a snapshot of the perceived relationship between the Church-State, the Church-Laity and how capacity could be built for overcoming watershed management fragmentation in the region.

During the thematic analysis process, I was interested in themes that were common, but also different in the two cities of San Rafael and Plaridel and within each of the three categories of respondents: lay community members; clergy and the professed religious and municipal officers. From the data, I have separated the findings into three high-level categories labelled as: "structural and institutional opportunities and impediments", "church-government-laity relations" and "challenges in environmental management and program implementation" and the following 17 sub-themes, which include: "*transactional vs. transformational leadership*"; "*we are the church: lay church relations*"; "*oneness of mission: church-state relations*"; "*changing assignments; maintaining support for environmental initiatives*"; "*religious vocation and moral duty*"; "*hierarchical authority and control*"; "*collaboration*"; "*collaborationist relationship with local government*"; "*gaps in environmental knowledge*"; "*a willingness to act*"; "*terrain and economic factors"; "factionalism within the church*"; "*managing budgetary demands*"; "*silos in government*"; "*changing tides towards collaboration*"; "*mutually beneficial: church and government*" and "*challenges of information*

dissemination". The former categories provide a structured framework for exploring the similarities and differences that emerged between the two cities and three respondent groups, while the latter sub-themes dig deeper into the less homogenous and rich findings that emerged from the data.

5.1. Part I: Lay Community Perspectives
5.2. Structural/Institutional Opportunities and Impediments:

5.2.1. *Transactional vs. Transformational Leadership*

The importance of leadership in the Diocese of Malolos was a key theme that emerged from the laity responses to determine whether the Church could play an active role in environmental advocacy and management. While leadership is vital to any organization, a distinction was made between "effective church leaders" who were characterised as being transformational, a style of leadership that prefaces raising levels of morality and motivation through collaboration and consultation with members (Burns 1978), versus "transactional leaders", those with a more top-down and managerial style of promoting compliance among followers (Hood 2007). For many laity, the ability of the priest or nun to walk with them, consult them in decision-making and teach them were highly valued and respected qualities over those who stressed liturgy and ultraconservativism. One respondent summarized her parish priest in the following way:

> "Father Dennis is influential. He inspires others attitudes he is an indescribable person, man of many talents. Some other priests just do their job as priests. But Father Dennis is a father for the whole; he thinks for the needy of others and not for himself. Others only as priest – mostly stay in convent. Father Dennis changed the people and their attitudes to become a good person" (Lay A, personal communication, Plaridel, April 24, 2013)

In both San Rafael and Plaridel, transformational leadership was an important quality for clergy and the professed religious to possess because it created confidence among participants in the pastoral committees that fostered a trusting and inspirational work environment, "The Church priest guides us, informs us about activities and lays down the roadmap of how to get there. We as lay leaders are looking for guidance from priests. The lay community is always more active when parish priests are involved" (Lay B, personal communication, Plaridel, April 27, 2013). Furthermore, this style of leadership supported knowledge transfer and capacity building that empowered laity members to continue the activities and programs after priests had moved on to new assignments because they are able to, "stand on our own" (Lay A, personal communication, Plaridel, April 24, 2013)

In both San Rafael and Plaridel, laity stressed a preference for priests and clergy members who organized activities and actively participated in the planning and implementation of community projects. While it was noted that, "some parish priests do not leave the convent, they vanish after mass and do not help with repairs, festivals or organizations" (Lay G, personal communication, San Rafael, May 17, 2013) leaving laity members stranded to plan, manage and run activities like festivals, community events and pastoral organizations on their own. For the most part, laity members serving the Diocese of Malolos had encountered a good mix of clergy members and nuns who had transformational leadership qualities that respected their roles as partners and inspired them to take an active role in their communities:

> "I have worked with the previous two priests and the three assistant parish priests. Working with them goes hand in hand with different projects and instructions are given. Things go hand in hand – if only the priest will do these things they will not get accomplished. Without the help from the laity the goals of the priest will not be done. It's really the good leadership of the parish priest that has the most impact on us" (Lay C, personal communication, Plaridel, April 27, 2013).

While clergy and the professed religious are remarkable influencers who give their time and energy to the communities where they work, those who possess special personality traits such as: charismatic leadership, strong interpersonal skills, teaching abilities and enthusiasm for activism have a greater role inspiring and guiding the laity to serve and participant in community activities. While at times these traits may not be present in all priests, one thing for certain is that laity preferred leaders who shared their time, resources and passion with them.

5.3. Church-Government-Laity Relations:

5.3.1. *We are the Church: Lay-Church Relations*

In commenting on Church-Laity relations, respondents expressed that the success of the Church's social activities and organizations depend on its lay members who commit their time and volunteer efforts, "It's the community who makes the activists succeed, that's why the lay community is important. There is a saying, that no man is an island" (Lay C, personal communication, Plaridel, April 27, 2013). While often overlooked, the laity plays an important role in accomplishing the mission of the Church, implementing the priest's vision and plans and bringing to life Christ's messages of salvation, compassion and selflessness. Similar to the ordained members, laity respondents mentioned that they experienced a calling or religious vocation to serve, "I work to serve God not work to serve the priest. My experience

is that all of the priests are very good, but I personally choose to serve the church through my communion with God" (Lay A, personal communication, Plaridel, April 24, 2013), which informs an understanding of one's motivation to volunteer which is irrespective of authoritative Church clergy. One laity member commented that the strengths of the Church's social offerings depend on the parishioners who volunteer their time and energy:

> "We work on a voluntary basis – time, effort, service of the Lord and the Church. Most of the time I follow what the priest wants. Sometimes when priests leave it is up to us to prepare and implement events and activities" (Lay B, personal communication Plaridel, April 27, 2013)

However, this does not mean that the laity prefers to work in isolation from their parish priests/nuns/brothers and sisters; in fact quite the opposite is true. For instance, laity in Plaridel mentioned that parish pastoral councils routinely work in collaboration with the local priests to seek their feedback and build capacity through knowledge transfer and to gain opportunities to learn new skills, such as, public speaking, facilitation and project management, "Pastoral conversations, which occur for 2-3 hours every month, allow us to discuss and collaborate with priests about what should or shouldn't be done in the community so we know where to stand. During these meetings the priests also seek advice of lay leaders, many of which have spent many years in the community so that their views are included" (Lay B, personal communication, Plaridel, April 27, 2013).

Additionally, some of the respondents acknowledged that in terms of environmental advocacy and management they lacked the skills and technical expertise to lead projects in these areas on their own and saw the importance of parish priests to offer teachings on ecology and catechism about the environment. In Plaridel, there was a notable interest to involve youth because they were already learning about the environment in school and were more equipped to address environmental issues. This suggests further opportunities for collaboration and guidance between the laity, volunteers of all ages, and the Church.

5.3.2. *Oneness of Mission: Church-State Relations*
With regards to a Church-State relationship, a number of laity in both San Rafael and Plaridel expressed a positive opinion towards the local Church collaborating with municipal staff on environmental projects, especially those that target areas such as: ecological education, solid waste management, social discipline and coordination during times of natural disaster and calamity:

> "I think the Catholic Church will help the government in positive ways. It [the environment] is the madness of the God, so we have to help. The Catholic Church is beyond catechism but also trying to enlighten problems. Before the Church-State was separate now it's a better relationship, mayor and staff have a bond because they are Catholic too" (Lay C, personal communication, Plaridel, April 27, 2013)

In Plaridel, examples of collaboration and trust between Church-State are often drawn from the Diocese of Malolos Jubilee Housing Subdivision (see Chapter Six, Case Study Three), which has been viewed, by lay members, as a good indication for future partnerships that can support sustainable and healthy community development, livelihood attainment and reduce ecological concerns on the Angat River. While some respondents were more critical of the government "The government is hard headed and stubborn. The State and the Church are separate," (Lay D, personal communication, Plaridel, April 28, 2013) there was still a general belief that it was important for the Catholic Church to remain an active and influential role in environmental matters in both San Rafael and Plaridel because clergy and the professed religious bring concerns of the community to the forefront and can be conduits for change.

This proved to be true for the majority of lay respondents because government officials and municipal staff are well known in the community, easily accessible, and often attend local mass, which fostered a personal relationship that holds them accountable. In the laity's opinion, because most municipal staff are also Catholics, they are part of the wider Catholic community, bound and influenced by God's teachings, "The relationship is very cordial with the mayors and officials because they too are Catholic" (Lay G, personal communication, San Rafael, May 16, 2013). Furthermore, their bond not only as Filipinos, but also as Catholic Filipinos, makes it easier to sell the benefits of a genuine partnership built on improving the preservation of human life now and for future generations. Others also felt that involving the Church and encouraging priests and nuns to use their organizational and spiritual guidance would also help reduce political corruption and allow the Catholic Church to serve as "watch-dogs" over the municipal staff (Lay I, personal communication, San Rafael, May 16, 2013). Respondents related the lack of proper environmental enforcement to weak political will by the provincial and municipal government to implement, enforce and monitor laws protecting the Angat River Basin and watershed:

> "Sometimes we have flooded streets but we have a good drainage system. Our main concern is waste disposal, lack of localized dumpsites and ordinances not being enforced by the government. For example, it is prohibited to raise poultry or pigs in residential areas but it still happens due to poor enforcement. As a consequence, the

local kang-kong vegetable that grows along the Angat River, is now contaminated because slaughterhouse waste and pig farms pollute the river" (Lay B, personal communication, Plaridel, April 27, 2013)

In the Philippines, parish priests and the professed religious are viewed as extensions of one's family and as a result, they often maintain a high degree of respect and authority, particularly from mayors and political staff. At times this can be a positive relationship for building trust and inspiring political transformations, but can also present obstacles when local priests struggle to renounce or condemn the privileges that these positions of power afford. Nevertheless, the clergy and the professed religious have immense democratic potential for advancing meaningful public participation and engaging with both government and civil society as mediators, facilitators, spiritual guides and power brokers to ensure social inclusion and environmental justice at the local level.

5.4. Challenges in Environmental Management and Program Implementation:

5.4.1. *Changing Assignments*
One significant obstacle faced by laity working in the Diocese of Malolos is the longstanding Catholic practice of clergy reassignments. Typically, every 4-6 years (sometimes longer) priests are relocated to different parishes under the authority of the diocesan Bishop. While this practice is not specific to the Philippines, and found in all Catholic countries around the world, it allows for new ways of sharing the parish priest's talents, building a stronger Catholic community and ensuring that diocesan guidelines are fully inculcated across the network. Having said that, the shuffling does not apply evenly to all priests nor follow a strict schedule and procedure, thus presenting obvious emotional distress and disorienting feelings by lay members, parishioners and priests themselves who became attached to their parishes and their work in the community. One lay member expressed that:

> "When our other priest was with us – we were positive. Now with the new parish priests we have nothing. This priest is not interested or concerned around life of the people or the environment. I feel like he doesn't care and everything our former priest did is now lost – we want someone new" (Lay G, personal communication, San Rafael, May 16, 2013)

While traditionalists within the Catholic Church claim that a parish priest's role is to live a life of simplicity and detachment, the practice remains complicated, personal and challenging for lay members to adapt:

> "Sometimes when priests leave it is up to us to prepare and implement events and activities, Father Roman Nocom, our priest for 14 years left lay people to everything

minus liturgy. Social action was fully responsible to the lay community" (Lay B, personal communication, Plaridel, April 27, 2013).

It was pointed out that because this practice is so widespread many priests capitalize on their time to share their talents, or "gifts," within each community (Lay J, personal communication, San Rafael, April 27, 2013). In these cases, the laity welcome priests who express enthusiasm for new projects and who are willing to train and inspire them. In some instances, laity noted that because Bulacan experiences flooding and natural disaster, the concern for the environment has grown across the diocese and even though priests may come and go, the interest to protect creation and address environmental concerns is growing and becoming more common place, "The experience of the people—the calamity, floods and climate change has changed the views of the people in Bulacan. People are more aware of the environment" (Lay K, personal communication, San Rafael, April 26, 2013). While the majority, rather than the minority, of lay respondents expressed dissatisfaction with losing a priest who they had become familiar with and whom they have built trust, this practice of changing assignments also has some unintended benefits. For one, losing a great priest who has inspired one community means that a previously disenfranchised community has potential for change and vice-versa. While change is hard and often resisted, it can often breathe new life into looking at social, political and environment problem from multiple perspectives and from different angles.

5.4.2. *Maintaining Support for Environmental-Focused Initiatives*
Similar to concerns around changing assignments, laity members expressed worries about their ability to maintain or coordinate new environmental-focused initiatives if incoming priest do not expressed a shared interest or passion for ecological systems or holistic development. In most cases, parish priests, in consultation with the diocesan Bishop, work in collaboration with laity members to form committees that, vary, by region, but typically include: a Catholic Women's League (CWL); Parish Youth Organizations (PYO); Parish Pastoral Council (PPC); Diocesan Council of the Laity (DCLM); Committee of Pastoral Care for Priests (CPCP); Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV); Daughters of Mary Immaculate (DMI); and Basic Bible Seminar (BBS). While there are many to choose from based on the particular geography, demographics and interests of the parish priests and lay member, there are no clear guidelines or rules that environmental committees must be established across the Diocese of Malolos. For some, there was a feeling that it had become optional for priests to take on this work, "Our current priests is not interested in

advocacy for the environment, he does what he wants, so the work and interest relies on the parishioners to care for the environment" (Lay J, personal communication, April 27, 2013); whereas in other diocese in the Philippines, the lay commented that there are specific Ecology Desks and coordinated environmental programs.

To date, the only diocesan environmental initiative, supported and sanctioned by the Bishop, is the Diocesan Ecological Environmental Program (DEEP). Managed by Father Efren Basco, DEEP is an overarching environmental advocacy and coalition group that focuses on environmental education, advocacy and protesting natural resource extraction and harmful development. Although a majority of respondents were aware of DEEP and the work they are doing on the environment to condemn toxins from sanitary landfills leaching into the river system, logging in the Sierra Madre mountain range, and illegal slash and burn farming in Norzagaray, there was a feeling among the respondents that more localized approaches at the parish level were needed in San Rafael and Plaridel to make a long-term commitment and avoid a "passing fancy – active today, inactive tomorrow" (Lay E, personal communication, Plaridel, May 2, 2013). Furthermore, this respondent stressed that more action was needed to establish permanency in environmental advocacy in the diocese, "The Catholic Church in Bulacan should put up a permanent desk (not just ADHOC) that will foster the environmental advocacy or management. Parish priests should be tasked as guardians of the environment" (ibid).

5.5. Part II: Clergy and the Professed Religious Perspectives

5.6. Structural/Institutional Opportunities and Impediments:

5.6.1. *Religious Vocation and Moral Duty*

The notion of religious vocation was a prominent theme among clergy and the professed respondents that motivated action on environmental concerns. A religious vocation, or "spiritual calling" is the belief that certain individuals have received a message from God to follow his teachings closely and align one's actions with the Christian life. While there are many types of "vocations", the respondents placed a higher emphasis on the abilities and strength of those who had chosen the consecrated life as a monk, nun, sister or brother. For themselves, they have accepted a spiritual vocation to serve the Church and have taken vows of chastity, and obedience to dedicate their lives to living as Christ lived, as a way to serve as models for others.

Often, respondents described how because they were committed to a consecrated life they were perceived by lay members, parishioners and local residents as superior role models and leaders in their communities. One parish priest described his use of community theatre, dance and song as a way to inspire others, share his talents and serve God in this respect, "I have gifts to share that can help the community understand and learn deeper about God's message" (A. Pila, personal communication, May 12, 2013). Through his acknowledgement of privilege and power, the priest understood his position to spread the word of God and to help others understand and internalize the deeper messages of the Christian faith, particularly on environmental concerns:

> "We could play a stronger role by leading the people. We can help by informing the parishioners about the environment and we can integrate the matter in our homilies and meetings. If we could only explain it to the people they will be aware" (ibid)

As spiritual leaders, many respondents expressed a strong personal and moral duty to educate and serve the church and wider community within Bulacan. Whether this was through liturgy, social missions or as political campaigns, there was a strong sentiment that as individuals who had committed to following Christ they played an important role proclaiming the teachings of the Lord, serving as messengers for the Bishop, protecting their communities from hardship and showing guidance and forgiveness for those who had sinned. This was especially true in matters pertaining to the environment:

> "As a leader, I have a captive audience and a big responsibility. It is a big role to train children and give them discipline. Little by little the preservation of the environment is integrated in classes so that when students graduate they will become disciplined students. It is important to educate children about the right to live and to preserve. Life is given by God for free and we have to return the favour and leave the earth in good condition to be enjoyed for the next-generation" (E. Lalantacon, personal communication, April 23, 2013)

Furthermore, they recognized their unique position to work collaboratively within the diocese to bring people together, on a human level, to realize the benefits of holistic development and working together, "Bulacan is mostly Catholic which makes it easier to converse with others and work together. For example, the Catholic Church can sustain life by providing meaning; but Angat sustains life for all. We [the Catholic community] have a great role to play to preserve the Angat River and ensure it's long-term sustainability" (D. Espejo, personal communication, April 20, 2013). Another respondent had similar sentiments noting, "The Diocese of Malolos has a big role to pay in advocating for the environment and we must collaborate across DEEP and with other diocese because the number one rule of

ecology is that we are all interconnected" (E. Basco, personal communication, May 15, 2013).

