

# **Developing and Sustaining Agroecotourism**

*through a Community-Based  
Approach*

**Jerelyn B Medalla**  
**College of Agriculture**  
**Xavier University-Ateneo de Cagayan**



# BACKGROUND

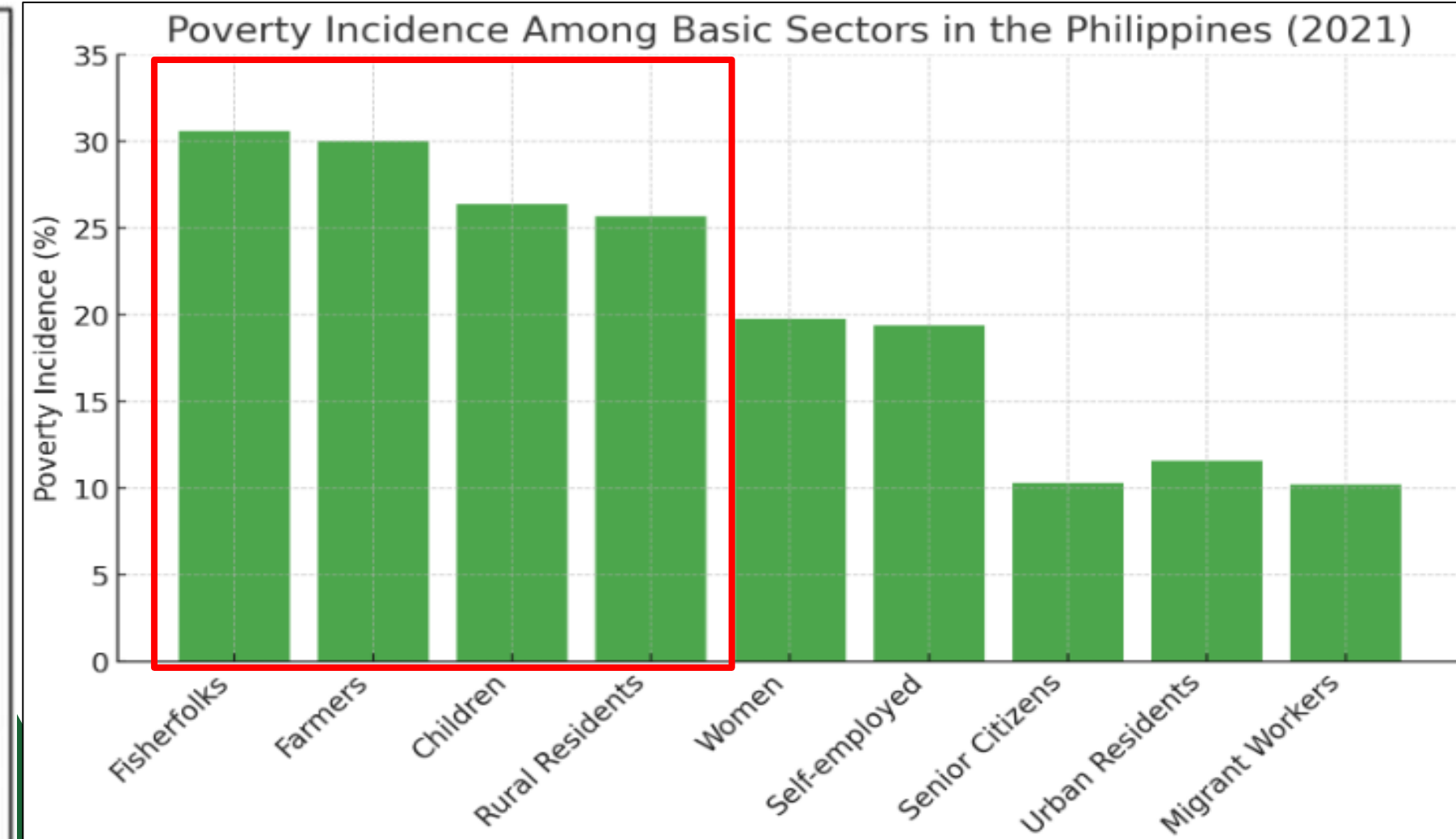
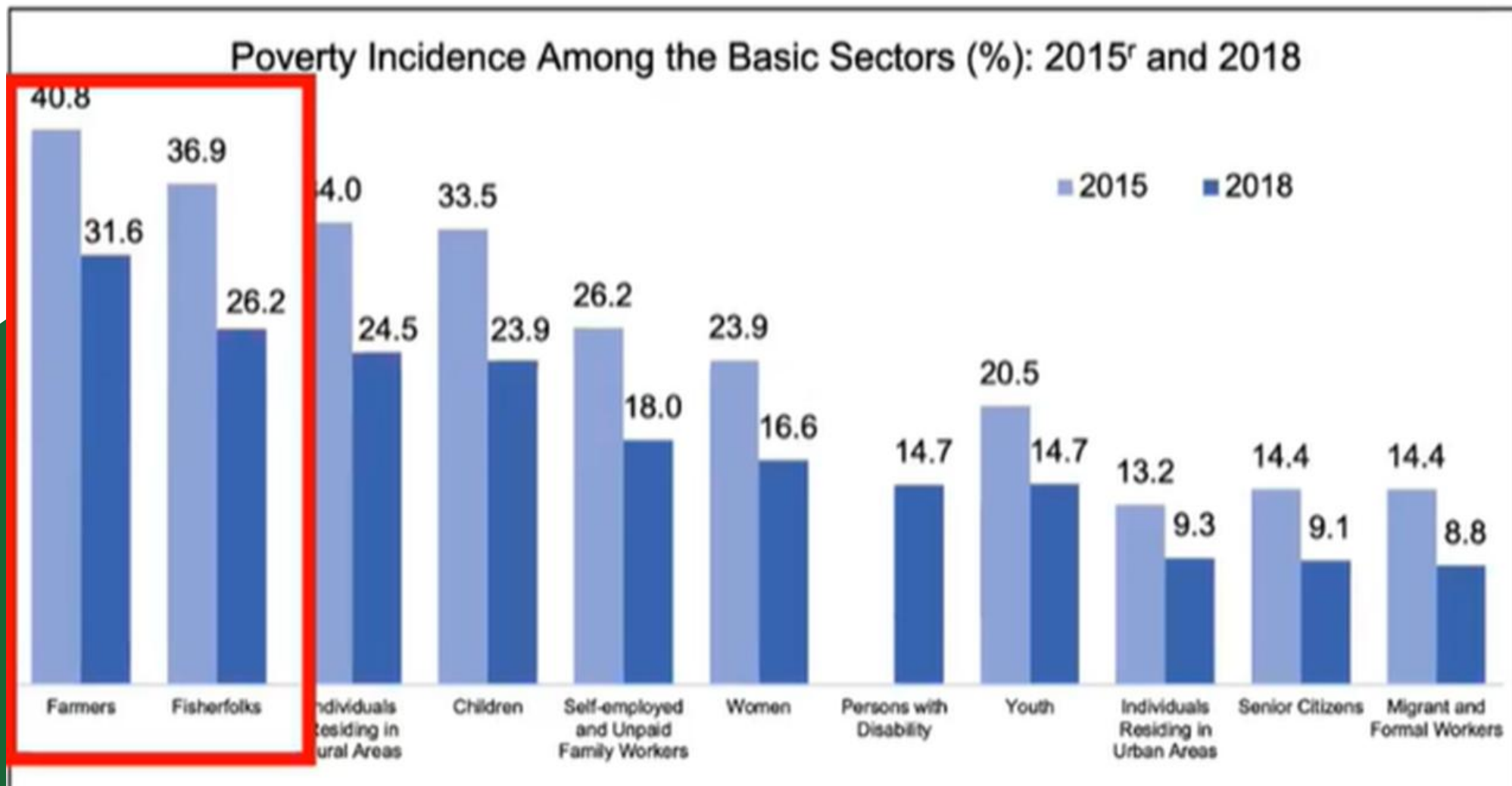


