

Economic Marginalization of Women During Disasters: The Case of Guimaras, Philippines Oil Spill

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Flow of Presentation

- Introduction, Objectives, Methodology
- Background of the study and the oil spill
- Analysis of women's economic marginalization before and after the oil spill
- Conclusions and recommendations

Introduction

- ◉ Disasters have different effects on men and women.
- ◉ Women and girls are among the most vulnerable sectors during disasters.
- ◉ Without disasters women already experience economic marginalization.
- ◉ Because of gender bias in the analysis of impacts and economic interventions during disasters, the economic marginalization of women is exacerbated.

Objectives

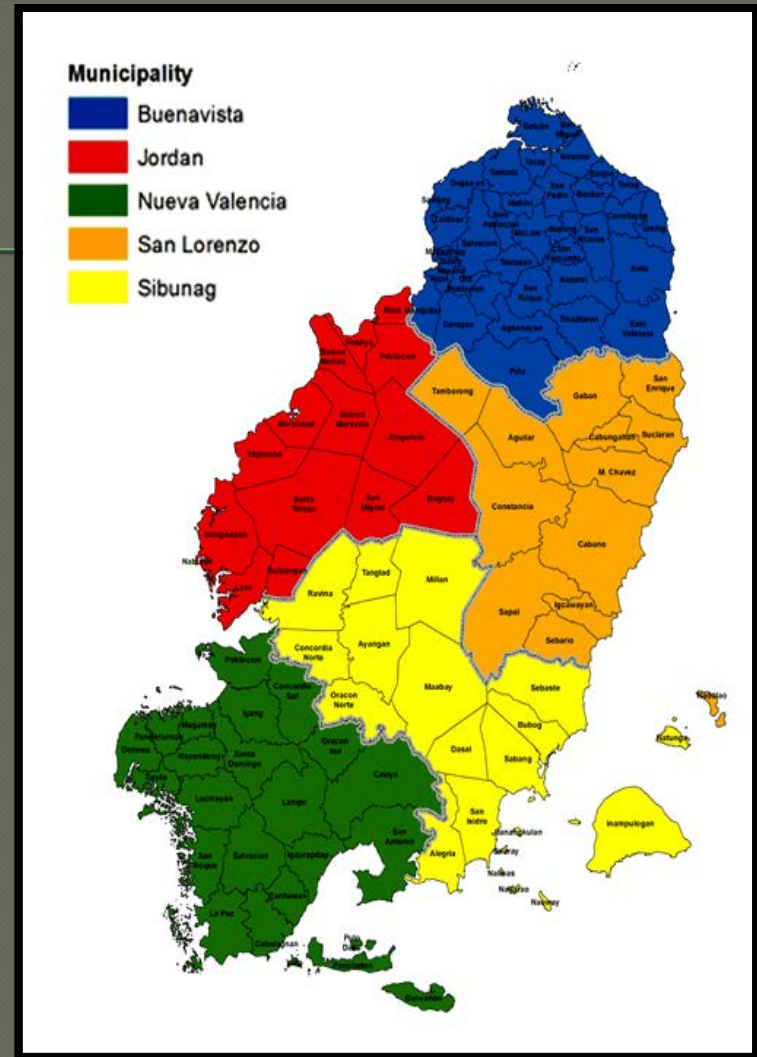
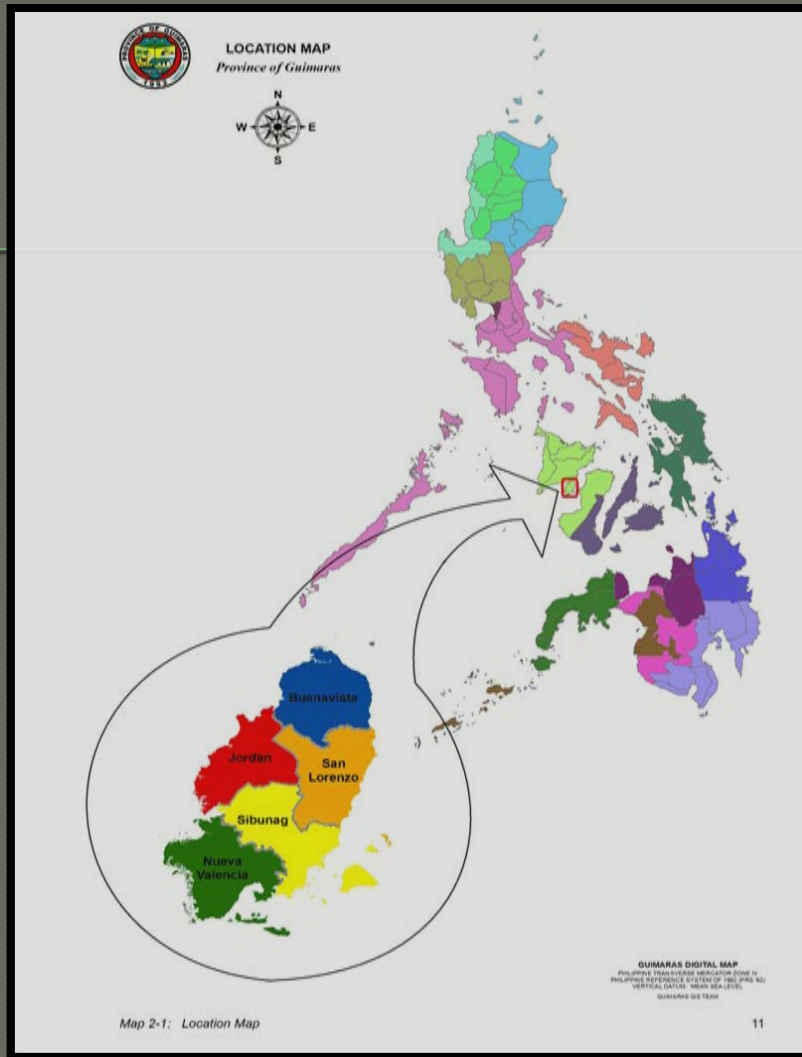
1. Analyze the economic impacts of the oil spill on women in the severely affected coastal communities in Guimaras Island, Philippines.
2. Find out if women are economically marginalized in these communities
3. Determine if economic marginalization was exacerbated after the disaster.