Overall, clergy and the professed religious expressed a deep interest and a genuine concern for the preservation of the Angat River Basin. They believed that they could play a role as conduits for change in their local communities by educating, empowering and inspiring others to make a difference. In terms of specific actions that could be taken, many felt that it was their obligation to: 1) educate parishioners about waste management, quarrying and the current state of the water quality; 2) network with the government on issues of sustainable development and 3) enforce discipline for offences that negatively impact the river and surrounding riverbank.

5.6.2. *Hierarchical Authority and Control*

To remain in line with the international Catholic Community, ordained clergy and the professed religious are expected and required to carry out and abide by the lessons and liturgical law of the Holy See, thus, issues of authority and control were prevalent themes among respondents. Since the PCC is part of the larger Roman Catholic community they too are subject to various hierarchical structures and rules put in place to ensure consistency and alignment with the Pope. At the Diocese of Malolos, Bishop most rev. Jose F. Oliveros, who oversees 230 diocesan priests working in 10 vicariates across Bulacan and Valenzuela, serves as the authority for the region, under him are the head parish priests (one per parish) and then subsequent priests, pastors, reverends etc. While the majority of respondents noted that obtaining support from Bishop Oliveros was an important and necessary precursor to make changes in pastoral decisions and social action, "you need the support of the Bishop, he needs to be active and he needs to care" (D. Espejo, personal communication, April 20, 2013); in one case a respondents expressed their frustrations with Bishops and parish priests who had little incentive for community works:

> "There is no commission or mandated parish direct participation on the environment. Priests are concerned with faith information side by side with environmental concerns and many priests in the Diocese of Malolos are involved in DEEP's programs. But, environmental concerns are not always important to some parish priests at the moment. Some priests here [in San Rafael] have less concern because they are not worried about the environment and only stick to pastoral matters" (anonymous, personal communication, May 17, 2013)

Since the Bishop has direct authority over the parish priests, many respondents felt that there needed to be more leadership to encourage environmental education and awareness from the top-down. One respondent raised concerns that the Diocese of Malolos has missed out on key opportunities to show support and speak out on behalf of environmental concerns, "In Bulacan there are worries. The Save the Sierra Madre awareness cross-sat idle in Bulacan, there was no awareness about its significance and enthusiasm to support the cause. During the Manila Bay Reclamation meeting, no one from the Diocese of Malolos showed up. They are missing out on opportunities to strategize and oppose" (L. Aresenio, personal communication, May 6, 2013).

For subordinate priests, frustrations with authority were more prevalent. One respondent, who wished to be anonymous, felt that the clergy could be move involved in environmental concerns if their head priest took the initiative:

> "We could play a stronger role – lead the people. But if your parish priest doesn't have that incentive it is difficult. DEEP has no power to influence, it is a program for the diocese. It is up to the parish priest to accept or reject the program" (anonymous, personal communication, May 17, 2013).

This suggests that due to the structure and hierarchical nature of the Catholic Church, both in the Philippines and around the world, their needs to be a strong institutional commitment to environmental protection and it's connection to Catholic social teaching*[1].

5.7. Church-Government-Laity Relations:

5.7.1. *Collaboration*

The majority of respondents reported that lay relations were vital to the success and function of the church and thus a positive and collaborative relationship in the ministry was important. There was a common understand that, "People here are the Church" (D. Espejo, personal communication, April 15, 2013) and lay volunteers were crucial for the planning and implementation of church-mandated organizations, pastoral councils, fiestas and community activities as well as offering advice about local problems and how to address them. Priests

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[1] As of 2015, Pope Francis released an encyclical on the environment, known as "*Laudato si*" that outlines the important role for the Catholic clergy and wider community to serve as stewards of the environment. This monumental document challenges harmful development practices, uneven wealth and the vulnerability of the poor to climate change and natural disaster. More importantly, as the leader of one of the world's largest religions, it call for an "ecological conversion" to care and protect God's creation (Pope Francis 2015).

and nuns recognized the benefits in engaging the laity on religious grounds, "85% of the population in Bulacan is Catholic. It is so strong and if we work together we can use a lot of resources to protect the environment" (E. Lalantacon, personal communication, April 23, 2013); but also because many of the lay members had lived in Bulacan their entire lives and were active volunteers, "some of the parishioners have volunteered for over 10 – 15 years, sometimes more in their local parish" (ibid). Over the years of volunteering, the laity's level of trust and interpersonal relationships between one another were recognized as key strengths in both San Rafael and Plaridel and often openly extended to clergy and the professed religious working in the community. In Plaridel, the parish priests expressed a strong desire to respect this by promoting openness, collaboration and joint partnership with lay members in a two-way communication stream, "To inspire others you must be true to yourself and to the community. Participation with the parish helps provide opportunities to think and engage about progress" (Fr. Pila, personal communication, April 20, 2013).

5.7.2. *Critical Collaboration with Local Government*

When asked to describe the relationship between the Church and the State, which has often been characterized as being both positive and adversarial in the Philippines, many respondents offered descriptions of what can be classified as "collaborationist". According to Hundekar (1995):

> "A collaborationist relationship is one based on mutual respect, acceptance of autonomy, independence and pluralism of voluntary organizations and entails genuine relationship between them [government and voluntary sector] to work on a problem critical for the area. However cooperation or collaboration with voluntary organizations should not mean that the government is absolved from its responsibility to pay attention towards improving and revitalizing its own service delivery mechanisms" (292).

On the one hand, respondents recognized the need to work collaboratively with the local government to maintain equilibrium, but on the other hand respondents expressed feelings of apprehension towards offering services and support because of the countless examples where government officials played a role in supporting anti-environmental corporations plaguing the community. One respondent shed light on this contradiction when she mentioned, "Priests share stories about local government that disagrees with them. Local government sometimes creates problems with the priests. Local government in Plaridel takes sand out of Angat near the bridge, which causes the water to go deeper … this isn't sitting well with the church" (E. Lalantacon, personal communication, April 23, 2013).

Furthermore, a majority of respondents described their relationship with the state as being controversial; yet necessary for survival, "Advocating depends on rapport with local government and Catholic Church in Plaridel. There must be good rapport – if they are friends or enemies it means a lot" (L. Arsenio, personal communication, May 6, 2013). One respondent reported that because there is no clear understanding of the separation of Church and State legislation in the Philippines it is difficult to establish effective collaboration with the local government because the delineation of boundaries and roles between the two are blurred. It was the belief of some respondents that addressing this confusion could help clarify the relationship:

> "What are the boundaries and limits? The government has not been clear about the boundaries the church's role. We can integrate, but the lines are so unclear. Currently secular theory prevails; we are often reminded that the church and state are separate, written in the constitution. If the government and Church define the separation first, then we can find a path to work together. Right now there are problems identifying the terms, the church is more clear but the government is not" (Fr. Cenon, personal communication, May 17, 2013).

While cautious of government, the overall impression was that clergy and the professed religious were positive about making strives towards collaboration on climate change, disaster preparedness and watershed management. Some respondents even noted that it could be mutually beneficial because they lacked the hard skills and technical knowledge to address the sustainability of the Angat River Basin alone:

> "We see the significance of collaboration. Church and State shouldn't have animosity. They need to safeguard the environment together and share capacity. Church doesn't have technical knowhow but government does. They need to safeguard natural resources and the Catholic Church needs to continue education and awareness" (Fr. Basco, personal communication, May 15, 2013).

Further to that point, many respondents described that the diocese's greatest strength would be to provide education and awareness to their parishioners, "By informing the parishioners about the environment they will understand. We can integrate the matter in our homilies and meetings" (Fr. Espejo, personal communication, April 20, 2013). Respondents also described that an enhanced partnership with the local government could condemn corruption and provide moral guidance.

There was a general feeling that in the absence of collaboration, leaving things up to the government would be the worst-case scenario because they would give in to destructive resource extraction companies, preface economic growth over sustainability and fail to take

responsibility for safeguarding the watershed. Thus, many respondents felt strongly that the Catholic Church must co-exist in a political environment or it risks alienating portions of the population, such as the sick, displaced and vulnerable, who rely on the Church for services and leadership but also the local government who have the power and the resources.

5.8. Challenges in Environmental Management and Program Implementation:

5.8.1. *Gaps in Environmental Knowledge*
Respondents described a strong desire to obtain a better understanding of ecology and eco-spirituality to lead their parishes and serve the wider community in Bulacan, "Many within the Church are aware of environmental problems but we are only half way there in terms of obtaining a deeper understanding of it" (E. Lalantacon, personal communication, April 23, 2013). Another respondent noted that one of the major obstacles in addressing how to care for the environment, is that clergy and professed religious lack specialized knowledge to address the breadth of complex environmental topics and scientific facts, "DEEP needs someone with an environmental studies or ecological resilience background to provide expertise" (Fr. Basco, personal communication, May 15, 2013). Currently, DEEP is offering advice on how to care for the environment through videos, seminars and activities such as tree planting, recycling and farming; however the director commented, "At the moment, our program [DEEP] is having problems because I am under staffed, having difficulty managing a new parish and providing programming for other churches and with the schools" (ibid). Further to that, some respondents expressed a desire for more education during their seminarian training. At the moment, "there is no required ecology training in the seminary" (O.Paris, personal communication, April 19, 2013) and electives on eco-spirituality are ad-hoc and only available to seminarians at certain points in their academic career when DEEP staff are available.

5.8.2. *A Willingness to Act: Terrain and Economic Development Factors*
In comparing San Rafael with Plaridel, there were some obvious differences in regards to geography that shaped how clergy and the professed religious understood environmental problems and their urgency to act. In San Rafael, respondents noted that unlike other areas of Bulacan their community was relatively rural and did not have the same environmental issues, such as: informal settlements along the riverbanks, air pollution from jeepneys and motorcycles or issues of commercial toxins polluting the water quality, which were raised by other parishes. While some respondents pointed out local issues, "here in San Rafael we

have soil erosion, mahogany factories, agrarian problems with farmers, people not paying taxes and ongoing construction of Kentucky Fried Chicken poultry farms" (Fr. Cenon, personal communication, May 17, 2013) the consensus overall was that the quality of the environment in San Rafael is relatively stable, noting, "San Rafael was rated cleanest municipality in Bulacan" (ibid). Since the level of concern is minimal, some respondents felt that parish priests and nuns in the area were less inclined to discuss environmental problems and eco-spirituality. One respondent commented, "Parish priests will only have influence in social action if they are convinced of the urgency for them to act. Diocesan priests are luck of the draw and in some places the priests are less concerned about the environment" (L. Aresnio, personal communication, May 6, 2013).

In Plaridel, the environmental situation is much different. A majority of clergy and the professed religious cited the challenge of managing economic development alongside environmental sustainability, "In Plaridel the development pressures are intense, as you can see we have lots of traffic, pollution and solid wastes being dumped into the riverbanks" (Fr. Espejo, personal communication, April 15, 2013). Another major concern was the growth of informal settlers, located along the riverbanks, who lacked access to proper sanitation services and the same rights as other citizens. As a result, respondents in Plaridel had a much stronger personal and emotional attachment to care for the environment, as expressed by one respondent:

> "In reference to the Angat River, there have been many problems with flooding; the rivers being clogged with garbage contribute to the flooding. The riverbanks are polluted with garbage and there is no good flow of water. Angat releases water and floods cause a break the dam. The discipline of the people is a problem. Someone needs to find out what are the disciplines that need to be followed to protect the water that is supplying Manila. I see four major environmental problems; (1) discipline of the people- some people don't know how to clean and where to throw their garbage (2) greediness – people are over consuming the water and making profit (3) no respect for the environment (4) illegal logging" (E. Lalantacon, personal communication, April 23, 2013).

In making comparisons, the difference occurring between upstream and downstream concerns are not only consistent with the literature (Gregersen, Ffolliott and Brooks 2007), but suggest there is a greater urgency for action among clergy and professed religious, living in environmentally stressed communities, because they experience deteriorating water quality and environmental problems on a direct basis. To that point, the responses from San Rafael suggest that a holistic approach to the Angat River has not fully permeated the Diocese of Malolos and there remains some clergy and professed religious who do not

share recognize or accept their shared role in working towards and supporting an ecological vision of a clean and healthy watershed.

5.8.3. *Factionalism within the Church*

The reputation and pride of some parish priests appeared to be common concerns among the respondents as to whether or not they would accept environmental concerns as part of their priority list. Although clergy and the professed religious are expected to take direction from the diocesan Bishop, there is no mandated environmental agenda within the Diocese of Malolos leaving it up to each individual whether or not to get involved in environmental concerns, "Every priest has his own goals and priorities" (Fr. Cenon, personal communication, May 17, 2013).

Most respondents recognized and acknowledge their role as effective communicators, who possessed strong leadership and teaching abilities that could be used for information dissemination and environmental education, but some respondents commented that younger priests had accepted the fervor and motivation set out by Vatican II and the 2nd Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP-II) to lead social change for the environment. There was a sense among respondents that younger priests had a stronger interest to focus on the organizational and facilitative aspects of community leadership and social convening, not just spiritual concerns. To clarify, this does not mean that age was a determining factor as to whether a priest served as a conduit for change, outside the church, but that there seemed to be fractions among the older priests in the diocese who had experienced EDSA, the rise of the communist insurgency and various political campaigns that left a bad taste in their mouth. While one respondent commented that, "The Cardinal needs to select a young and environmentally conscious Bishop to inspire" (L. Aresenio, personal communication, May 6, 2013), other respondents mentioned that "there remain fears among the clergy of being too radical and not in line with Church doctrine and policy. You need to have balance" (Fr. Espejo, personal communication, May 13, 2013).

5.9. Part III: Municipal Officer Perspectives

5.10. Structural/Institutional Opportunities and Impediments:

5.10.1. *Managing Budgetary Demands*

The theme of managing budgetary demands captures a common experience shared by municipal staff in both San Rafael and Plaridel to address the sustainability of the Angat

River Basin. While it is fair to say that financial shortfalls and barriers are a common problem across the country, at all levels of government, it is especially true at the local level due to devolution policies that have off-loaded natural resource responsibilities onto local public agencies. Within this context, a majority of respondents highlighted not only the lack of funding for increased service and program demands, which include: the inclusion of public participation, education and awareness raising, monitoring proper waste segregation, the regulation of plastics, recyclable and biodegradable materials, but the lack of control over its use by provincial and federal mandates:

> "At the moment, financing is challenging. You have to coordinate between the Province and National government. Right now, the taxes in Plaridel all go to the Provincial government" (L. Lucas, personal communication, Plaridel, April 22, 2013).

In such a financially stressed context, there have been major gaps in service delivery and information dissemination, this has especially been true for meeting the demands for public engagement without additional access to resources or personnel. The Municipal Officer of Tourism in Plaridel comments:

> "It has been difficult to get groups to volunteer. There are low turnout numbers. Education of the people is number one for the environment. It is important to invite more individuals to help the local government because we have exhausted the budget. We can use youth for dissemination of pamphlets and encourage scholars to offer their knowledge to get work experience" (L. Lucas, April 22, 2013).

Similarly, respondents in San Rafael acknowledge their own frustrations with balancing budgets and maintaining alignment with provincial policies, "In San Rafael the town is small but the land area here is huge. There are gaps in meeting the needs of the residents as well as teaching them about the environment" (Z. Villanueva, personal communication, San Rafael, April 29, 2013). Although less so in San Rafael, there was a considerable degree of resentment in Plaridel expressed towards the provincial government in regards to control over the municipal budget. The Municipal Planning Officer in Plaridel explained that:

> "Because funds for local government units are tight and need municipal development council approvals for the budget, it is difficult to make things happen. Not only that but 5% of the budget per year is used for disaster relief like flooding" (R. Alvaro, April 22, 2013).

Overall, the key message is that both staff from San Rafael and Plaridel are grappling with their responsibilities to fulfil policy obligations, meet provincial mandates and monitor environmental concerns, while at the same time, support local initiatives and maintain responsiveness to their constituents. Furthermore, some respondents viewed governmental

hierarchy as an obstacle to local autonomy because it delays local decision-making and ignores community needs.