## AGROECOTOURISM



- Agroecotourism supports community development by offering a sustainable alternative livelihood, fostering environmental conservation, and generating socio-economic benefits for local communities (Honey, 2008; Schmitz et al., 2018).
- Agroecotourism lies at the intersection of the three pillars of sustainable development: economic growth, environmental governance, and community livelihood enhancement.
- Empirical research (Carpio et al., 2008; UNWTO, 2022) suggests that community-driven agroecotourism models increase economic resilience and reduce rural poverty.

# BACKGROUND



Source: Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)

# RESEARCH CONTEXT & STUDY AREA

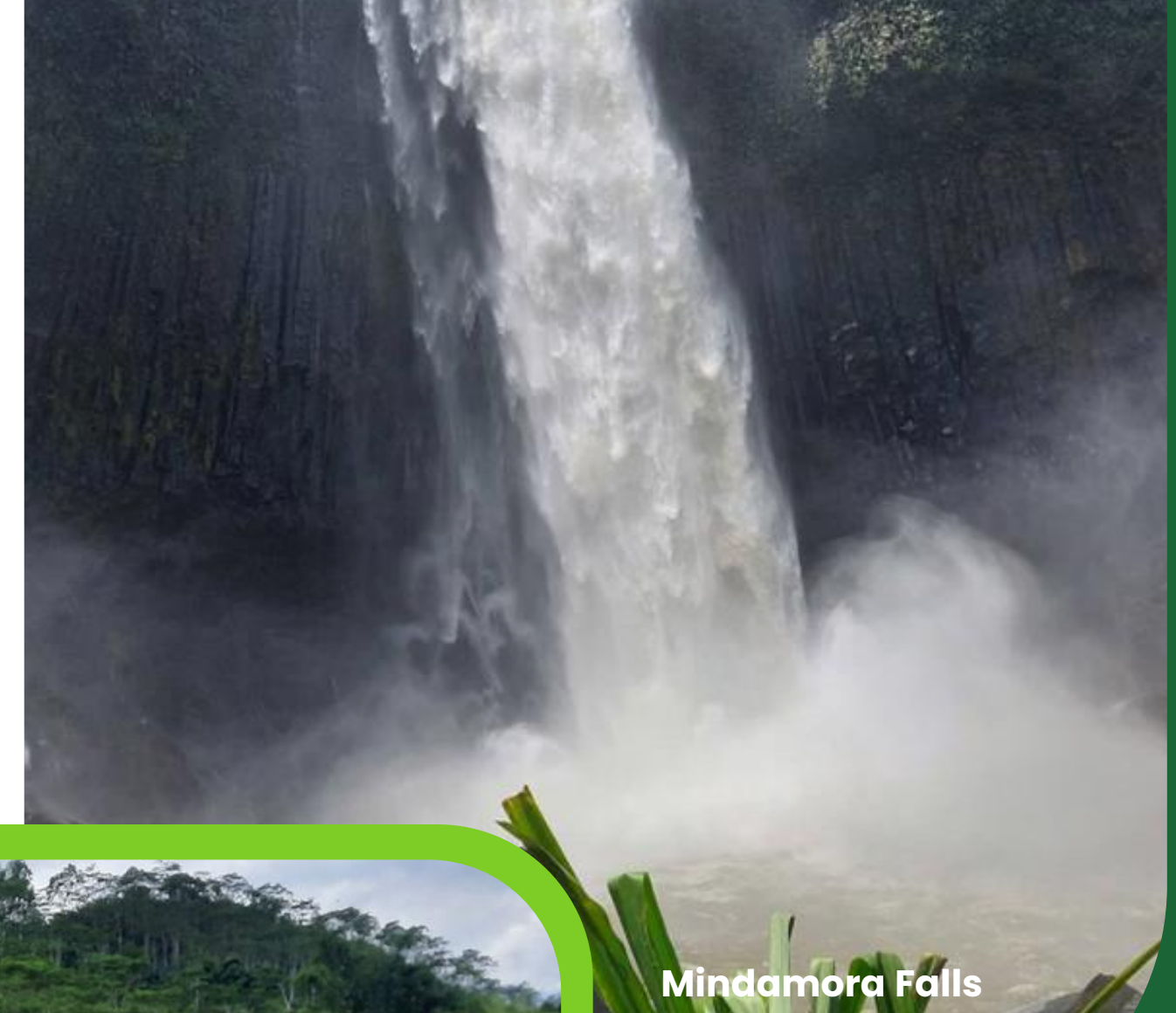


## > Barangay Lantud, Talakag, Bukidnon

- Rich natural resources: Mindamora "Bayug" Falls, Kisolok Cave, wide agricultural land
- High potential for sustainable agroecotourism development

