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論 文 の 内 容 の 要 旨

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論文題目 Facilitating Decentralized Policy for Sustainable Forest Governance in
Myanmar: Lessons from the Philippines
(ミャンマーでの持続可能な森林ガバナンスを目指した分権型政策の促進：フィリ
ピンからの教訓)

Introduction

In Myanmar, people's participation has prioritized as an imperative of national forest policy in 1995 endorsed by the community forestry instructions (CFIs). Today, there are about 42,148 ha of community forestry (CF) management by 572 user groups (USGs). Under the project of CF, the people engages three types of activities: (1) to preserve or improve the production system such as planting trees and promoting the growth of trees, (2) to use forest resources for subsistence needs, (3) to get cash by selling the timber harvested or furniture made by the timber. Initial participation by the people and their continuation of CF activities are considered to be indispensable for sustainable forest management. In practice, however, the improvement of forest management and protection are often threatened because of difficulties in continuing the activities even though initial participation was achieved. Many literatures revealed that it is important for the people to secure property right in order to continue CF activities. Thus the objectives of the dissertation are (1) to find out the factors affecting initial participation of USG members in management activities in Myanmar, (2) to assess the role of property rights to continue CF activities in the Philippines, and (3) to get implications for Myanmar policy in terms of property rights issues from the case of the Philippines.

Analytical framework and data collection

For the first objective, a framework that explore the nature of causal relationships among economic, social /institutional and physical factors was constructed by modifying existing framework. Data were collected from four USGs of agroforestry (AF) type and natural forest (NF) type of CFs in central dry zone of Myanmar. Semi-structured formal interviews were conducted at household level (15 households from each of sample USG in the AF type, 50 % of households from sample USG in the NF type) to know their social and economic situations. Other data were collected by applying key informant interviews, participant observation, informal interviews and reviews of the meeting records.

For the second objective, two concepts are applied as analytical framework: (1) “bundle of rights” consisting of the right of access, withdrawal, management, exclusion, and alienation, and (2) “three levels of rules” such as operational, collective-choice and constitutional rules. Different property rights will achieve different forest governance outcomes in terms of forest resources as well as income. The research is undertaken in 3 systems of community-based forest management (CBFM) located in northern Philippines: central government-initiated program (CGIP), local government-initiated program (LGIP) and traditional forest management (TFM) system. 111 households from 9 villages were randomly selected to collect data such as demographics data, property rights, income from selling crops and numbers of trees on their farms. Key informant and informal interviews with 41 respondents were also conducted.

For the third objective, property right issues from three CBFM programs in the Philippines and two types of CF from Myanmar were compared by applying SWOT analysis. In SWOT analysis, the policies were regarded as external factors to generate ‘opportunities’ and ‘threats’: the communities such as POs in the Philippines and USGs in Myanmar might have some ‘strengths’ and ‘weaknesses’. Then the policy implication to support strategies to be taken by the USG in Myanmar were proposed by considering how to make use of the ‘opportunity’, how to defend against the ‘threats’, how to promote the ‘strengths’, and how to overcome the ‘weaknesses’.

Factors affecting participation of USG members in the Dry Zone, Myanmar

In AF type CF, performance of USG was measured by the number of trees managed by households in each individual plot. Under the favorable market situations, all respondents have income which encourage initial participation in CF. The study showed that the more the leaders work on the farm, the better their active participation in discharging their responsibilities for supervising, monitoring and decision making which affect rule awareness and cooperation among members in the execution phase. It was found that social/institutional factors can mediate the negative effect of economic factors.

In NF type CF, performance of USG was measured in terms of the proportion of

members participating in collective resource management. Under the situation where economic benefits are not yet received, those who had experience as village head could take better coordination and leadership. The achievement of collective action was higher when majority of members participated in decision-making process and vice versa. Additionally, the legal rights of CF motivated the people who have experience in traditional forest management as common property to participate in collective activities. When the institution lacked strong rule enforcement due to the weakness of social/institutional factors, it seemed that physical factor was more important for poor participation.