5.10.2. *Silos in Water Governance*

Despite research that recognizes urban services such as transportation, water, sewerage and economic growth are better managed through coordinated region-wide structures, there remain significant challenges, at the LGU level, in Bulacan to adopt and support such processes. In the case of water governance, municipal staff in San Rafael and Plaridel expressed challenges with maintaining water quality and quantity across the region and fostering collaboration with other municipalities to address a shared vision for the sustainability of the Angat River. In terms of strategic planning for the Angat River Basin and watershed, the Municipal Environmental Officer in San Rafael noted:

> "All of the environmental officers in Bulacan meet up once a month in Norzagaray to discuss initiatives and projects being carried out in our municipalities. Currently nothing is being done to help each other out to address the environmental protection of the Angat watershed" (Z. Villanueva, personal communication, San Rafael, April 29, 2013).

Yet, municipal staff in Plaridel expressed dissatisfaction with upstream problems negatively impacting their capacity to address non-point source pollution, "The problem is that the upstream towns do not properly manage garbage, piggeries and solid wastes which can trickle down dirty water" (J. Carrillo, personal communication, Plaridel, April 22, 2013). These discrepancies were common across the interviews and suggest little effort is being made to facilitate dialogue and negotiations, during the monthly municipal meetings, or discuss opportunities to coordinate river clean-ups and collaboration across jurisdictional boundaries.

For the most part respondents in Plaridel and San Rafael offered inconsistent responses when asked about the initiatives being carried out, across Central Luzon, to address the sustainability of the Angat River. From the interviews, various answers were provided including: the National Greening Program, disaster management plans, Earth Day celebrations, the relocation of informal settlers along the riverbanks, and local initiatives like river clean-ups and solid waste management ordinances, yet only few respondents mentioned the Manila Bay Clean-Up Rehabilitation and Preservation Program (MBCP). The MBCP is a Supreme Court mandate and regionally coordinated initiative to address the rehabilitation and preservation of Manila Bay whose main water source is the Angat River:

"There are initiatives of the provincial government to address the Manila Bay rehabilitation and preservation. We are invited to attend meeting on solid waste management, informal settlers, water quality and habitat cover. These are overwhelming problems, how do we do it?" (R. De Castro, personal communication, San Rafael, April 29, 2013)

While it is difficult to pinpoint why the responses were so varied, or why the Manila Bay initiative was not a prominent answer among municipal officers, considering its specific focus on the water quality of the Angat River, it could be interpreted three ways. One, there is poor coordination and understanding between and across all three tiers of government regarding the functions and roles played by all actors. Two, municipal staff especially those living further away from the core (e.g. Metropolitan Manila) are far-removed from provincial oversight and have become overwhelmed with the complexity of dealing with environmental issues at the local scale. And three, municipalities at the local level are less interested in efforts that do little to appease local constituents and instead prefer to function independently from one another so as to remain competitive and favourable in the market and in the polls.

To that last point, a majority of respondents knew little of their neighbouring municipalities plans for watershed conservation and management, but stressed their own local accomplishments. For example, the Municipal Planning Officer in San Rafael described with great pride and a sense of competitiveness that:

"San Rafael has already completed approximately one kilometer of embankment starting from the rubber dam going upstream, it's more popularly known as the "baywalk". The baywalk was constructed along the bank of the river to prevent residents from encroaching and to dissuade them in disposing trash into the water. The baywalk has 3 meter concrete pavement and how become a jogger's land for the local residents. Other towns are following suit to what San Rafael has initiated, seeing its positive effect on our river system" (E. San Rogue, personal communication, San Rafael, April 29, 2013).

Thus, to promote greater integration of watershed planning across the region the data suggests that more work is needed to break silos across the three tiers of government, overcome barriers to competition and encourage partnership across the region to enhance knowledge sharing, capacity building, and an equitable use of resources.

5.10.3. Changing Tides Towards Collaboration
Despite the strong preference to appease local needs and remain autonomous, many respondents felt that water resources are increasingly becoming scarce in the region and

collaborative action is needed to reduce the financial and human resources necessary to carry out these functions. In San Rafael, one respondent commented that, "If we don't co-ordinate and take care of the river within the next 5 years there will be no more water. We must clean and safeguard Angat" (Z. Villanueva, personal communication, San Rafael, April 29, 2013). Some respondents suggested a growing need and desire to pursue policy tools, such as, a shared service delivery model with local institutions as a way to address funding shortfalls, coordinate solid waste management, non-point source pollution, environmental education and political corruption. The San Rafael Municipal Planning Officer, commented, "It will be most effective if all groups (government, non-government, religious and people's organizations) converge and unite for a common goal of protecting the river system" (E. San Rogue, personal communication, San Rafael, April 29, 2013). Similar views were shared in Plaridel, as one respondent claimed that partnerships with civil society could, "save budget for government by minimizing the money and resources needed" (J. Carrillo, personal communication, Plaridel, April 22, 2013).

While the interest was strong for collaboration with civil society groups like the Catholic Church, respondents were unaware of any active civil society groups operating in the region or working on sustainability issues within San Rafael and Plaridel. More than half of the respondents claimed that they did not know of any active local groups in the community or if those that existed did any activities that specifically address environment concerns. Among those who provided answers, there was a higher portion of individuals who noted the Catholic Church as the only institutional arrangements addressing environmental issues such as logging, water sustainability, housing and promoting solid waste management in the region, while the local chapters of the Knights of Columbus and the Soroptimist sometimes volunteered during environmental month or during river clean-ups. In both San Rafael and in Plaridel, I was provided with a list of registered CSOs in the municipalities and was informed that while some had partnered with municipal staff on environmental initiatives, the efforts had been ad-hoc and not part of their organization's core mission. The lists can be found in Appendix 7 and Appendix 8. There was also no formal system in place to coordinate and partner with CSOs or measure the effectiveness of their joint-activities.

5.11. Church-Government-Laity Relations:

5.11.1. Mutually Beneficial: Church and Government

Through discussions regarding partnership potential for the Angat River, the majority of respondents expressed that a coordinated working relationship with the Diocese of Malolos, could bring increased effectiveness in accessing community networks, a reduced burden on government, and innovative inspiration for change. The term, "mutually beneficial" was often used in conversation to describe this relationship and the belief that the Church, the community, and the local government would benefit from a strengthened partnership to address the Angat River. While many respondents cited the reduced financial burden that would come with an enhanced Church-State partnership:

> "The municipality would experience less strain on resources and lighten the burden of logistics for environmental advocacy. The local government could provide logistics such as trash bins; waste centers and the Catholic Church could provide information dissemination and mobile the people". (L. Lucas, personal communication, Plaridel, April 22, 2013).

> "They [the Church] are always coordinating projects. Helping with funds and coordinating with Congress. They offer good networking and connections with NGOs. Catholic Church is also good with education and dissemination (T. Borja, personal communication, Plaridel, April 22, 2013).

There was also a significant emphasis placed on the benefits of establishing a collaborative working relationship with the Church, particularly since they have already built and supported a strong relationship with community residents that could enhance the implementation of LGU programs and initiatives:

> "In my honest opinion, the Local Government should support if there's work/programs of the Catholic Church to provide environmental management and advocacy to the community. The LGU has the capacity and may use its financial resources to support the work of the church on environment. It will be beneficial to the community if both the LGU and the church will work together for the environmental programs. The church may, through pastoral letters and its organizations such as the Lay Ministers, Lectors and Commentators, and catholic groups like the Knights of Columbus, Christian Family Movement groups, assist the LGU in information dissemination of the LGU programs on environmental management. They may also assist in the implementation of LGU programs such as clean up drives, tree planting activities and river clean up" (E. San Rogue, personal communication, San Rafael, April 29, 2013).

Furthermore:

> "The Church can reach the community better. The network is so strong in the church. During times of calamity the church is they're helping no matter what. Father Dennis

has such strong leadership" (J. Carrillo, personal communication, Plaridel, April 22, 2013).

Another common thread found across both municipal responses was the idea of a shared Catholic identity amongst the Bulacan residents. Since the population of Bulacan is more than 85% Roman Catholic, most residents in Bulacan including municipal officers, are Catholic and thus would not take issue partnering with the Catholic Church over other foreign FBOs and CSOs. Through the interviews it was common to hear that the PCC and the local parish priests in Bulacan had a great influence on the daily lives of the residents and that people looked up to the Church for guidance, moral and spiritual lessons and ethical leadership, especially during times of calamity. The Municipal Officer of Planning in San Rafael commented that:

> "The Catholic Church in Bulacan shall have a great influence on the community regarding environmental advocacy. The religious nature of Bulakeños can be utilized for the purpose. People see the church and their leaders as their guide to noble deeds" (E. San Rogue, personal communication, San Rafael, April 29, 2013)

In both municipalities, there was a shared understanding that the Diocese of Malolos could support the role of the local government to preserve the environment and protect creation. Whether for a higher purpose, a personal purpose or for the next generation of Bulacan residents, the Municipal Agricultural Officer in Plaridel, asserted that, "Everyone is concerned about the environment. It's the church, the government and the NGOs who must collaborate with the government. People should appreciate the efforts on a human level. In the end, it's the preservation of the human life" (J. Carrillo, personal communication, Plaridel, April 22, 2013).

5.12. Challenges in Environmental Management and Program Implementation

5.12.1. *Challenges of Information Dissemination*

Information dissemination was identified as a key initiative to educate local residents about the sustainability of the Angat River Basin; however municipal officers in both San Rafael and Plaridel expressed frustration in their effectiveness to reach out and inspire community members. Generally, staff from both towns were involved in information dissemination campaigns, yet their efforts varied in scope and success. For example, the Municipal Officer of the Environment in Plaridel commented that:

> "There are regular campaigns where we distribute posters, leaflets to the community. We spend 20,000 pesos per year to produce the materials. To distribute the

materials we tap into Barangay networks and volunteers" (A. Cervantes, personal communication, Plaridel, April 22, 2013).

But the success of these campaigns varied because the onus was largely contingent on the residents, some of whom lacked the incentive or willingness for change:

> "There needs to be an awareness of the environment. Residents need to love it. The government can give support but their needs to be community passion and involvement" (ibid).

Further to that point, the Municipal Officer of Agriculture in Plaridel highlighted that, "pamphlets are not always effective. Addressing the environment is a process it is not simple. It's a huge culture change and it is very difficult to change behaviour" (J. Carrillo, personal communication, Plaridel, April 22, 2013). While the municipality of Plaridel often hosts informal dialogues, seminars and community level meetings to train barangay captains and residents about recycling efforts, waste collection and the realities of the environment it was made clear from the former Solid Waste Management Officer that, "only a few people attend because resident's think it is a waste of time" resulting in low turnout and poor incentive for barangay captains to continue this work in the community (T. Borja, personal communication, Plaridel, April 22, 2013).

Similar concerns were expressed in San Rafael. While efforts to provide information to the residents were more creative and less reliant on text-based print mediums, the Municipal Officer of the Environment, commented:

> "We go house to house and visit barangay captains in each community. Our staff bring laptops to screen videos and teach disciplines in a creative way. We use speakers to promote burying biodegradable and sorting of non-bio, which goes to the landfill. We use a jingles for garbage collection that are played on the barangay trucks as they pass neighbourhoods and every 1st Saturday of the month we have a river clean up for 3 hours (6am-9am). During these clean-ups all of the municipal officers, barangay and volunteers are encouraged to come out to clean the riverbanks with the residents" (Z. Villanueva, personal communication, San Rafael, April 29, 2013).

Staff found it equally as difficult to capture a wide audience and maintain momentum for sustainable education in a "cost-effective and timely manner" (E. San Rogue, personal communication, San Rafael, April 29, 2013). That said, when asked how the Diocese of Malolos could offer support for the Angat River Basin, there was an overwhelming consensus among the respondents that the Church played a powerful role providing education during masses, seminars and education in schools, especially through videos and

lectures. To that point, many respondents pointed out that unlike municipal staff, who are adequately trained in comprehensive planning and possess technical knowledge as architects, planners, engineers, the Church was very experienced in offering soft-skills such as effective communication among diverse stakeholders, ability to demonstrate high ethical practices, coordination during calamities and assertiveness to make decisions, adapt quickly and mobilize large groups of people. The San Rafael Municipal Environmental Officer commented:

> "We welcome the world of the Catholic Church to provide environmental advocacy and awareness to the community. It will be a benefit to us if they can help with things like giving info and communicating ordinances. This is not just a project, but also a long-term commitment to reducing waste and making behavioral change. The municipalities are trying really hard to keep residents on track but it requires patience and leadership" (Z. Villanueva, personal communication, San Rafael, April 29, 2013).

This respondent further noted that priests, in particular, are good resources for the local government because of their strong leadership capacity to inspire others:

> "Priests are a big help mainly because most people here are Catholic. If a priest preachers about the environment people will follow. I once wrote letters to local priests to teach them about the importance of waste segregation so that it could be used in their homilies. The priests were very receptive and obliged. Through this effort three priests participated and helped distribute door-to-door flyers in the neighborhood" (ibid).

Similarly, municipal staff in Plaridel believed that in utilizing the Church's captive audience, during masses and homilies, it would be an effective way to support the provision of environmental education, "The Catholic Church is a vehicle for advocacy. A letter read at church, written by the government to appeal to the community about waste segregation and preparation of the river would all be useful" (J. Carrillo, personal communication, Plaridel, April 22, 2013). The Municipal Tourism Officer in Plaridel also pointed out some positive benefits in partnering with the Catholic Church:

> "The municipality would experience less strain on resources and lighten the burden of logistics for environmental advocacy. The local government could provide logistics such as trash bins; waste centers and the Catholic Church could provide information dissemination and mobilize the people" (L. Lucas, personal communication, Plaridel, April 22, 2013).

Based on the responses, information dissemination was an important faucet to address the sustainability of the Angat River especially to educate the under-privileged, economically weaker and less educated sectors of society. However efforts to do so were largely focused on one-way communication novelties like flyers, films and catchy songs to gain interest and

approval, leaving little room for direct community involvement. As a result, there are major gaps in understanding local peoples attitudes about natural resources and their use of them, as well as, opportunities to capture local knowledge about the changing nature of the public realm and riverfront. Instead, it was assumed that the public knew very little about the environment, how to segregate garbage, or improve water quality and municipal staff were forced to carry the burden in providing education and awareness without first taking stock of what people already knew, the barriers they faced to comply and whether the community has capacity to support a long-term sustainable plan for the Angat River Basin.

Chapter Six: Exploring Faith in Action, the Philippine Catholic Church in Environmental Advocacy and Management

> As Filipinos we can and must act now. Nobody else will do it for us. This is our home; we must care for it, watch over it, protect it and love it. We must be particularly careful to protect what remains of our forests, rivers, and corals and to heal, wherever we can the damage, which has already been done (Legaspi, Archbishop of Caceres, CBCP, 1988, n.p.)

This reflection from Caceres Archbishop Legaspi comes from, "What is happening to our beautiful land?" the earliest known CBCP pastoral letter on the environment that outlines the fragility of the Philippines life-systems, the role of clergy in providing ecological awareness and a call on Christians to act urgently as stewards of the earth (Lagarde 2015). A landmark document then, and arguably now, Archbishop Legaspi's letter serves as a reminder of how the PCC has explored the relationship between sustainability and Catholic social teachings decades before Pope Francis's encyclical on "eco-conversion" and climate change (*Laudato si* 2015). In maintaining a commitment to foster harmony with the environment and to motivate others to develop a deep appreciation for the fragility of the country's life systems, the Filipino clergy and the professed religious have played important roles nurturing individuals' understanding about the preservation of the environment through the promotion of eco-spirituality, "a manifestation of the spiritual interconnection between human beings and the environment" (Lincoln 2000: 228), and providing leadership to protect the country against harmful development practices.

To demonstrate the role of the PCC in promoting eco-spirituality, this chapter will provide insights into four case studies: 1) The Ministry of Ecology at the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Manila; 2) The Anti-APECO movement; 3) The Diocese of Malolos Jubilee Housing Subdivision and 4) The Save Sierra Madre Mountains Alliance Inc., organizational-institutional spaces whereby the PCC has played an active role mobilizing human resources, leading awareness campaigns and providing effective leadership for environmental advocacy and management. To gather data for these examples, I engaged in participant observations, conducted critical document analysis (e.g. online, books and reports) and held semi-structured interviews during the fieldwork. In three out of the four case studies, I was immersed in natural and organizational environments, affording me the opportunity to engage with key gatekeepers of knowledge, ask probing questions and make inquires from within. In the fourth case study, my role was less participatory, as I was detached from the

setting, but relied on informal conversations with lay members and document analysis to capture the Save Sierra Madre story and its notable initiatives.