## > Research Methods

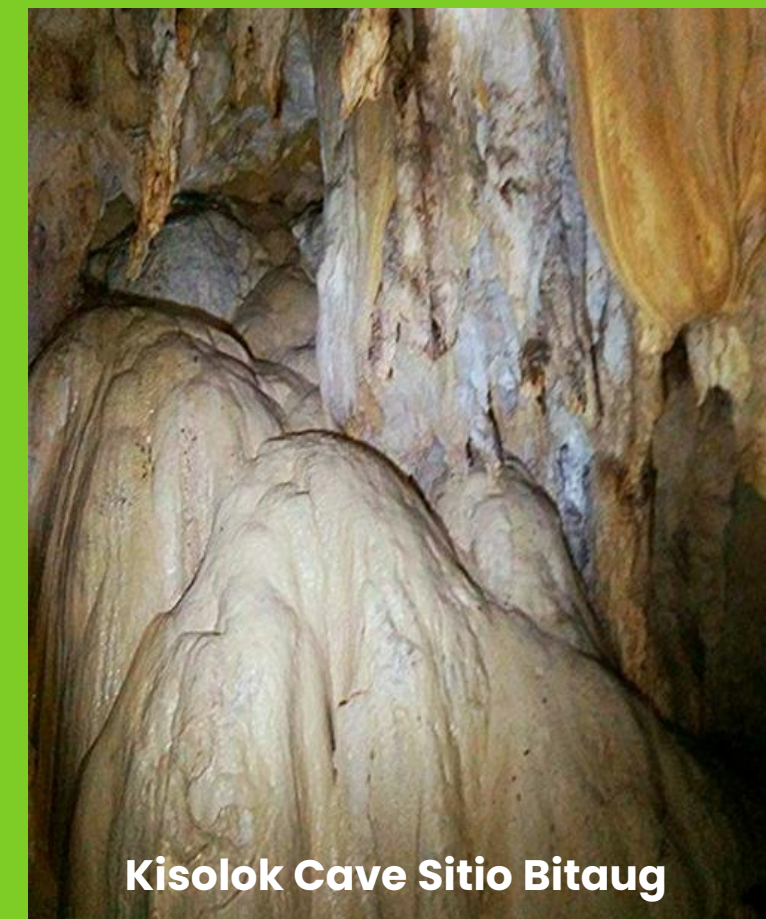
- Triangulation
  - Household surveys
  - Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)
  - Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)