Property rights issues of CBFM in the Philippines

In both CGIP and LGIP, the peoples are granted all the five bundles of rights on the individual plots within the CBFM area, or full ownership. They are free to decide species of forest trees, fruit trees or crops as long as making sound ecological practices. Income from AF crops supported livelihoods of the households. In TFM, the people can decide how to manage their resource and maximize the profit, although individual right holders are prohibited to sell or transfer their private property. Comparing withdrawal right on trees among three systems, the local people in TFM system are granted the most liberal and assured rights because they can devise operational rules in terms of quantity of resource use, timing of harvesting and harvesting technology, whereas such rules are regulated by higher level actors in CGIP and LGIP.

The local people in CGIP gained operational and collective choice rights on the communal forest. Such devolution from the central government to local organization resulted in good forest management, although there are variations in three associations. On the other hand, LGIP i.e. devolution to local government unit, grant to communities limited operational level-rights and the management of whole watershed area is driven by local government, which weaken the function of the local organization in the long run. In the case of TFM, everybody can access and harvest the trees.

Comparison of the cases of Myanmar with the Philippines

In the Philippines, there were some opportunities: (1) Access, withdrawal, and management rights including marketing of forest products, and exclusion rights has been transferred to PO members; (2) PO members are permitted to rehabilitate the land by planting agricultural crops, fruit trees, trees or by making fish-breeding pond to enhance participation and support food security, and (3) PO members are given access to local financial, technical and seedlings support from other departments. The right to make operational rules, however, was controlled by national authority, which was obvious 'threats'.

The PO in the Philippines has the 'strengths' such as existence of internal regulation

to define the powers and authority of the PO leaders and women's involvement in collective-decision making and 'weakness' such as limited collective activities through participation of PO members.

In Myanmar, the 'opportunities' were: (1) USGs were allowed to have the rights of access, withdrawal, management and exclusion, (2) Withdrawal rights to harvest naturally grown trees are not regulated, (3) They are not required to distribute any of CF benefits to the Forest Department (FD), and (4) The department provides seedlings of tree to USG. 'Threats' were: (1) CFIs did not prescribe the right of commercial harvest of forest products and the procedure involved when extracting forest products, (2) Exclusion rights were not ensured because there was no strong legal mechanism to punish the encroachers, even they are given the right to exclude outsiders, and (3) Legal status of the USG after termination of the project was fragile, (4) The management rights for the improvement of the land only emphasized on forest trees and, (5) Access to finance was limited for the USG members.

The FUGs have 'strengths' such as existence of collective action under strong leadership, and 'weaknesses' such as lack of internal regulation to define the authority of the USG leaders and women's involvement in collective decision making process.

Conclusion and policy implications

Decentralization in Myanmar is likely to be another form of centralization provided with few new benefits and little autonomy, while the approach of CBFM in the Philippines can be considered decentralization without devolution of authority, except TFM system.

In order to overcome the threat of prohibition of commercial harvest of forest trees, the scope of CFIs should allow commercial harvest to supply wood-based industries. FD shall issue additional orders for commercial harvest of forest trees including authorized procedures for obtaining cutting permits. To ensure exclusion rights and secure legal status of USGs, article 15 of forest law, which permit establishing village owned firewood plantation, should be strengthened. Moreover, CFIs should add a section on forest protection and conservation that provides secured and strong institutional power to exercise exclusion right. To improve the management right of USGs, section 19 (e) of CFIs, which concern with property right on how to manage and rehabilitate the land, should provide USGs to decide on how to rehabilitate the land including what type of tree and crops to plant. Lack of financial incentive for USG members can be overcome by providing other incentive including non-forest based alternative livelihood system through institutional linkage with other departments concerned. The existing strength of USGs like collective action under strong leadership can be applied in national programs like the national greening policy e.g. Bago Yoma greening program. In order to overcome the weakness, USGs should modify internal regulations to define authority of leaders and to allow women's involvement; the FD should create sections of CFI to promote and legalize such internal regulations.