6.1. Case Study One*: The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Manila's Ministry of Ecology*

In 2005, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Manila (RCAM) opened a Ministry of Ecology to promote environmental education and awareness within the PCC. As an indication of its authenticity, the Archdiocese office, located on the Caritas compound in Pandacan, Manila, has been fashioned entirely out of pulverized plastics and rocks, donated by nearby construction sites (L. Arsenio, personal communication, May 5, 2013). According to RCAM's Ministry of Ecology coordinator - Lou Arsenio, the initial idea behind the office was to educate parish priests and the professed religious in disciplines such as ecology, climate change and sustainability principles using detailed scientific evidence, case-studies and research outlined in, "Ecological Crises: Our Responsibility Let Us Amend our Lives" (Arsenio and Arsenio 2010). However the audience, activities and programs have since expanded to include skills training and experiential learning over the years.

While Lou comments that "ecology requires higher education and the Church in the Philippines is only half-way there", her staff now organize various seminars, film festivals, workshops and training sessions on topics like organic vegetable gardening, food waste, organic composting, organic liquid fertilizers, and the reuse of plastics for construction, shopping bags and throw pillows to facilitate this knowledge transfer and spiritual awakening. Adding to the robust training and information dissemination, proven tactics to address behaviour change for sustainability (Barr 2003; Hungerford and Volk 2013; Tyndale 2006;), Lou and her team have also been involved in transforming vacant Archdiocese lands into ecologically productive organic farming sites, reminiscent of Cochrane's (2013) study of organic farming in Senegal, establishing the *Kablikasan Samahan* organization and various recycling programs that focus specifically on women's participation.

The *Kablikasan Samahan* organization is a collective of twenty families living in the gigantic landfill garbage dumpsite Smokey Mountain, Cabuyao whom the ministry trained as Eco-Aids, front-line recycling workers who are taught to recycle waste, remove toxins from the environment and clean up the railway. While this informal waste-recycling program, designed to reduce municipal spending on waste management and conserve resources, is

consistent in other developing countries (Oteng-ababio 2011; Medina 2008), the scenario presented by RCAM's Ministry of Ecology goes one step further. In making connection between sustainable livelihoods and poverty reduction strategies, the Ministry has given their program more credibility by re-framing the activities of Eco-Aides or "waste-pickers" as environmental champions, fostering a sense of pride and dignity among the unskilled and marginalized workers being stigmatized (L. Arsenio, personal communication, May 3, 2013).

The recycling programs that empower women are achieved through skills training on how to create natural home-care products like herbal soaps, ointments, lotions, aromatic oil and paper products that can later be sold for profit. As participants, it helps women subsidize their living expenses, contribute to the household income and promote a more sustainable culture of consumption (L. Arsenio, personal communication, May 5, 2013). In helping diversify women's incomes, the Ministry of Ecology's recycling and skill upgrading program also contributes to a greater sense of empowerment, personal independence and equality in poverty alleviation (Mbaiwa 2004; Scoones 2015; Suich and Murphy 2002), that has wider implications beyond conservation, especially in tilting power imbalances within the Catholic Church.

In 2007, RCAM's Ministry of Ecology expanded its mission to care for an abandoned farmland in Sitio Fucil, Tagaytay, located 59 kilometers south of Manila. Under the direction of Cardinal Rosales, staff from RCAM's Ministry of Ecology built an eco-retreat that is now being used to advocate and promote the restoration and protection of the environment through experiential learning (L. Arsenio, personal communication, May 5, 2013). To employ the 1st principle of ecology – holism, a belief that we are all interconnected (Carroll 2004:12), RCAM opened the farm to all dioceses in the PCC to support much needed education on climate change and adaptation, restoration of biodiversity and skills training for complex negotiations. The eco-farm is managed by a small team of dedicated staff who receive funding from NASSA, church donations, the Commission on Climate Change (CCC) and the WWF.

During farm retreats, there is a heavy focus on practicing how to live a sustainable life by reducing one's demand on the natural environment. To achieve this, all participants sleep in tents outside, shower outdoors, eat locally grown organic food produced on-site, consume a vegetarian diet and practice recycling and conservation by reusing clothing, plates and

cutlery for all meals, and composting all unused items and food wastes. To keep energy consumption to a minimum there are no modern comforts like warm water, electricity, or cell reception allowing participants to fully engage in nature, avoiding all modern distractions. During the year, various retreats are open to clergy and the professed religious interested in building capacity to lead environmental causes at their local parishes or to support BECs.

During my time in the Philippines, the RCAM Ministry of Ecology was hosting the annual Youth Leadership Training for Climate Change on May 5 – 8th, held each year at the farm in Tagaytay City. With permission from the coordinator, I was able to attend the retreat, as a research-practitioner, to observe and participate in the work underway to promote sustainable living and education among youth in PCC (see Figure 6.1; Figure 6.2. and Figure 6.3).

Figure 6.1: Group Photo of 2013 Youth Leaders

(Photo credit: K. O'Callaghan 2013)

Every year, a call out is made to all Bishops, across the PCC network, inviting youth participants to attend the RCAM Youth Leadership Training for Climate Change, where they will learn about organic farming, recycling, ecological footprint analysis and how to live a

sustainable life through the teachings of the Catholic Church. The goal of the retreat is to train and empower youth leaders so that they will return to their parishes and inspire others to live a more sustainable lifestyle. During the retreat, efforts are made to take youth participants on nature walks, organize stargazing, instil sustainability principles – as well as to educate on the science of climate change, natural weather and climate disasters plaguing the Philippines and to inspire them with public speakers from the WWF, Greenpeace and other international NGOs who provide scientific data and research about the importance of sustainability on a wider scale. There is also a large spiritual component, where participants pray, sing and learn about the connections between ecology and living as stewards of Creation.

RCAM's Ministry of Ecology has a unique "hands-on" approach to learning that incorporates reflection, environmental awareness and advocacy for change. To date, the program has inspired over 40 parish ecology ministry coordinators, trained 50 parishes, 25 Catholic schools and gathered support for the Marikina Watershed Rejuvenation Program and the mangrove reforestation at Batangas City (L. Arsenio, personal communication, May 6, 2013).

Figure 6.3: Youth Learning About Ecosystems (photo credit: K. O'Callaghan 2013)

Figure 6.2: Youth Learning About Food Webs (photo credit: K. O'Callaghan 2013**)**

Aside from its impressive community events, workshops and the book published on eco-spirituality and climate change (Arsenio and Arsenio 2010), one of the most inspiring initiatives is the farm in Tagaytay where participants come together to learn about ecology, be inspired through eco-spirituality and plan and prepare for a sustainable future. Not only does this case study highlight the Ministry's sophisticated knowledge of ecology and

sustainable development, but it also reveals when Church hierarchy support environmental education and skills training, there is more cohesion to reach the Ministry's goals, less resistance to change and accountability on its leaders to harness creativity, at all ages, to make positive change for the environment.

6.2. Case Study Two*: The Anti-APECO Movement*

Since the 1970's the peaceful town of Casiguran, in the province of Aurora, has been targeted by the National Government to transform 12,292 hectares of the municipality into the Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority (APECO) (Cruz and Hansley 2012). Now destined as a "special economic zone", under the Republic Act No. 9490, the mandate of the National Government's APECO development is to transform Casiguran into an industrial, commercial, agro-industrial and financial centre that would bring employment, alleviate poverty and provide opportunities for public-private partnerships. However, in reality, the proposal would largely benefit Aurora's main political dynasty the Angara family (Fr. Talaban, personal communication, April 28, 2013).

According to Fr. Joefran Talaban, local farmers, fisher folk and indigenous families in Casiguran, whose livelihoods depend on the rich biodiversity in the area, are in conflict with this top-down development agenda because they believe the project will:

      (1) Cause up rootedness, dislocation and dispossession of farmers;

      (2) Threaten the natural resources;

      (3) Endanger the livelihood of locals;

      (4) Establish unequal bargaining powers when new labor forces are brought in;

      (5) Marginalize the poor who already experience barriers to social services;

      (6) Benefit the eco zone's investors like the Angara family and unscrupulous government brokers;

To aid in their struggle, Aurora's local church, the *Prelature of Infanta* viewed as, "the only institution entity capable of challenging the province's dominant political powers, particularly the Angara political family" (Cruz and Hansley 2012) has been instrumental in organizing and leading anti-APECO resistance marches since 2012 that identifies the concerns and demands of local residents, Indigenous Agta tribes and those living in this marginalized sector (see Figure 6.4; Figure 6.5; Figure 6.6).

Figure 6.4: The Philippine Catholic Church supporting affected locals of Casiguran

(Photo credit: C. Lim 2013)

In 2007, under the charismatic leadership of Bishop Julio Labayen, Bishop Rolando Tria Tirona and Fr. Jose Francisco Talaban (Fr. Joefran), the Church backed the Casiguran residents and formalized an anti-APECO movement. In taking opposition against the provincial government and the wealthy Angara family, patrons of illegal timber concessions in Aurora, the Church has continued to stand in solidarity with residents to challenge the elusive development and provide financial and logistical support to their resistance efforts (ibid).

My first experience meeting Fr. Joefran, parish priest of the *Prelature of Infanta*, came about when he and over 150 Casiguran residents appeared at *St. James the Apostle Church* in the middle of the night where I had been staying during my fieldwork. The marchers had walked from Aurora to Plaridel on foot, with plans to continue on-ward to Manila to stand outside the National Government offices to protest their land and livelihood rights. During this introduction, I learned about the movement – its history, mission and values, and volunteered with CSA to help feed the protesters and set-up areas for them to sleep outside on the Church compound. By relying on the financial and human resources of other parish priests and lay members, Fr. Joefran had successfully utilized his social capital and charisma to feed and provide shelter for his protesters ensuring a safe and comfortable journey to the capital. While in Manila, researching RCAM's Ministry of Ecology, I ran into Fr.

Joefran again and we chatted more about the movement and he passed along some books and reading materials to share the story and fight against the APECO enclave development.

Figure 6.5: Anti-APECO protesters with opposition banner

(Photo credit: B.Cupin 2013)

While the Catholic Church has been instrumental in getting this movement off the ground, Bishop Rolando has also successfully mobilized allied groups from national and international NGOs, church groups, BECs and foreign parishes, forming an international solidarity movement to fight for transparency in the APECO process and meaningful inclusion. The movement has gained support from various organizations and religious institutions summarized in Table 6.1.

Together, these participants have asserted their unity under the mission statement that, "APECO has scorned the basic right of communities throughout Casiguran and it has stripped those impacted of any voice and democratic control over the eco zone" (Cruz and Hansley 2012). Under this mission, the Anti-APECO movement has organized information sessions, protests and two successful marches to Manila to lobby for support from the national government (see Figure 2.6). A filmmaker Ditsi Carolino (2014) has also produced a documentary entitled, *The March to Progress in the Philippines* on the APECO's impacts on the Indigenous peoples of Casiguran to raise awareness about the issue and draw attention to ancestral land that is being threatened by the project.

Table 6.1: List of Individuals and Organisations Backing Anti-APECO

INDIVIDUALS

- Bp. Rolando Tria Tirona, Fr. Nilvon Villanueva, Fr. Eusebio Molde and other priests from the *Prelature of Infanta*
- Bp. Felix Gmur from the Diocese of Basel in Switzerland
- Fr. Ben Verberne of the Dutch Conference of the Religious
-

- Fr. Pete Montallana and Martin Francisco of the Save Sierre Madre Network Alliance Inc.
- Fr. Jose Francisco Talaban and the laity of *Nuestra Senora dela Salvacion Parish*

ORGANIZATIONS

- The Philippine National Government's Commission on Human Rights
- National Secretariat for Social Action
- The Save Sierra Madre Network Alliance Inc
- Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines
- Justice and Peace Action Group
- Bataris Formation Centre

- The Freedom Debt Coalition
- Pastoral Development Initiative
- Multi-Sectorial Action Group of Aurora
- The National Confederation of Small Farmers and Fisher's Organizations (PAKISAMA)
- The Board of the Swiss Catholic Lenten Fund

Although the controversial APECO development has not been resolved and the fate of Casiguran residents remains to be known, the anti-APECO movement has succeeded by advancing an alternative vision of development that reflects the voices and needs of those who live in the region.

Through consultation and listening to residents, farmers and the Indigenous Agta tribes, the solidarity movement has uncovered grassroots alternatives for sustainable development that focus on organic agricultural practices and community development that do not negatively impact the livelihood that Casiguran townsfolk have built up for generations (Fr. Talaban, personal communication, 2013, April 28 2013). For example, by working with PAKISAMA and the European Union-sponsored Philippine Farmers for Food Project (PFFP) the *Prelature of Infanta* has empowered Casiguran residents to build organic seed banks, master aquaculture techniques and sustainable rice production that has enhanced productivity while preserving the town's natural resources.

Figure 6.6: Casiguran residents protesting APECO development

(Photo credit: C. Lim 2013)

In building the residents trust, the local Church has also worked on other initiatives such as a community-based forestry and tree nursery projects, an Agta Health Centre that combines modern and traditional healing methods, and the Tribal Centre for Development's "Central Agta School" for over 75 Agta children that employ teaching techniques specifically designed to meet their traditional needs, which were not being addressed in public schools. Although small, these are powerful examples showing how local parish priests have gained the trust and commitment of residents by listening to their demands and searching for alternatives with and not for those involved. It also showed that the residents of Casiguran were not "anti-development" but that they sought development alternatives that could balance natural beauty with agricultural productivity.

The mobilizing power of the Bishops and the strong leadership of the *Prelature of Infanta's* parish priest in Casiguran have been crucial in disseminating knowledge, gathering human resources and involving all stakeholders in decisions that affect their future. In gathering support both nationally and internationally, the anti-APECO movement made waves across the country eliciting support from a variety of public and private institutions, FBOs and CSOS who shared compassion for the Casiguran people in their fight against the proposed top-down development. Aside from bringing together a group of residents with a variety of voices, a feat in itself, the anti-APECO movement presented an alternative form of development, reflective of the local context and particular needs of Aurora's residents. Even though no decision has been made on the APECO development, the anti-APECO

movement succeeded in its fight for equity, participation and rootedness. That proves, the local Church has the strength, the institutional support for environmental causes, as well as the time and energy to take on large-scale development issues.

6.3. Case Study Three*: The Diocese of Malolos Jubilee Housing Subdivision*

To address the urban housing needs of informal settlers, living in the disaster prone Angat River region, Fr. Dennis Espejo, a local parish priest from the Diocese of Malolos, partnered with Caritas Australia to secure land and funding for a housing subdivision in Plaridel, Bulacan. In 2010, the Jubilee Housing Subdivision (JHS) was created providing low-barrier housing to families in Plaridel and Paombong, as well as those displaced from typhoon Ondoy in the village of Villalus and Marilao (see Figure 6.7).

Figure 6.7: Jubilee Housing Subdivision

(Photo credit: K. O'Callaghan 2013)

By relocating the displaced individuals to JHS, a Christogram for Jesus Christ, the project aided both the local and provincial government in providing safe and quality shelter, disaster prevention, and waste management along the bio-sensitive areas near the Angat River (I. Samson, personal communication April 27, 2013). Receiving no government subsidy or

financial support from the province and municipality, the fifteen million pesos required to finance the project came from parish donations, private investors, a loan from the Land Bank of the Philippines, local support from the St. James Parish Council, volunteer work from St. Paul's College, CSA and the support of Caritas Australia, who provided architects, builders and local volunteers for the construction phase (D. Espejo, personal communication, April 19, 2013). There are now 150 families living in JHS with plans for expansion underway to include a mixed-use housing addition, a tourism park and recreational green space to project the riverbanks from encroachment.

According to Fr. Dennis, the purposeful design of JHS required working closely with foreign architects to ensure the housing site reflected the Filipino's preferences for shared accommodations, communal spaces for playing basketball, for enjoying fiestas and a central church for attending mass. This was also done to ensure that residents would find the accommodations useful, reflective of Filipino cultural traditions and welcoming. In addition to the architectural features, the housing site features a sustainable livelihood component that employs residents at various positions in the bakery, daycare, clinic, handicraft shop and organic farm (see Figure 6.8), with the stated goal of empowering residents to work so that they can pay off their monthly amortizations and eventually own their home in JHS.