Mindamora Falls



Agricultural Land, Sitio Dagunulan

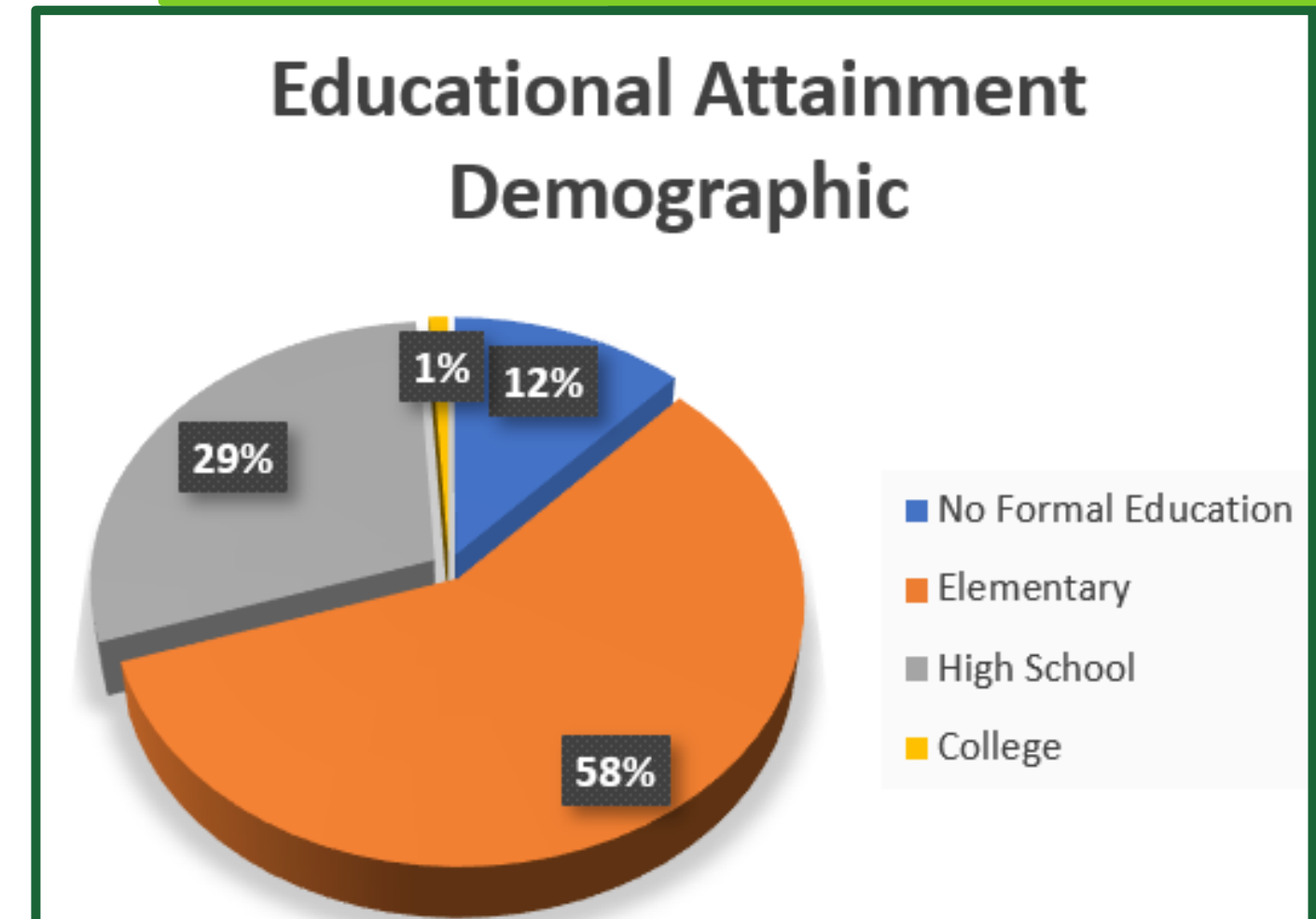
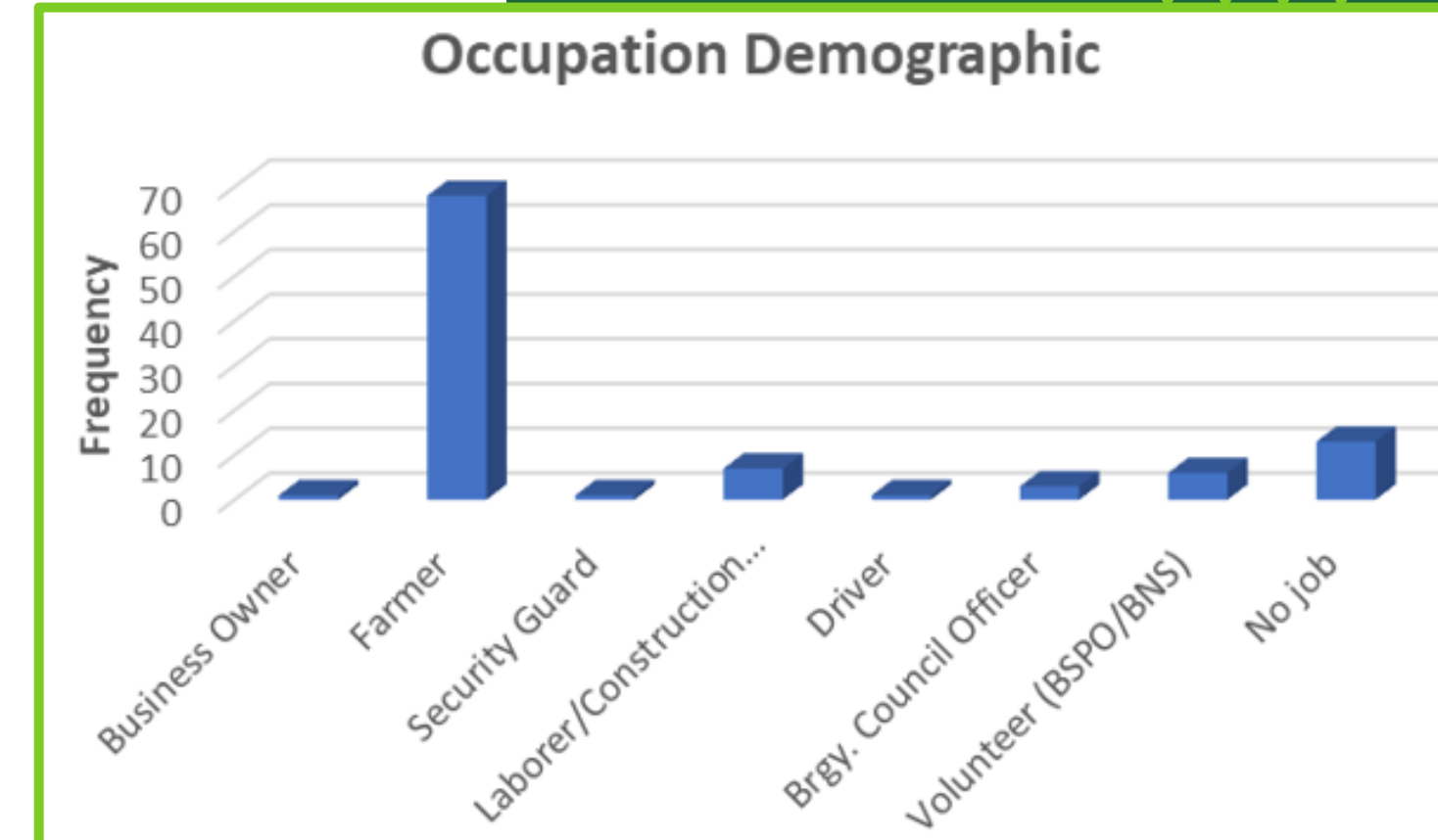