Figure 6.8: Organic Farm at Jubilee Housing Subdivision

(Photo credit: K. O'Callaghan 2013)

Recognizing the important link between health, employment and housing, Fr. Dennis ensured that all residents moving to JHS attended four compulsory weekend long seminars

for their social preparation and job training. With the help of St. Paul's College, students, enrolled in the social work program, assisted Fr. Dennis and CSA staff with job training and discussions on the housing project's concept, and on rules and regulations to every beneficiary. As members of the JHS community, the themes of discipline and education were considered core elements and the individuals moving in were required to get married and have their children baptized under the Church. Adults were expected to restrain from alcohol and drug consumption, abstinence from sex, if not for the purposes of procreation, and attend regular mass on Sunday (Figure 6.9). Children living in JHS were also put under a curfew and required to attend school, catechism classes and volunteer with parish activities (F. Francisco, personal communication, April 26, 2013).

Figure 6.9: Jubilee Housing Subdivision Parish Church and Community Space

(Photo credit: K. O'Callaghan 2013)

To ensure compliance, CSA staff complete random check-ins with residents to ensure they are showing up for work, paying their rent and complying with the rules. While supporting individuals through skills training, financial support and empowerment to own a home, the Jubilee housing site is also deeply rooted in Catholic teachings, values and core principles suggesting Catholic conversion is a key principle driving the project. While not palatable for everyone because of the strict pre-requisites, heavy focus on discipline and inherent conversion goals, the lessons learned and the ideas emerging from JHS do present an alternative approach to housing that is rooted in sustainable development through its livelihood components, affordability and social connectedness. However, it is important to acknowledge that while CSA has been transparent about the strict policies of JHS, individuals may only agree to the rules as a way to secure housing, since many are in living in positions of vulnerability and have limited choices to provide safe and clean shelter for their families. To that point, one must be cautious in replicating similar faith-led housing developments if they reflect ulterior motives and perpetuate unequal power and class dynamics.

Nevertheless, under these circumstances, the project surpassed expectations and became a shining example of how one parish priest was able to mobilize his networks and resources to finance and construct an entire subdivision with 250 homes and a livelihood component. The project also had indirect impacts such as improving informal settlers victimization by the local government and strengthened their sense of belongingness and environmental awareness. Since the success of JHS, some staff at the municipal government maintain a view that because the Church is already doing a good job running its own housing program, with the support of local donations, investment monies, and foreign aid, it does not require financial support from the government (D. Espejo, personal communication, April 17, 2013). Unfortunately, this attitude creates a "hands-off" approach leaving the responsibility up to the Church to care for the urban poor. There are also some municipal staff however, who see the successful JHS project as a model that the municipal government should have been able to emulate or replicate on its own. On the one hand, these views reveal that the government in Bulacan views the Church as a trusted and stable entity that can alleviate the pressure to provide affordable housing and employment. But on the other, it also suggests that the government lacks the funding and political will to do so themselves and are more than happy to leave it up to the Church to provide affordable housing alternatives.

6.4. Case Study Four*: The Save Sierra Madre Mountains Alliance Inc.

The Sierra Madre Mountain Range is of national importance for the Philippines providing a total of 1.4 million hectares of forest, making it the biggest forested area in the northern island of Luzon and home to an array of biodiversity including 3,500 plant species and 68 nationally protected areas (D.Dadivas, personal communication, May 8, 2013). The Sierra Madre Mountain Range supports major dam projects in Magat, Casecnan, Pantabangan, Angat, La Mesa and Caliraya-Botocan that irrigate farmlands in Central Luzon and the Cagayan Valley. It provides Manila residents with water and electricity and serves as a watershed of the Pasig River and the Laguna de Bay. However, loose enforcement and weak environmental policies have opened it up as a breeding ground for large-scale industrial logging, small scale timber harvesting, unregulated burning, mining operations and severe threats from unsustainable agricultural practices (Save Sierra Madre Network Alliance Inc. 2012).

The biggest threat to the Sierra Madres Mountain Range is deforestation due to profit-driven industries that are diminishing the forest cover in the Philippines, by approximately 20,000 to 35,000 cu. m of wood per year (Van der Ploeg, Van Weerd, Masipiquena and Persoon 2011). According to Fr. Pete Montallana, founder *of* the *Save Sierre Madre Network Alliance Inc.* (SSMNA), the primary and secondary forests play an important role in minimizing the impacts of typhoons, floods and other natural disasters since the mountain range is able to shield much of Luzon from the Pacific Ocean. But due to rampant deforestation and logging, as well as, dam, landfill and garbage dump projects, the area is under severe environmental stress putting residents living near or along the mountain range at risk to the impacts of climate change and natural disasters (Save Sierra Madre Network Alliance Inc. 2012).

 In 2011, Fr. Peter Montallana, established SSMNA, which is an environmental coalition that brings together concerned laity, a variety of indigenous members from the Dumagat, Agta, Bugkalot, Gaddang, Ibanag, Itawes, Isinai, Yogad, Remontados, Iwak, Palananum and Malauegs tribes, local community members, environmentalists and CSOs concerned about the protection and preservation of the Sierra Madre Mountain region. Table 6.2. shows the partners and organizations that back the alliance.

The members of SSMNA are united in their mission under the following four areas, which include: (1) condemning corruption within the Department of Environment and Natural

Resources (DENR); (2) preventing the privatization of forests and water reservoirs; (3) protesting the removal of indigenous peoples from their ancestral domains and (4) preventing the further loss of biodiversity in the rich rainforest region (D.Dadivas, personal communication, May 6, 2013). To act on these key areas, members routinely report illegal deforestation activities, raise awareness about harmful natural resource extraction through public education and seminars with government officials and private industry, organize environmental conferences, train and mobilize mass action, write articles about constitutional change, public speak at schools, blog and lobby for green bills and policy change (ibid).

Table 6.2. Member and Partner Organisations in Support of SSMNA

<u>**MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS**</u>

- Ecowaste coalition
- Franciscan Missionaries of Mary Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (FMMJPIC)
- Franciscan Movement Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (FMJPIC)
- Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (SFIC)
- Great Work Movement
- Green Convergence
- Green Hope
- Greenresearch Environmental Research Group (Greenresearch ERG)
- Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (JPICC-AMRSP)
- Multi Sectoral Action Group (MSAG) Aurora
- Tribal Center Development (TCD)

- Order of Friar Minors Conventual Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (OFMConJPIC)
- Order of Friar Minors Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (OFM JPIC)
- Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka (PAKISAMA)
- Public Education and Awareness Campaign for the Environment (PEACE), Miriam College
- Sagip Sierra Madre Environmental Society Inc. (SSMESI)
- Samahan nh mga Katutubong Agta na Ipinagtatanggol at Binabaka ang Lupaing Ninuro (SABIGIN LN)
- Social Action Centre – Diocese of Antipolo
- Task Force Sierra Madre (TFSM)

<u>**PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**</u>

- Faith Based Congress Against Immoral Debts (FCAID)
- PEACE Foundation Inc
- Philippine Alliance of Ex-Seminarians (PAX)

- Haribon Foundation
- Noble Blue Falcons International
- Tanggol Kalikasan

To date, SSMNA has received national recognition for its efforts in managing complex negotiations that bring together a variety of stakeholders with a vested interest in the

preservation of the region. On September 26th 2011, the anniversary of typhoon Ondoy, President Benigno Aquino III honoured the group by declaring a "Save Sierra Madre Day", through Proclamation No. 233 (Calleja 2011). While great for raising awareness, political efforts such as these are often more tokenistic than achieving real policy change and action to keep the DENR in check. To ensure continued support, the SSNMA continues to push for change and challenge large-scale mining, loan-financed mega projects, privatization and the DENR to uphold and protect the rights of indigenous peoples and the local communities who are affected by development.

In addition, SSNMA has cross-collaborated and given support for other environmental movements such as the Ore Asia Mining in Barangay Camachin, Dona Remedios Trinidad in Bulacan, the Aurora-Pacific Economic Zone and Free Ports Authority (APECO) and the Marikina Watershed. By working in partnership, SSNMA has been able to gather a large following of supporters and create tangible action items that reflect a collaborative governance model that puts lives first and profits second.

The Sierra Madre Mountain Range is one of the Philippines' most precious natural resources. Under the leadership and coordination of various PCC leaders, parish priests, lay members and the professed religious, efforts have been made to preserve and raise awareness about the harmful impacts that mining, logging and quarrying are having on the environment. Through their efforts, the SSMNA has strengthened the commitment of local residents in maintaining the natural environment, established long-term partnerships with various organizations and institutions at the local level including progressive government officials, who can monitor and support the coalition, address corruption within the DENR and work with local residents to provide alternative and sustainable livelihood programs for income. This coalition is an excellent example of how the PCC is working inside and outside of the state, to condemn and rally support against indiscriminate mining and logging activities that are being pursued by elites and rich concessionaires. It is also an example of the Church's mobility to respond to environmental causes while the government experiences political pressure to industrialize and turn a blind eye to poor environmental regulation that benefits the controllers.

6.5. A Defining Moment for Church-Government Collaboration

While the four case studies presented in this chapter only represent a small portion of the PCC's involvement in environmental advocacy and management, they have illuminated some important findings for this research. Some of the potential opportunities that these studies highlight are that the Catholic Church in the Philippines, both internally and externally, has proven its capacity to galvanize financial and human resources for building education centres, providing affordable housing, organizing large-scale political demonstrations on a consistent and long-term basis, supporting livelihood programs, training and professionalization as well as building trust amongst its members.

As evident in all four examples, it is clear that charismatic Church leadership plays a key role in championing local causes and utilizing networks of reciprocity and social capital. On a gendered note, while the majority of examples capture the work of male leaders, I want to point out that Lou Arsenio is a former nun and the coordinator of the RCAM Ministry of Ecology. While Lou faces additional barriers as a female within a largely male dominated organization, she is a shining example of a competent and capable role model within the PCC. Her work at the Ministry, especially the programs focusing on empowering local women through handicrafts and sustainable livelihoods suggest the need to further explore the work of Catholic nuns and sister organizations across the Church network to capture examples of the PCC's work in environmental advocacy through a gendered lens.

From the various case studies, it is also clear that these environmental advocacy and management initiatives are not occurring in a vacuum. In most cases, the initiatives and coalitions have garnered support and partnership from other parishes and diocese, also doing similar work, across the Philippines and elsewhere in the world. In working in solidarity with one another, the PCC has recognized the benefits of collaboration, of strong communication and of offering support at both the local, national and international level for making change and fostering innovation. This recognition has immense potential for collaborative watershed management because many of the issues attending collaborative relationships relate to fragmentation among LGUs, a lack of communication regarding development practices that negatively affect local communities and poor collaboration on education campaigns and initiatives.

In thinking about constraints to collaborative relationships, the four case studies suggest that

there is a deeply rooted and historically acrimonious relationship between the PCC, the National Government and political dynasties in the Philippines. Whether through the disregard of the Sierra Madre Mountains, the bio-sensitive Angat River or the bountiful town of Casiguran in Aurora, there is evidence that the elites who control the Philippine National and local governments are less concerned about long-term sustainable development and more concerned with short-term economic profits. Although there have been moments where local, provincial and national politicians support the work of the Catholic Church by showing up at events, signing petitions or declaring a "Save Sierra Madre Day", the efforts to make substantial policy and legislative change are limited and leave much to be desired.

The Philippine State and various Governments of course are not monolithic and may not speak in a united voice in the course of policy-making. Often, political opposition members who sit in the House of Representative, or provincial and local councils may align themselves with critical elements within the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church itself is often beset with internal debates amongst its most conservative and progressive members. But, on the whole, there remain tensions between the Church and State when it comes to environmental issues and sustainable development visions. Rather than positioning the Catholic Church as being against the government, which is neither useful nor productive, it is best to view the Church as a key stakeholder that can share its experience, knowledge, social capital and resources to support a sustainable development vision that is beneficial and reflective of community values, and with the greatest potential for reducing environmental deterioration, particularly in regions such as the Angat River Basin.

Chapter Seven: Analysis of the Philippine Catholic Church's Role in Environmental Advocacy and Management

7.1. Introduction to Major Themes from the Findings

This chapter seeks to explore the main themes and ideas that emerged from the data in San Rafael and Plaridel, participant observation data and case-studies in Chapter Six, to demonstrate the Diocese of Malolos in developing local partnerships to address the Angat River Basin's sustainability, governance and management. In doing so, this chapter reconnects the data to literature on FBOs and watershed partnership and offers an assessment of where the Church in the Philippines can best be integrated as a partner to provide new and exciting way to think about, use, and manage precious water resources in the Philippines.

7.2. Providing Leadership to Inspire and Motivate

Data findings reveal that while religious organizations are primarily concerned with spiritual affairs, many local parish priests and the professed religious also play an important role inspiring others, within their web of influence, to care for the needy, to find common ground, and build trust for sustainable development initiatives. These findings are consistent with IWRM literature documenting the importance of 'strong leaders', 'change agents' or 'environmental champions' to galvanize resources, provide inspiration for change management, broker exchanges for resource sharing, and implement policy mandates (Floress, Prokopy and Broussard 2011; Kootnz and Newig 2014). However, the respondents in this research clearly identified that this is not just any leadership, as leadership styles and characteristics can vary, but a transformational type of grassroots leadership rooted in a desire to inspire change from below. Whether through community organizing, financing projects, or mobilizing efforts for disaster-relief, these transformational religious leaders were described, by lay and municipal officials, as being: (1) enthusiastic about driving change, having a "vision"; (2) going out of their way to listen to the concerns and voices of others, especially the vulnerable; and (3) being adept at exercising influence, delegating authority, and providing training and capacity-building to empower Christians and people of good faith throughout the process.

Based on this information, what lessons can be drawn from these leaders when developing local partnerships? Is there a way to determine what makes leaders so "transformational?" and if some clergy and professed religious possess these traits, why not all?

In light of these findings, it is useful to recall how Vatican II has played an important role shaping the PCC's transition into a "Church of the Poor" (Dionisio 2011: 5). While social activism had been a common practice for the PCC, prior to Vatican II, a combination of support from Pope John Paul II and the modernistic nature of the global movement also had a profound impact on CBCP hierarchy to move towards a decentralized Church structure. This is evident through the many social programs like NASSA, AMRSP, BECs, DACs and CSAs established during this period that continue, in present time, to provide funding and support for grassroots initiatives that stand in solidarity with the poor (Moreno 2006; Dionisio 2011). Throughout this transition from a top-down to a bottom-up religious institution, changes within the PCC inspired a generation of clergy and professed religious to live among the poor, walk in their shoes and champion local causes, which undoubtedly shaped environmental leaders like Fr. Dennis, Lou Arsenio, Fr. Joefran and Fr. Pete, who put communities and their needs at the centre of their work.

In thinking about the benefits of effective leadership for local partnerships, one must also consider the potential risks (see Lyons, Walters and Riddell 2015). In relying too heavily on the impressive transformational leadership of clergy, it overlooks lay members who offer their volunteer time, resources and "gifts", which go hand-in-hand with the success of these leaders. As we saw in both San Rafael and Plaridel, lay members recognized the crucial role they played in the daily functions of the social and liturgical activities, within their churches, and knew they were often the ones responsible for knowledge transfer and continuation of programming after parish re-assignments. A majority of lay respondents also recognize that priests and the professed religious relied on them for their volunteer time and active participation but also for delivering appropriate outcomes since they had lived in the target community for an extended period of time.

In overstating the value of clergy and the professed religious it jeopardizes some of the gains made from Vatican II by reinforcing patron-client relations, devaluing the status and role of lay people, inflating personal egos, and creating a system of dependency between local communities and their spiritual guides. Cartagenas (2010) aptly pointed out that the PCC struggles to achieve radical social transformation because many, within the Church

hierarchy, prefer to operate in the traditional authoritarian framework, whereby the parishioners are the sheep and the clergy are the shepherds. As we think about moving towards a partnership model for the Angat River Basin, it will be important to recognize the divisions within the Diocese of Malolos institution and attempt to reconcile the differences between transactional leaders and those who have adopted a more decentralized and horizontal approach to their work, as well as how transformational leadership translates into positive action for lay members.

Further to that point, the real judge of character will be whether transformational leaders at the Diocese of Malolos can accept and support 'emergent leaders', within the church community. According to Northouse (2013), emergent leaders are individuals who acquire leadership over a period of time, through communication and being informed, and are then empowered to exert their own influence to drive environmental leadership and processes (ibid:8). A potential avenue for this to play out would be through the BECs that provide localized opportunities for community members to come together to address social issues in the neighbourhood, exercise their civic rights, build social capital and strengthen Christian values through prayer and service (Moreno 2006), which have yet to take off in the Diocese of Malolos, unlike other regions of the Philippines. Fortunately, under Pope Francis, climate change and environmental conservation discussions are commonly promoted through encyclicals, speeches and through his Holiness's presence at the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris (COP21), suggesting a "now or never" urgency to act. This commitment from the highest level of authority within the Roman Catholic Church undeniably confirms that the PCC, like others within the global Catholic community, will have a moral obligation to provide leadership and action on climate change at both the grass tops and grassroots of the institution and follow through with their eco-spiritual commitments.

7.3. Liaison between Government and Community for Environmental Awareness and Advocacy

Similar to Sheikh's (2006) study on Islamic Imams in Western Pakistan, the Diocese of Malolos has proven capacity, through years of community organizing and building trust, to serve as community liaisons between LGUs and local residents. Bound by Catholic social teachings, clergy and the professed religious have an innate responsibility to improve dialogue among the faithful and enhance coordination (*Mediator dei* 1947). Because of this, municipal officers and laity recognize the benefits of harnessing the Diocese of Malolos'

influence, strong communication skills, income-generating potential, extensive community networks and physical church structure for information dissemination, especially during homilies. According to the respondents, homilies spoken during mass were viewed as the most effective medium to share information about environmental concerns, instil discipline, provide updates on upcoming river clean-ups and on-going campaigns from the government, such as, waste ordinances, plastic bag taxes and the Philippine National Government's Manila Bay Clean-Up initiative.

While homilies are a step in the right direction to deliver important environmental information they should only be considered as the first phase of a much deeper partnership strategy for the Angat River Basin. During the interviews, many municipal officers expressed limitations as to why they struggled to engage the public and address fragmentation, which included: (1) being disconnected to the communities where they work, (3) poor turnouts at Barangay meetings, (4) limited resources both financial and human, and (5) the inability to effectively connect with the poor and hard to reach. Yet, it was surprising that a majority of municipal respondents did not offer other suggestions beyond capitalizing on religious leaders networks to share information through flyer distribution and homilies during mass.

Drawing from the four case studies and responses from San Rafael and Plaridel, the capacity of the Diocese of Malolos to serve as liaisons between the local government in Bulacan and the community, is currently being underutilized. Since we know that municipal officials are under-resourced to engage residents, and that mechanisms for public consultation are either weak or non-existent, there are greater opportunities for clergy and the professed religious to deliver appropriate outcomes for local communities that can strengthen democracy and improve water governance. For example, many clergy and the professed religious are able to support communities spiritually, emotionally and physically by helping them to (1) understand and make pleas for legislative changes that reflect local realities; (2) get involved in monitoring and the enforcement of local ordinances; (3) finance local campaigns through donations and volunteer efforts; (4) lend community spaces for dialogue and planning, and (5) facilitate action for the environment through the promotion of eco-spirituality. Through these efforts, the Diocese of Malolos could improve the democracy nexus by strengthening civic capacity in the Bulacan region, attain good governance objectives and reduce the financial burden on municipal budgets.

However, the reality is that this can only happen, if and when, the local government is willing to make serious change and a commitment to address the sustainability of the Angat River Basin. Currently, the lack of political will among certain parties and politicians stagnates efforts to engage the community in more meaningful and authentic discussions about how to address river basin management and fragmentation with other municipalities. As a result, efforts to inform, consult and engage the public are tokenistic and focused on one-way levels of communication that do little to understand the 'wicked' problems of the Angat River, which include a history of chronic policy failures. We know from the CWP literature that government support of and active involvement in collaborative partnerships have shown to foster successful sustainable outcomes (Chaffin et al 2015: 62). State agencies serve as catalysts who define group issues, build trust, legitimize the process, provide necessary technical information and help groups with funding and investment priorities (ibid; Leach and Pelkey 2001; Koontz and Moore 2004). Thus, an authentic commitment from LGUs to preserve the sustainability of the Angat River now, and for future generations, is required. If not, the efforts of clergy and the professed religious to liaise with the community through basic information dissemination will fall short of meaningful action and simply preach to deaf ears.

7.4. Bridging Gaps with Political Acuity

Based on the historical legacy of the Catholic Church and its deep-rooted ties to nationalism, independence and authoritarianism, the PCC's familiarity and comfort with government politics and political nuances is run-of-the-mill. In many ways, knowing how to navigate bureaucratic systems, its own, and across the three-tiers of Philippine government has become a required competency of clergy and the professed religious. To that point, many church leaders have cultivated a strong sense of political acuity (Daniel and Rose 1991). According to the Canadian Government Executive (2015), there are five steps to cultivating political acuity: 1) understanding formal structures and processes; 2) understanding informal processes; 3) understanding environmental factors – climate and culture; 4) understanding personalities and organizational politics; 5) understanding political factors and underlying issues (Constantinou 2015). As evidenced by the "People's Power Revolution" and the case studies in Chapter Six, the PCC has advanced expertise in cultivating and exercising political acuity given their central role in development and welfare provision. Not only are priests and the professed religious effective in navigating choppy water with professionalism, but they are successful in reading between the lines, tapping into informal power networks to

achieve their goals and objectives, adept at identifying compromises, detecting motivation and digging deeper into "why things are, the way they are".

Unlike other CSOs, which are foreign or local, the Church in the Philippines benefits from an inside track within government because of the intensity of religious adherence among public servants who profess the Catholic faith (Clarke 2013). In some countries, this would raise alarm bells, but within the Asia-Pacific region, it is more common for religious professionals to be transparent about their values, especially when the enculturation of religious beliefs is so deeply engrained, as it is in the Philippines, into the social and political fabric of the country (ibid: 341). In the Philippines, is it also not uncommon for politicians to actively and publicly seek out Church leaders for their advice on policy issues, blessings and endorsements during elections, or to gain their approval on controversial infrastructure or social developments. This suggests an entanglement of Catholicism with daily life. However, due to such an advantageous position, the PCC, including the Diocese of Malolos, knows how to wield their influence to "beat around the bush", connect dots and get things done, which can be a positive impact in light of pressing environmental concerns that need immediate attention.

7.5. Finding God in Darkness: Living a Life of Christlikeness

As the Philippine National Government continues to pursue a regime of "environmental managerialism" (Escobar 1995:194) to preserve "capital" and protect elite interests, it has become crucial for other stakeholders, such as the PCC, and its local diocesan networks to step-in to provide environmental planning that is strategic, effective in building partnerships and creative in managing influence and negotiations that seek to preserve sacred water resources. In the face of adversity, one way the PCC has responded is through the promotion of its Catholic social teachings that prioritize the embodiment of Christian values, such as compassion, forgiveness and living in harmony with nature. In drawing on biblical examples and religious-based themes, a common practice across the FBO literature (Cochrane 2013; Moyer et al; 2014; Tyndale 2006); the Diocese of Malolos, and wider PCC, has been able to encourage participation for environmental concerns and unlock individuals' personal and collective power for large-scale campaigns like the Anti-APECO movement and the Save Sierra Madre Alliance Inc. In the interviews, this promotion of Christian values was often referred by the respondents as, "becoming Christ like" or living in a life of Christlikeness, which implies all faithful (e.g. clergy, professed and lay) should strive to think,

feel, and do as Jesus Christ would, when facing earthly experiences, such as corruption, disproportionate economic development, bribery and unethical rule of law and overcoming them with grace and compassion.

In seeing the light through dark situations, the PCC recognizes that responding to those in need is more important than delaying on ethical grounds and understands that the relationship between themselves and local politicians requires negotiation, finding compromises and knowing when to pick battles. That said, the relationship is not always grey, and can sometimes be black or white, as the case with the controversial *Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act* of 2012 (Republic Act No, 10354), where the PCC took direct opposition to the government's efforts to provide accessible birth control (Ruiz Austria 2004; David 2003). In these cases, the confluence of the Universal Church and its deeply engrained values about the sanctity of life, shape and to a certain degree define the PCC stance on these issues. However, for the most part, clergy and the professed religious use the Catholic theology to accept the faults and differences of politicians, community residents, informal settlers, elites and rich concessionaires and continues to work with them, instead of opposing or working against them, to show compassion and how to live a life of Christlikeness. In this way, clergy within the PCC serve as a moral high ground for Filipinos to "look-up to", to be inspired, and to choose, for themselves, whether or not to live out the social teachings of the Catholic Church.

Recalling an earlier point, while lay members do look up to their priests for guidance, it is important not to over-state their influence because it takes agency away from individuals who experience a personal spirituality with God. According to basic Christian theology, true believers of Christianity follow Scripture and try to mimic the life of Jesus Christ, not the teachings of the parish priest. Therefore, it is not surprising that respondents in San Rafael and Plaridel claimed that they worked to serve God, not other people. Although effective leadership helps motivate and inspire, Catholic Filipinos have a personal and spiritual relationship with God that commits them to do their best as a way to be thankful and appreciative of God's gifts and blessings. While some respondents believed that in serving God, it brought them closer to Him and his ideals for a compassionate world, others believed it would "get them into heaven" or allow them to "atone" for their sins. Regardless of the reason, this personal motivation guided them to take an active role in Church activities and is important for understanding motivation, particularly for watershed partnerships, as to why

lay members volunteer, how parish re-assignments impact a community and how the faithful "overlook" bad behaviour since many believe that an individual's soul will undergo judgement upon descending into Heaven – a firmly held belief in the Catholic tradition, not specific to the Philippines. Without a deeper background in Catholic theology, these queries are largely beyond the scope of this analysis, but provide important and useful direction and explorations for future research.

7.6. Connecting Local Livelihoods with Sustainable Development

The value of partnerships for IWRM objectives are that they bring together a diverse group of stakeholders to discuss and negotiate competing uses of water, to strengthen democratic ideals, to transcend jurisdictional boundaries and to undertake a sector-wide approach to water issues such as nonpoint source pollution (Hardy and Koontz 2008; Leach 2006; Hardy 2010). While these partnerships may require many meetings and demand more time by all involved, they have immense potential to foster legitimacy in the decision-making process and facilitate trust between members (Mandarano and Paulsen 2011; Taylor and De Loe 2012). Based on this description, the mainstream understanding of CWPs presents some challenges within the Philippine context. First, it assumes that the mechanisms for engagement are readily available to all affected stakeholders. Second, it implies that stakeholders understand what engagement is. Third, it implies that all stakeholders have equal amounts of free time to participate in decision-making for the watershed.

In Bulacan, it was identified that some of the key stakeholders, including: farmers, fisher folk and informal settlers lacked additional time to voice their concerns about the Angat River and offer valuable feedback for decision-making processes. It was also noted that certain individuals, who are not legal citizens, faced additional barriers to participation because they have been socially constructed as "undisciplined" and excluded on the basis of their race and income disparity. This is worrisome, as many of these individuals have a key stake in the sustainability of the Angat River, since their livelihoods depend on the health and quality of the water. Furthermore, a majority of these individuals are also the hardest hit by top-down policies that impact farming practices, drought re-directions and discussions around conservation easement along the riverbanks, suggesting their seat "at the table" is crucial for a successful partnership (Sarkissian, Hofer, Shore, Vajda and Wilkinson 2009).

Fortunately, from the data we can infer that similar to the World Bank's "Voices of the Poor" report, Filipinos in places of high vulnerability and low public trust, place higher degrees of confidence in their religious leaders. Therefore, the Diocese of Malolos can offer valuable contributions in reaching out to these vulnerable populations by listening to their concerns, representing their values, and defending their rights among politicians and key decision-makers. Since the Diocese of Malolos recognizes the vital aspects of poverty, beyond income levels, such as vulnerability to climate change, social exclusion and the importance of sustainable livelihoods – as evident in the Jubilee Housing Subdivision case study, they are an ideal stakeholder who can ensure that livelihood and sustainable development are included in the government's plans and long-term vision for the Angat River so as to not undermine local economies and job security.

7.7. Summary: A Recipe for Partnership

Setting up a partnership for the Angat River Basin is similar to baking a cake. There are certain things required, such as key ingredients - stakeholders, the right political temperature and the perfect institutional timing for the best results. Given that watershed partnerships should reflect diverse interests and should be approached from the cultural context of the community, in which they operate, there is no denying that the Diocese of Malolos can play a stronger role in supporting local government in Bulacan to develop partnerships to address the sustainability, governance and management of the Angat River Basin. As key stakeholders, clergy and the professed religious have capacity and experience to be positive role models in their communities, by leading and empowering local residents to care and take an active part in the environment.

In terms of temperature, Lubell (2004) contends that the formation of watershed partnerships is not applicable everywhere and although partnerships present one possible solution, among many needed, they should only be considered when the comparative advantages outweigh the costs of command and control institutions, such as government agencies, who have failed to resolve water issues on their own. Drawing on what we know from the data and the work of academics at BulSU, DLSU and planners at the PPDO, to support LGUs in adopting more collaborative governance approaches, the current climate seems to suggest that there is a desire in Bulacan to explore and expand watershed partnerships that bring stronger stakeholder engagement and a broader spectrum of participation. Lastly, due to the institutional support from Pope Francis, to address

environmental concerns and pressing climate-change realities, the institutional timing for a watershed partnership has aligned for the PCC, specially the Diocese of Malolos, to respond to Pope Francis's call by engaging individuals in discussions about uneven development practices, smart growth and sustainable planning for the Angat River Basin.

In combination of all three factors, the potential prospects of partnership development to address the wicked problems of the Angat River Basin are positive and hopeful. I want to reemphasize the words "potential", as this research and data collection were exploratory and remain in Stage Six, of Checkland's model, whereby the researcher goes between reality and perceived reality, formulating new ideas about possibilities and perspectives as a way to get closer to a vision that is systemically desirable and culturally feasible for the respondents.

As part of the SSHRC research project, the findings from this research have contributed to identifying and analyzing systems of relationships between the local government, the Catholic Church and the local community in two river-fronting towns San Rafael and Plaridel, as well as illuminated case studies where the PCC has already proven its capacity to provide effective and successful environmental advocacy and management. More specifically the findings have generated new knowledge about where the Diocese of Malolos can add-value through transformational leadership, serving as liaisons, bridging gaps with political acuity, living a life of Christlikeness and connecting local livelihoods with sustainable development that provide new lines of thinking, future cycles of learning and understanding for strengthening inter-jurisdictional governance for watershed sustainability and climate-change adaptation.

Chapter Eight: Working Towards a Healthy Angat River Basin, Future Recommendations and Concluding Remarks

In this last chapter, I will discuss how the research on the PCC and the Diocese of Malolos improves an understanding of FBOs and their important role in understanding a people, place and its history, as well as, present some new lines of thinking about and engaging with FBO literature. I will then provide some recommendations based off the findings from the participants and end with some closing remarks.

8.1. Research Contributions: Getting Over the "Religion" Factor

> The world of official science and the nation-state is not only destroying soils and silting up lakes, it is freezing the imagination …we have to see the Bruntland report as a form of published illiteracy and say a prayer for the energy depleted and the forests lost in publishing the report. And finally, a little prayer, an apology to the tree that supplied the paper for this document. Thank you, tree (Visvanathan 1991: 384).

Rather than condemn the blurred lines between Church-State relations that exist in the Philippines, it is best to examine how their church-democracy nexus reflects a distinct Filipino approach to development. To date, because of perceived divisions between sacred and secular realms of society, there remains little discussion in planning and development literature around the important role religion and spirituality has played in shaping ethnic identity, political culture, and the moral consciousness of citizens because the dominate discourse reflects the historical and cultural processes of colonizing countries (Deneulin and Rakodi 2011). At best, there is acknowledgement of the role that religion plays in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (Clarke and Ware 2015; Clarke 2007; Deneulin and Rakodi 2011) providing service delivery after decentralization policies rolled back the state (Bradley 2009; Jeavons 1998; Sider and Unruh 2004), and the rise of Islam in public space that is far too often associated with violence (Aijazi 2010; Clarke 2006; James 2009). However, in taking contextual approaches to the significance of religion and its institutions, particularly for environmental advocacy and management, there remain untapped opportunities to generate culturally appropriate and feasible solutions for technical and complex problems.

Since Catholicism plays an influential role shaping thought and motivation to act in the Philippines, I felt it was necessary to explore, as a research-practitioner and member of the

SSHRC project, a deepened understanding of the PCC, specifically the Diocese of Malolos, and its capacity for environmental advocacy and strengthening inter-jurisdictional governance for the Angat River Basin. As one of the largest Catholic populations outside the Vatican, the PCC holds immense potential for addressing fragmented government policy and weak decentralization efforts, if given the right leadership and room for collaboration. While the findings mirror many areas of FBO literature previously documented by academics since the research shows that the Diocese of Malolos can offer support for information dissemination, capacity for engagement, support during times of turmoil and using its political acuity to get things done quickly and in meaningful ways, it does present some new and interesting findings.