Kisolok Cave Sitio Bitaug

# SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE COMMUNITY



- Majority are farmers (68%)
- Low educational attainment (58%)
- High poverty incidence in the rural sector (aligned with PSA data)
- The majority of the respondents have lived in their respective sitios in Barangay Lantud since birth (41 years and above)

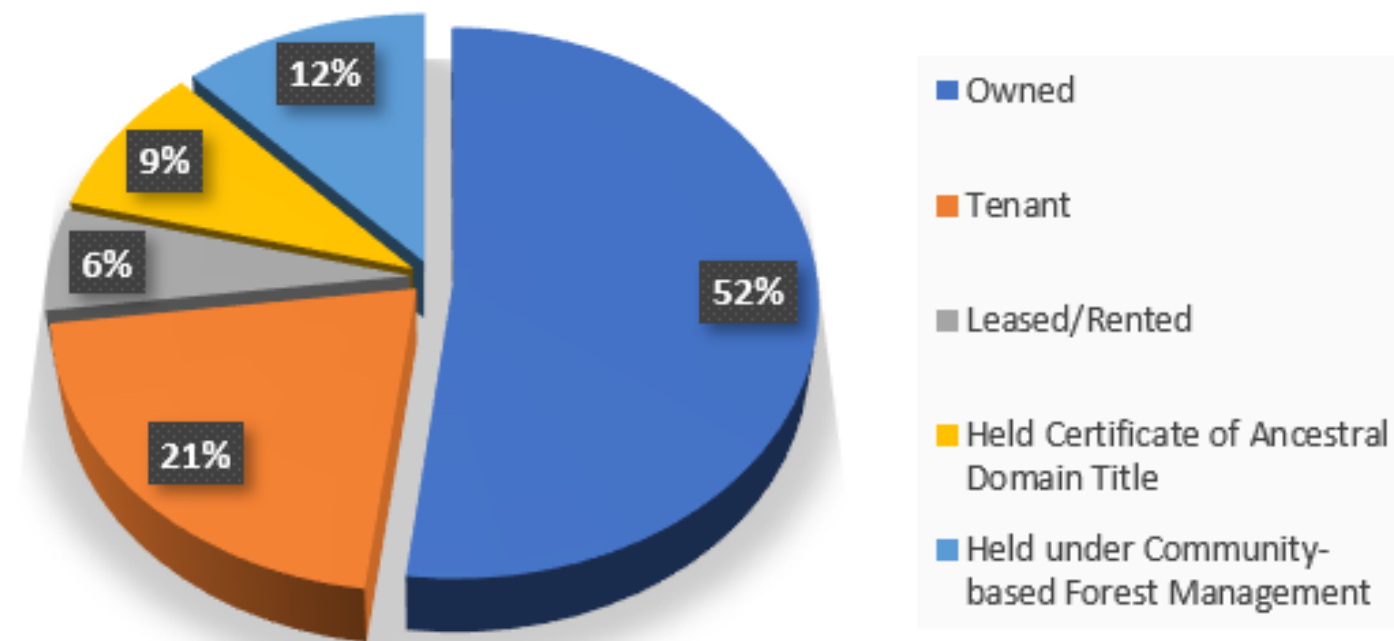


# SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE COMMUNITY

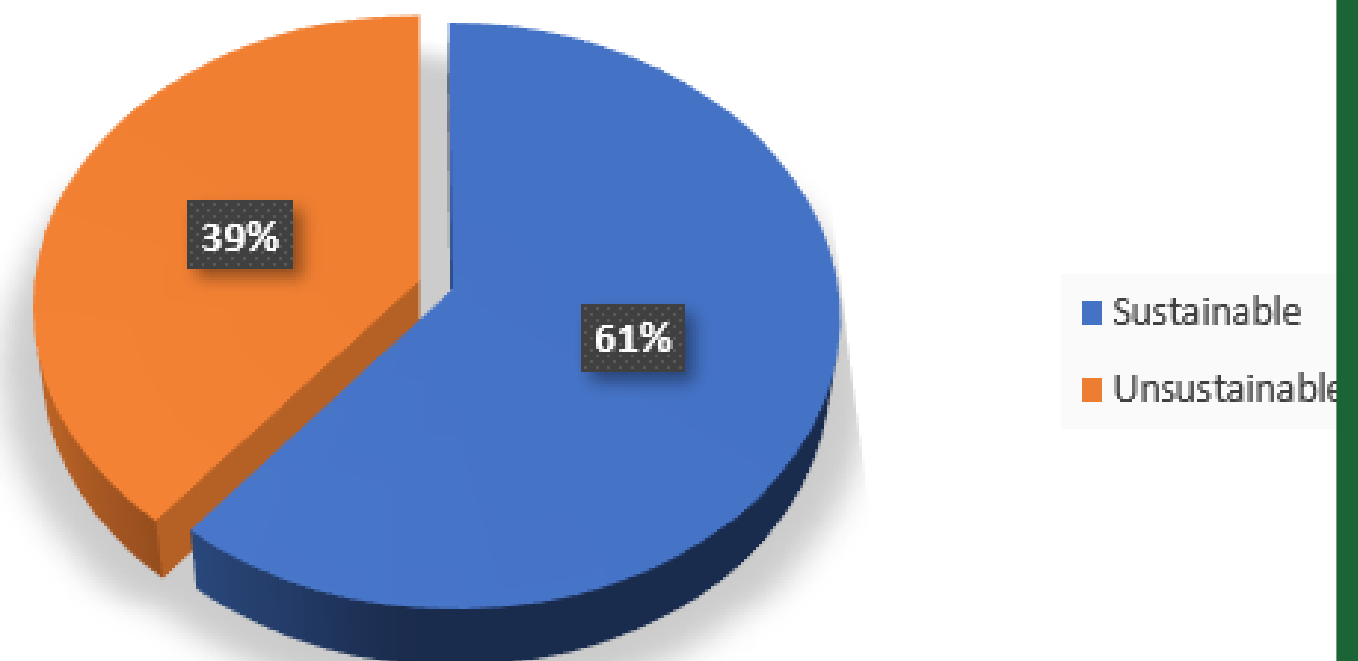


- Majority of the respondents (52%) fully owned their lands which were also inherited from their ancestors while some of them are tenants (21%).
- Most of the respondents are using sustainable or good farming practices (61%) such as the application of chicken dung/organic matter and integrated pest management while others are using the unsustainable (39%) ways such as the intensive farm production using inorganic fertilizers and pesticides.

### Land Ownership/Tenurial Status



### Farming Practices



# DISTRIBUTION OF STATISTICS ON THE KNOWLEDGE OF COMMUNITY-BASED AGROECOTOURISM AMONG RESPONDENTS

Indicators	Knowledge on Community-based Agro-ecotourism			
	With knowledge (n=90)		Without knowledge (n=10)	
	Mean	Description	Mean	Description
Awareness	3.74	High	3.62	Moderate
Perceived Economic Benefits	3.56	Moderate	3.42	Moderate
Perceived Cultural Benefits	3.81	High	3.74	High
Perceived Political Benefits	3.73	High	3.66	Moderate
Perceived Environmental Benefits	3.77	High	3.60	Moderate
Level of Participation	3.78	High	3.55	Moderate

# SWOT ANALYSIS OF AGROECOTOURISM IN BARANGAY LANTUD

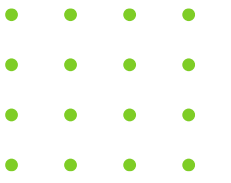
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tourist spots: Mindamora "Bayug" Falls and Kisolok Cave</li><li>• Fertile soil (potential for agriculture and forestry)</li><li>• Landscape and abundant natural resources</li><li>• Land availability and protected areas</li><li>• Recreation