For one, the research captures the role of FBOs in the Philippines who are working on watershed planning and environmental services thereby making connections with applied science disciplines such as urban planning and IWRM, which often exclude any discussion of religion or religious organizations in their work. In bridging the fields together, this research facilitates more understanding in the sciences about the important role of religion and religious institutions and how FBOs can be engaged in sharing responsibility for technical information, infrastructure and resources that ultimately moves away from rationalist thinking that relegates religion to the private sphere.

Two, it digs deeper into understanding the institutional power dynamics, both vertical and horizontal, within the PCC that shape and motive action. As the case studies point out, there are unique power subtleties, within the Philippine Church between hierarchy at the CBCP level, and among the various bishops, across the diocesan network. There are also power dynamics between bishops, clergy and professed religious, even one level further between clergy and the professed. Adding to the complex and interrelated web is also the relationship between laity and their clergy members and how this plays a role in shaping institutional leadership and action for the environment. In exploring these dynamics, and getting confused along the way, this research was able to contribute to a better understanding of the PCC, from multiple angles, to acknowledge and show dialectic between the various forms of "expert" and "privileged" knowledge alongside local knowledge, which often receives little to no attention in the FBO literature.

Lastly, this research contributes to the FBO community of practice by highlight some examples and stories of how the PCC plays a key civil society function serving local communities by providing housing, environmental education and training and land-rights advocacy that is tempered with periods of collaboration and acrimonious debates and disputes with the government at the local, provincial and national level. Since the majority of literature of FBOs and the State takes political will for granted, this thesis contributes to a better understanding of situations where religious institutions co-exist peacefully or disruptively within society.

8.2. Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on this thesis research, which is rooted in qualitative methods that reflect the voices and opinions of those living in Bulacan and the Philippines during the time of my fieldwork in April-May 2013. The suggestions and ideas are not meant to be prescriptive, but to provide new lines of thinking and support for future research and investigations useful for the Diocese of Malolos, the SSHRC project team, the respondents of the study and LGUs in Bulacan.

8.3. For the Diocese of Malolos

8.3.1. *Environmental Curriculum at the Immaculate Conception Major Seminary*

Since tomorrow's leaders must be equipped with meeting tomorrow's challenges, it is strategic for the Immaculate Conception Major Seminary (ICMAS), which serves seminarians from the Diocese of Malolos and adjacent dioceses, including: Tarlac, Antipolo, Cabanatuan, Iba, Pasig, Cubao and Balanga, to offer a required course on Environmental Education and Outdoor Learning. While the seminary's main purpose is to train and prepare students for a life of clerical work, the school offers a broad range of courses in pastoral care suggesting room for extended curricula on the environment. When speaking with ICMAS seminarians, from the class of 2013, the students mentioned one of their most memorable experiences at college was working with Fr. Efren, Director of DEEP, who taught them about ecology and took them on tree planting excursions. Since Fr. Efren's classes are only offered in his spare time, there is currently no real institutional commitment to prepare students for a future of stewardship and conservation.

Having said that, if the Diocese of Malolos wants to respond appropriately to Pope Francis's call to protect the environment than they need to commit, through funding and resources, better access to environmental education and outdoor service learning for seminarians. Since we know from the data, that the internal capacity and technical knowledge for environmental education is limited among clergy and the professed religious, ICMAS and the Diocese of Malolos should consider piggybacking with other local institutions such as Bulacan State University (BulSU), located close to ICMAS in the City of Malolos. The reason a partnership with BulSU is advantageous is because the university, which is of a similar rank and caliber to ICMAS, currently offers a bachelor of Environmental Science, within the BulSU College of Science, where the courses are rooted in scientific fact and cutting edge research that are applicable to localized needs of Bulacan. Rather than reinvent the wheel by spending more time and resources establishing its own environmental program, ICMAS could take this as an opportunity to enhance student mobility options, deliver on their pledge to offer modern education and extend the profile of the college into the community. If this partnership is effectively executed, it could also serve as a positive example for other training seminaries across the PCC.

8.3.2. *Dedicated Ecology Desks*

Due to the size and diversity of environmental issues occurring in Bulacan, the Diocese of Malolos would benefit from setting up Regional Ecology Desks across their parish network to support the work of DEEP and focus on localized issues. Since we know from Chapter Two (Table 1.4), Bishop Oliveros oversees 107 parishes so by combining multiple parishes under one ecology desk, within a specified region, it would avoid the messy logistics of managing individual parish concerns for all 107 churches. For instance, in establishing 10-15 environmental regions across the diocese, that manage 7-10 parishes each, the Bishop and director of DEEP would only have to meet with15 ecology coordinators (maximum) on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. The purpose of the Regional Ecology Desk Network would be to provide localized leadership and coordination for sustainable development, monitoring, volunteer coordination and documenting changes to the physical environment on a more consistent and unified basis. In building miniature networks of environmental hubs, led by a local lay member or assistant priests, it would also avoid duplication of efforts, effectively maximize the Diocese's time and investments, while also providing more support for the environment.

8.3.3. *Evaluation and Tracking Program Metrics*

While there are numerous initiatives underway in the Diocese of Malolos and across the PCC to provide environmental education, training and awareness initiatives, the level of pre-planning, reporting and documentation ranges from minimal to fragmented. Since clergy and the professed religious have years of experience setting up programs and administering successful initiatives at the parish level, their strength lies in program delivery which is only one area of successful program implementation. Thus, the Diocese of Malolos would benefit greatly with a more robust checklist and tracking system to capture the effective lifecycle of their programs and use of resources, both financial and human, for future program improvements and evaluations. By drawing on evidence-based research, the Diocese of Malolos can improve their effectiveness by tracking things, such as, how well a program turned out, its long-term impact on environmental change (e.g. did the trees planted, survive?) or whether their programs had any effectiveness in shaping attitudes among the public in areas like reducing consumption or conserving resources, and then use that data to make adjustments based on new information. To gather this information, the Diocese can use a combination of mixed method research tools like questionnaires; intercept surveys, and interviews with key stakeholders, both volunteers and participants, who have a stake in the programs. In having more data and conducting longitudinal studies, it will also give the Diocese a better indication of how well they are accomplishing their goals, how clergy reassignments impact environmental initiatives and if efforts to host events contribute to long-term sustainability. Currently, without any baseline data, it will be difficult for the Diocese of Malolos to track their progress in the future and compare results over the years

8.3.4. *Building a BEC Network for Environmental Action*

While many dioceses in the Philippines have adopted BECs as a pastoral priority to support and empower local leaders to engage in prayer meetings, bible sharing and social action, the phenomenon has not been uniform. For instance, the BEC network is weak and underutilized in the Diocese of Malolos, despite its support from the CBCP and success in other dioceses like Mindanao and Negros, as well as, more urban areas such as Cebu, Metro Manila, Lingayen and Davao. While I am cautious to recommend a program that works in one place, as it may not be applicable elsewhere, there is strong institutional support suggesting that BECs are effective in building civic capacity, empowering lay members to take action and respond to problems of poverty, small-scale development, cooperatives, feeding programs and more recently ecological matters. Since the BEC trend

has not taken off as easily as in other parts of the Philippines, I would suggest that an initial assessment be done to identify interest and the needs of lay members, within the Diocese of Malolos as a first step in a longer consultation process. In doing so, the clergy will be equipped to understand the barriers to participation and a deepened understanding of how BECs should function and be supported by the Church. In doing so, the Diocese of Malolos can learn from its lay volunteers, gather some best practices from other dioceses in the PCC, and develop a strategy that works best for their context.

8.3.4. *Focus on Youth*

Youth in the Philippines are among the most cherished population. As a large majority of Filipino nationalists will quickly refer you to Jose Rizal's famous poem "To the Filipino Youth", written in 1879, which continues to inspire and motivate generations of youth who are the future of the country. While more so in Plaridel than San Rafael, because of aging demographics, the respondents in this research raised the importance of involving youth in environmental advocacy now as a way to build enthusiasm and address intergenerational equality. In working with youth, something that the Diocese of Malolos already does a good job with through theatre, song and dance programs, the clergy and the professed religious can continue to foster future lay leaders or seminarians in meaningful and useful ways by getting them involved in their communities through service learning about the environment. Since RCAM's Ministry of Ecology is open to dioceses across the country, the Diocese of Malolos should capitalize on this opportunity to send youth leaders to receive training and work on building their capacity to lead environmental change. An added bonus of working with youth is that many are currently learning about environmental science and ecology through the education system and can support the Church as well as older generations to move towards better recycling practices and a more sustainable outlook.

8.4. For the LGUs In Bulacan:

8.4.1. *Look Beyond Information Dissemination*

If the LGUs stand is to make significant and long-term change for the Angat River Basin, then they will need a more thorough approach to address behaviour change to curb pollution, poor solid waste management and a disregard for water quality above and beyond information dissemination. They must make a meaningful and authentic commitment to public participation that seeks to engage residents, from all walks of life, in ways that listen

to their concerns, hear their worries and empower them to work collaboratively on solutions moving forward. Currently, the level of communication between the local government and their constituencies is very basic (e.g. flyer and pamphlet distribution) and ineffective in addressing root problems, such as, why people pollute, why there are poor turnouts at Barangay meetings to discuss environmental initiatives and to understand the challenges to livelihood when water quality is poor or during droughts. To change this, LGUs in Bulacan should consider adopting the public participation spectrum outlined by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP[2]) (Figure 8.1). The IAP[2] model for engagement has become an internationally recognized gold standard for engaging people in decisions that affect their lives. The framework outlines possible types of engagement with stakeholders and communities and offers clear guidelines on where and how to engage individuals in decision-making as you move from 'inform' to 'empower'.

The spectrum can help municipal officers in Bulacan who are inexperienced in the components of engagement and the theories behind it to develop more clarity and transparency around where members of the public can be involved to planning and have influence in the decision-making process.

8.4.2. *Improve Internal Systems for Collaboration*

Based on the interviews from both San Rafael and Plaridel, there was no clearly defined system in place for LGUs to partner with CSOs, including the Catholic Church. While each municipality has its own list of registered CSOs and the Local Government Code is supportive of developing partnerships with the "Third Sector", staff in both towns had little knowledge and capacity of who did what, where or how there work could better support the on-going work of local actors. In creating a strategy for partnerships that highlights appropriate rules, mission statements, how data is shared and a structure for knowledge and power sharing it would make the overall process more efficient and manageable for staff and interested parties. Currently, without a structure in place, everything is done ad-hoc and there is little consistency or tracking. Of course, as previously mentioned, this level of commitment for developing partnerships also requires political will, leadership, and the right temperature from within.

Figure 8.1: Example of IAP^2 Public Participation Spectrum

IAP2'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM

The IAP2 Federation has developed the Spectrum to help groups define the public's role in any public participation process. The IAP2 Spectrum is quickly becoming an international standard.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION →

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

(Source: International Association of Public Participation 2014)

8.5. For the Provincial Government in Bulacan:

8.5.1. *Encourage the Provincial Planning and Development Office to Strengthen Cross-Boundary Learning and Resource Sharing*

Municipal staff in both San Rafael and Plaridel commented that there was a lack of coordination across the municipalities regarding efforts to preserve and protect the Angat River Basin. While it was noted that the environmental officers in Bulacan met monthly in Norzagaray to discuss initiatives and projects being carried in their respective municipalities, there was no focused discussion on addressing the Angat River Basin or opportunity to identify priority needs and challenges. Furthermore, there is also no clear understanding of what constitutes a good watershed governance approach and how to achieve it. Since the PPDO is a resource for strengthening the Province's allocation and best uses of resources they should offer more support in the following three areas: 1) work with river-fronting municipalities to identify a clear and common purpose for the Angat River Basin and produce a collaborative blueprint for how to get there; 2) provide training on "best practices" for engaging with CSOs, including the Catholic Church, as a way to reduce financial and human resource gaps; 3) create a mechanism (e.g. a web portal) to share data amongst the municipalities regarding water quality, clean-up efforts and success stories. By supporting the LGUs, the PPDO can work towards reducing competition among the municipalities and strengthen trust, interest and stewardship for the Angat River.

8.5.2. *Support Collaboration Between the Bulacan Environment and Natural Resource Office and the Diocese of Malolos*

Under the 1991 Local Government Code, the Bulacan Environment and Natural Resource Office (BENRO) has been mandated to provide technical assistance and support on environmental and natural resource programs and projects that protect, conserve and rehabilitate the environment and the development of natural resources. While they are engaged in a broad range of activities to preserve communal forests, watersheds, parks and infrastructure projects they have also been mandated to support NGOs and CSOs in implementing these projects. Since the provincial legislation supports this type of work, it would be worthwhile for BENRO to work with LGUs and the PPDO to create a pilot program working with the Diocese of Malolos to address the management, protection and rehabilitation of the Angat River Basin. The BENRO has technical assistance that can supplement the work of DEEP, while the Church can reciprocate by offering leadership, community mobilizing for activities and coordination across the diocesan church network to

educate parishioners about solid waste management and other environmental ordinates being implemented. The benefit of a pilot would be to test out this type of partnership on a small scale to gather more information about the opportunities, challenges and areas of contention among the stakeholders involved, which could increase the likelihood of success if a more permanent solution, was desired.

8.6. For the SSHRC research project:

8.6.1. *Continue Research with the Church and Lay Members*

Due to limitations of time and resources, this thesis only captured a snapshot of a much larger story of the relationship between the Church, the laity and the local government in Bulacan. Since the data revealed that there are more opportunities to capture stories and best practices, especially among laity and nuns who are equally as active in environmental advocacy and management, but less known outside the Philippines, these is more work to be done. Since I do not see this research as complete, but rather on-going, I am hopefully that a fresh set of eyes and perspective from other graduate students who are affiliated with the project team or the partnering universities may pick up on the research and explore the Diocese of Malolos's role in supporting the LGUs to strengthen inter-jurisdictional governance for the Angat River Basin. As a starting point, it would be worthwhile to continue the research to all eleven municipalities that touch the Angat River to get a better understanding of the environmental issues and potentially explore a pilot in collaboration with the PPDO and BENRO to make use of Ecology Desks in these areas to see if collaboration and leadership for a watershed partnership is possible and desirable.

8.7. Concluding Remarks

Water supplies around the world are in crisis. Many rivers, lakes and streams are polluted, human uses on the water system have been poorly monitored and water withdrawals are being over-appropriated. To address these challenges sooner, rather than later, requires new ways of thinking about, using, and managing water resources. However, the more planners and policy analysts waste ruminating on the consequences of partnering with FBOs, by crossing the separation of church and state lines or working with organizations that proselytize, they are missing the forest among the trees. We are living in a "post-truth" world (Davies 2016), where fake news, alternative facts and climate change denialists remain a real and global threat to governance systems, our ability to function as a

participatory democracy and to reduce our impact on the planet. Thus, there is a sense of urgency to take immediate action, at the local level, for the environment, especially when unscrupulous businesses and capitalist markets are waging war on natural resources, and are not being challenged with a social force equal to its weight or influence. In the Philippines, while not perfect, the Catholic Church is living this call to action every single day.

As evident in this thesis, the Philippines is a deeply spiritual country and the PCC, an institution preserved by the Church of Rome and an organization made up of decentralized parishes, associations, commissions' chapel-based movement and diocesan congregations, has proven its capacity to shepherd Christians and people of goodwill in the post-authoritarian period (Moreno, 2006). Similar to other CSOs, the local Church serves as a vehicle for empowerment leading Filipinos to fight for their independence, contest unjust land reform and resist authoritarian regimes giving it the respect and support of Filipinos across the nation. Therefore, their potential for partnering with the local government to address fragmentation and inter-jurisdictional governance for the Angat River Basin remains untapped and ripe for consideration.