value and community-based agroecotourism potential</li><li>• Local, national, and international tourists/visitors</li><li>• Preservation of cultural traditions and customs</li><li>• Cultural heritage</li><li>• Community empowerment (presence of registered people's organization)</li><li>• Women's participation in community activities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Poor public services and transport infrastructure (e.g., farm-to-market road, water system, health clinic, other basic facilities)</li><li>• Poor links between food, energy, forestry, economic growth, and ecotourism</li><li>• Lack of entrepreneurial skills, specifically in managing community-based agroecotourism</li><li>• Lack of capital and means to procure agricultural inputs, knowledge of new farming technology, and capital for livelihood activities.</li><li>• Lack of training on alternative livelihoods (e.g., organic agriculture, integrated farming systems, handicraft making, poultry production, food processing, livestock production)</li><li>• Unemployment problems</li><li>• Lack of literacy</li><li>• Lack of policy support related to economic, agroecotourism, environment, and biodiversity protection</li></ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Potential for added value in agriculture and forestry</li><li>• Potential for farm diversification</li><li>• Development of community-based agroecotourism</li><li>• Enhancement of sociocultural values and land ethics</li><li>• Economic diversification in key sectors such as agroecotourism, agriculture, and biodiversity</li><li>• Coordination and building up of linkage among government agencies/line agencies and nongovernment organizations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Boundary conflict between Talakag (Bukidnon) and Iligan City</li><li>• Lack of extension services in agriculture</li><li>• Increased competition for tourism development in other areas</li></ul>