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Appendix 1: Diocese of Malolos Organizational Chart

Organizational Chart of the Diocese of Malolos
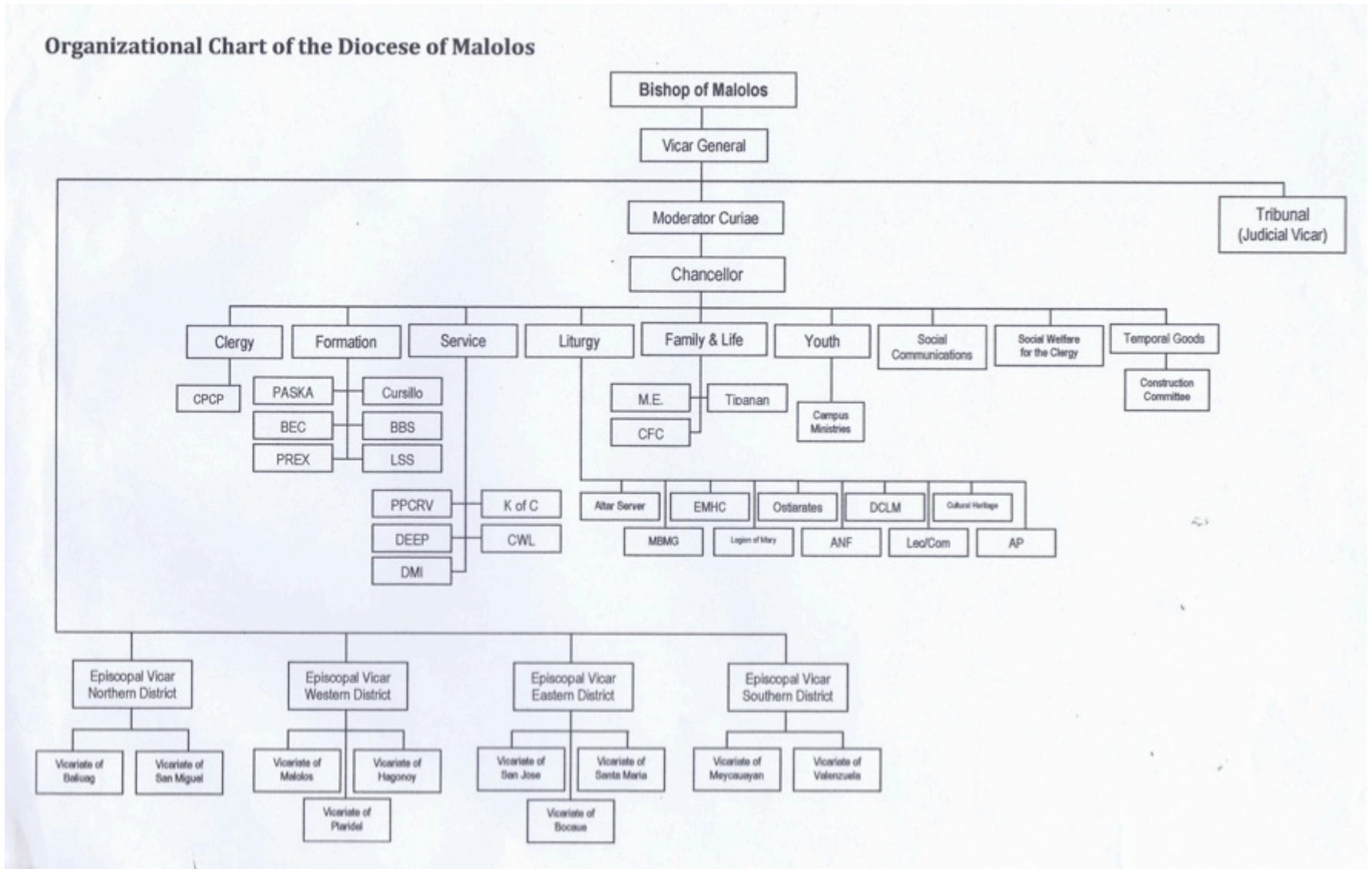
Appendix 2: Diocese of Malolos' Commission of Social Action Organizational Chart

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Diocese of Malolos
COMMISSION ON SERVICE
St. James the Apostle Parish Compound
Poblacion. Plaridel. Bulacan

Diocese of Malolos
BISHOP

Fr. DENNIS A. ESPEJO
COS CHAIRMAN
GENERAL PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Ralph Villaver
Encoder

Vicarial Priest Coordinator

Rachelle Flores
Office Secretariat

Supply

COS
Vicariates and Parishes

Records

I. PASTORAL DEPARTMENT

II. FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Vic Pehipol
Program Coordinator

Leigh Bico
Program Coordinator

Felicita Francisco
Program Coordinator

Sharon Grace Tiamzon
Accountant

A. Community Building Services

B. Social Development Services (CARITAS MALOLOS)

C. Livelihood Development Services

Accounting

1. VCOS/PCOS
Vicariate/Parishes

1. Education
Rachel Flores (Coordinator)

PAMANA

1. Caritas Salve

Bookkeeping

2. Alay Kapwa

2. Disaster Risk Reduction & Management (DRRM)
Leigh Bico (Coordinator)

2. Kabuhayan Program

Cashiering

District Coordinator

District I (Central)
Neneth Sto. Domingo
District II (West)
Vic Pehipol
District III (East)
Felicita Francisco
District IV (South)
Ric Berueta

3. Medical
Neneth Sto. Domingo
Coordinator

Caritas Clinic

3. Employment

Purchases

Feeding & Medical Program

Property

4. Thematic Concerns
Ric Berueta
Coordinator

Information and Advocacies

CHARITABLE INSTITUTION
Felicita Francisco (Coordinator)

Farmer's Desk

5. Special Project
Diocesan Housing Program
Jeff Manio (Project Coordinator)

Peasants & Fisher Folks

PPCRV/C
Fr. Anthony Chan (Coordinator)

WEAD

ECOLOGY
Fr. Efren Basco (Coordinator)

Women - Felicita Francisco

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Appendix 3: BREB Informed Consent Letter

School of Community and Regional Planning
6333 Memorial Road
Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6T 1Z2

Tel: (604) 822-3276
Fax: (604) 822-3787

www.scarp.ubc.ca

Consent Form

Study Title: Institutional Mapping and Organizational Assessment of Civil Society Organizations Working in Environmental Advocacy and Management: Assessing Opportunities for the Catholic Church's Engagement in Collaborative Watershed Governance in the Angat River Basin, Philippines

Researcher: Katherine O'Callaghan, MAAMAP candidate, The University of British Columbia
Supervisor: Dr. Angeles, SCARP Professor, The University of British Columbia

By signing below, I consent to my participation in this study designed to assess the opportunities of Catholic Church organization's engagement in environmental advocacy and management in Bulacan, Philippines. I have read the e-mail of information and understand the risks and benefits of participation. I also understand that the data collected from this research will be used to inform the Bulacan Provincial Government and Diocese of Malolos about the role of Catholic Church organizations working in environmental management.

I have been told that my role in this research will be to provide information about the work of Catholic Church organizations involved in environmental advocacy and management. I have also been told that the potential benefits of this research may lead to further collaboration on water governance with the Bulacan Provincial Government and Diocese of Malolos. I agree that I will report any concerns regarding the research and its possible impacts on my everyday life to the researcher and respected supervisor. I also understand that my identity and data will be kept anonymous and confidential between the researcher and supervisor and I am free to withdraw from the research at any time before, during or after, without reason or consequence.

I have been told the purpose of the research and I am free to ask questions at any time for further clarification.

I may take any complaints or concerns I may have to the primary researcher Katherine O'Callaghan ██ ███████ in Canada, or ██████████ in Bulacan; Email: ███████████), the supervisor Dr. Angeles (███████████ in Canada or ██████████ in Bulacan; Email: ████████████) and/or the Chair of the Research Ethics Board (604-822-8598 or Email: breb.rise@ors.ubc.ca).
I have read the above statement and freely consent to participate in this research.
Participant's Name: _____
Participant's Signature: _____
Date: _____

Appendix 4: Sample Interview Guide – Lay Members

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LAITY MEMBERS

Thoughts on Research Questions

These following research questions have been designed to assess the opportunities of Catholic Church organization's engagement in environmental advocacy and management in Bulacan, Philippines.

- What are the perceptions towards the term "sustainability" and role of the Catholic Church in protecting the environment? – both locally and institutionally
- Is there an understanding of environmental change and its impact on the Angat watershed in Bulacan?
- What kind of information is available about the work of Catholic Church organizations active in environmental advocacy and management? (is it cohesive, scattered, etc.)
- What are the opportunities where the Catholic Church in Bulacan could play a more active role in environmental management of the Angat watershed?
- Is there an interest in bridging a relationship between the Catholic Church in Bulacan and the local government to protect the environment?

Sample Interview Questions

1) Can you tell me about some of the environmental problems encountered in your area?

2) Do you know of any groups (faith-based or non-profit) who have/who are addressing issues of the environment within Plaridel/San Rafael in Bulacan?

3) What has happened over time to these activities and projects? Is there strong support and interest from parishioners/community members?

4) How is information disseminated about environmental concerns throughout the Catholic Church's in Bulacan? What are the best methods used by the church to reach out to the community?

5) Have you noticed, over time – since 1970s onwards, a growing interest in environmental issues either through the Diocese of Malolos or by parishioners?

6) In what ways do you think priests/nuns or lay leaders across the Diocese could play a stronger role in environmental advocacy or management?

7) What are the various knowledge bases, skills, attitudes and capacities that the Catholic Church can offer to protect the environment?

8) In your opinion, who is most active in environmental issues within the Church community?

9) Is there a shared sentiment across the Diocese of Malolos to come together on issues surrounding the environment?

10) * If your answer was **no**, what would lead to greater recognition of mutual understanding on the environment to protect Bulacan from further environmental degradation?

11) *If you answer was **yes**, how was this capacity built and what were the necessary inputs and processes to establish this?

12) In light of your experiences and understanding, do you think the Catholic Church could play a key stakeholder role in protecting the health and ecology of the Angat watershed?

13) I am attempting to identify bridges where the Diocese of Malolos can work with the local government and state to advocate for the environment. In your opinion, how do you see the current relationship between the church and state?

14) Generally speaking, do you think community members within Plaridel/San Rafael are satisfied with the services offered by the municipality? If not, what are the main problems that you have witnessed or heard about?

Appendix 5: Sample Interview Guide – Clergy and Professed Religious

INTERVIEW QUIDE FOR CLERGY AND PROFESSED RELIGIOUS

Research Questions

These following research questions have been designed to assess the opportunities of Catholic Church organization's engagement in environmental advocacy and management in Bulacan, Philippines.

- What are the perceptions towards the environment and the role of the Catholic Church in protecting the environment? – both locally and institutionally
- Is there an understanding of environmental change and its impact on the Angat watershed in Bulacan?
- What kind of information is available about the work of Catholic Church organizations active in environmental advocacy and management? (is it cohesive, scattered, etc.)
- What are the opportunities where the Diocese of Malolos could play a more active role in environmental management of the Angat watershed?
- Is there an interest in bridging a relationship between the Catholic Church in Bulacan and the local government to protect the environment?

Sample Interview Questions

1) In what ways do you think the Church in Bulacan could play a role in environmental advocacy or management?

2) Have you noticed, over time – since 1970s onwards, any interest in environmental issues either through the Diocese of Malolos or by parishioners?

3) In light of your experiences and understanding, do you think the Catholic Church could play a role in protecting the health and ecology of the Angat watershed?

4) If the Catholic Church in Bulacan is already active in environmental concerns, how would you describe what they do as promoting sustainable development and environmental advocacy?

5) What are some activities that you have been involved in to advocate for the environment?

6) Who is the most likely to be involved in environmental issues (priests/nuns within the Church/ lay community? youth? Women? Agricultural workers? etc.

7) What are the various knowledge bases, skills, attitudes and capacities that those involved in environmental issues can offer?

8) How is information disseminated about environmental concerns through the church? What are the best methods used by the church to reach out to the community?

9) What has happened over time to these activities and projects? Is there strong support and interest from parishioners/community members?

10) Is there a shared sentiment across Catholic churches in Bulacan to work together to address environmental problems?

11) * If your answer was **no**, what would lead to greater recognition of mutual understanding on the environment to protect Bulacan from further environmental degradation?

12) *If you answer was **yes**, how was this capacity built and what were the necessary inputs and processes to establish this?

13) I am attempting to identify bridges where the Catholic Church in Bulacan can work with the local government to advocate for the environment. How do you perceive the relationship between the church and the local government to collaborate in Bulacan at the moment?

14) What are the conditions under which a shared understanding, between the Church and the local government, of the issues and problems, including common mission, core shared values, problem identification and search for solutions could lead to some immediate outcomes and strategic plans to protect the Angat river basin?

Appendix 6: Sample Interview Guide – Municipal Officials

INTERVIEW QUIDE FOR THE MUNICAPALITY OF SAN RAFAEL

Thought on Research Questions:
The research gathered from this assessment will be useful in providing the Catholic Diocese of Malolos as well as the Bulacan Provincial Government with a better idea of how and why the Catholic Church may be a key stakeholder in governing the Angat River Basin. As research in this field suggests, religious organizations often have high levels of social capital due to commonalities in belief shared amongst members. In tapping into these social networks, the local government in Bulacan may have better success in working with Catholic Church organization to engage civil society on watershed management. That said, the following research questions have been designed to gain more information on:
- What data is available about the work of NGOs and Catholic Church organizations active in environmental advocacy and management at the municipal level?
- What are the perceptions on the role of the Catholic Church in Bulacan on engaging the community in environmental management and advocacy?
- What are the opportunities where the Catholic Church in Bulacan could play a more active role in environmental management of the Angat watershed?
- Is there an interest in bridging a relationship between the Catholic Church in Bulacan and the municipality of San Rafael to protect the environment?

Sample Interview Questions:
1) What sorts of initiatives are being carried out across Bulacan to protect the Angat River Basin?

2) Are you aware of anything currently being done in San Rafael to engage the local community on environmental issues or the protection of the Angat watershed?

3) Are you aware of any non-governmental (NGO) or faith-based groups working on environmental management or advocacy within San Rafael?

4) What do you perceive would be the most effective way to engage San Rafael residents to be more conscious of the environment and the Angat watershed?

5) How do you see the Catholic Church in Bulacan as a key stakeholder for the engagement of the community in environmental advocacy?

6) What do you perceive the benefits (if any) for the municipality of San Rafael to support the Catholic Church's efforts to address sustainable development?

7) What do you perceive the consequences (if any) for the municipality of San Rafael to support the Catholic Church's efforts to address sustainable development?

Appendix 7: Registered Civil Society Organizations in San Rafael and Plaridel

Registered Civil-Society Organizations in Plaridel	Registered Civil-Society Organizations in San Rafael
Dampol Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc	Rotary Club of San Rafael
Del Pilar Multi Purpose Cooperative	San Rafael Multi-Purpose Cooperative Federation, Inc
Homeowners Organization for Progress and Empowerment (HOPE Plaridel Federation)	Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association
Kapatirang Tulungan ng mga Diabetiko sa Bulakan (KATUDIB)	Sacred Heart Cooperative Credit Union
Kapisanan ng Bagong Pilipina Multi-Purpose Corp. (KABAPA)	San Rafael Ladies Association
Kilusang Aagapay at Magsasama-sama para sa Nagkakaisang Bulihan (KASANIB)	Organization of Lingkod Lingap sa Nayon
Kilusang Lingkod sa Nayon	San Rafael Kaunlaran Foundation
Konsehong Pambayan para sa Kababaihan (Local Council for Women)	Municipal Argicultural and Fishery Council
Lalangan Multi-Purpose Cooperative	Knights of Columbus, St John of God – Counil 8754
Municipal Federation of Senior Citizens Association	Soroptimist International of San Rafael
National Council of Women of the Philippines	Philippine Christian Fellowship for the Disabled
Parish Pastoral Council For Responsible Voting	Norfil Foundation Incorporated
Parulan Homeowners Assoc., Inc	Kasipag Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc
Patnubay sa Kaunlaran ng Plaridel	Amandaville Subdivion Homeowners Assocation
Patrol Assistance Rescue and Community Services (PARACS)	Kabalikat ng Bayan Association, Inc
PEFTOK, Veterans Association, Bulacan Chapter	Cruz na Daan-Mabalasbalas Tricycle Operators and Drivers Association CMA-TODA
Plaridel Arts, Culture and Tourism Foundation INC (PACTFI)	Doorcas Multi-Purpose Cooperative
Plaridel Private School Association	Crusada Multi-Purpose Cooperative
Plaridel Market Vendors Association, Inc	Alalay sa Kaunlaran Incorporation – ASKI
Prime Movers for Peace and Progress Assoc., Inc (TASKFORCE PRIMO)	San Juan de Dios TODA, Inc
Rockavillage High-Lander, Revo, FX Operators and Drivers Assoc., Inc	Samahan ng Pederasyon ng Tricycle Operators – TODA
Rotary Club of Plaridel	Sacred Heart Credit and Development Cooperative
Rotary Club of Plaridel (North and South	Trellis for Retiring and Veterans Teacher – San

Chapter)	Rafael Chapter
Rotary Club of Plaridel (KRYSTAL)	Senior Citizens Multi-Purpose Cooperatives, Inc. San Rafael, Bulacan
Siklista sa Pagkakaisa ng Plaridel, Inc (SPPI)	Peoples Trust Action Group
Society of Improvers and Knowledgeable Achievers for Development of Plaridel, Inc (SIKAD PLARIDEL)	
Solo Parents Federation	
Soroptomist International of Plaridel	
United Plaridel Vendors Cooperative	
Values Formation Council	
Volunteers for Plaridel Movement	
2004 Reformed and United Guardians Brotherhood Inc., Diamond Plaridel Chapter	