SWOT = strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats

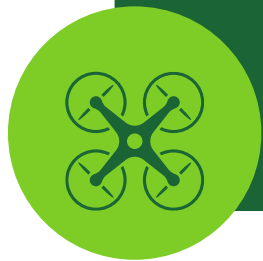
Source: Author's compilation based on focus group discussion results



# KEY CHALLENGES TO AGROECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT



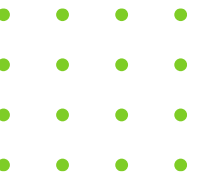
- Inconsistent regulations on tourism and land use
- Lack of funding & investment for agroecotourism ventures



- Poor infrastructure (roads, water supply, sanitation)
- Limited knowledge & training in business and tourism management



# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE AGROECOTOURISM (Based on TOWS Matrix)



## Strength-Opportunity Strategies

- **Develop agroecotourism parks, eco-trails, and demo farms**
- **Implement cultural tourism activities**
- **Strengthen infrastructure investment (farm-to-market roads, transport, health facilities)**

## Weakness-Opportunity Strategies

- **Establish training programs for entrepreneurship, organic farming, and hospitality services**
- **Improve marketing & branding strategies**

## Strength-Threat Strategies

- **Build stronger partnerships with stakeholders, LGUs, DENR, DOT, and NGOs**
- **Implement conservation programs**

## Weakness-Threat Strategies

- **Promote community leadership & participation**
- **Enhance local governance & policy support**

# PROPOSED SUSTAINABLE POLICY FRAMEWORK

## **Four Key Policy Areas**

- **Environment**                      Biodiversity conservation and wildlife protection
- **Social**                                      Information, education, and communication campaign
- **Economic**                                  MSEs operation and farm diversification through agroecotourism
- **Political**                                      Government stability, accountability, and transparency

## **Call to Action**

- Local governments should integrate agroecotourism into their development plans (BDMP).
- Stakeholders and line agencies should support capacity-building programs.
- Community organizations should take an active role in agroecotourism management.
- Need for a comprehensive policy framework & stakeholder collaboration.



[www.bworldonline.com](http://www.bworldonline.com)

**THANK YOU**

# REFERENCES

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). 2014.

APEC Tourism Ministerial Meeting. [https://www.apec.org/meeting-papers/sectoral-ministerial-meetings/tourism/2014\\_tourism](https://www.apec.org/meeting-papers/sectoral-ministerial-meetings/tourism/2014_tourism) (accessed on February 20, 2023).

Duraiappah, A., P. Roddy, and J. Parry. 2005. Have participatory approaches increased capabilities? Winnipeg, Canada: International Institute for

Sustainable Development. <https://www.iisd.org/publications/report/have-participatory-approaches-increased-capabilities> (accessed on October 1, 2022)

Hamzah, A. and N. Tiraieyari. 2012. Agri-tourism: Potential opportunities for farmers and local communities in Malaysia. *African Journal of Agricultural Research* 6(31):4357–4361.

Idris, A.P. and M. Rahmawati. Community-based tourism: Capability and community participation in tourism development. In *Community empowerment through research, innovation, and open access*, edited by J. Sayono and A. Taufiq. London, UK: Routledge.

Republic Act 10816. 2016. An act providing for the development and promotion of farm tourism in the Philippines. Manila, Philippines: Congress of the Philippines.

Sustainability Success. 2023. The 4 pillars of sustainability explained. <https://sustainability-success.com/four-pillars-of-sustainability/> (accessed on January 25, 2023).

Sutawa, G.K. 2012. Issues on Bali tourism development and community empowerment to support sustainable tourism development. *Procedia Economics and Finance* 4(2012):413–422