Methodology

- Multi stage sampling technique
 - 112 study participants from the severely affected communities of the 2006 oil spill in Guimaras Island, Philippines.
- Triangulation: Interview survey, key informant interviews, focused group discussions

Background

- This paper is part of a bigger research conducted from 2007-2008 on the analysis of women's experiences of gender bias following the MT Solar I Oil Spill in Guimaras Island, Philippines
- It focuses on economic marginalization of coastal women during disaster events.



Source: www.gov.guimaras.ph

Figure 1: Location and Administrative Maps of Guimaras Island, Philippines

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- In August 2006, the tanker M/T Solar I sank in Guimaras Island in central Philippines and spilled about 2.6 million liters of bunker fuel.
 - The oil spill affected three municipalities and about 20,000 individuals living along the coasts.
 - Small scale fishing was the most affected sector.

The Affected Municipalities

Municipality	Population	Number of Households	Number of Households Affected	
Nueva Valencia	35,475	7,757	2,185	
Sibunag	19,132	3,679	1,088	
San Lorenzo	23,293	4,395	371	
TOTAL	77,900	15,831	3,644	

Economic Marginalization Prior to the Oil Spill

Women's Roles in Fishing:

- ◉ Assisting husband in preparing/fixing the fishing gear.
- ◉ Gleaning and shell gathering along the shores with girls and elderly women.
- ◉ Fry gathering (done in shallow, usually waist-deep waters)

- ◉ Fishing in mangrove areas
- ◉ Assisting husband in maintaining fish traps.
- ◉ Going offshore fishing with their husbands in the absence of an able-bodied son or close young male relative.
- ◉ Marketing fresh, dried or salted fish
- ◉ Fish drying/salting

○ Fishing resources in the area are male dominated:

- Offshore fishing grounds are the domains of men
- Females are limited along shallow waters, shores and mangrove areas.

- Economic marginalization is evident even prior to the oil spill:
 - offshore fishing grounds are exclusive to men
 - shallow waters, shores and mangrove areas are left to women since fishing along these areas is considered “lighter, easier and less productive”
 - control of these “marginal fishing grounds” are not even exclusive to women alone as men also fish in these areas

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- roles of women in the entire fishing activity are only supportive to that of men.
 - even the fishing households' most common alternative source of income (agricultural and agricultural labor) is also male dominated.

The Effect of the Oil Spill

- Fishing and related livelihoods were disrupted by the oil spill.
- Women bore most of the brunt since the disaster was worst along the shorelines and mangrove areas (tidal action brought the oil and left the sludge along the shores)
- Gleaning and shallow water fishing completely stopped for several months.

Response to the Oil Spill

- ① The immediate concern was the provision of temporary income to affected families and individuals
- ① The assistance program to the oil-spill affected fishers included:
 1. Relief operations – distribution of food stuff
 2. Temporary work – cash-for-work program, minor construction, community clean-ups
 3. Livelihood – vegetable gardening, food processing.

Projects for Oil Spill Affected Fishing Households

Projects	Number
Clean & Green	10
Vegetable Prod	38
Construction	15
Animal Dispersal (chicken)	1
Food Processing	1
Total	65

Number of Projects and Male/Female Distribution of Beneficiaries at the Study Site

Project	No. of Projects	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Clean & Green Program	7	79	75	26	25	105
Vegetable Prod	24	218	57	166	43	384
Construction	7	105	91	11	9	116
Animal Dispersal	1	2	11	16	89	18
Food Processing	1	7	32	15	68	22
Total	40	411	64	234	36	645

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- Three out of five projects had higher percentage of male beneficiaries.
 - These are also the major projects in number and expenditure.
 - Clean-up activities in the community and gardening are often associated with females but most of the beneficiaries of these projects were male.
 - Minor construction work was clearly male dominated.
 - Food processing and animal dispersal beneficiaries were mostly females

Clean-up Operation



Source of picture: www.greenpeace.org



Source of picture: www.chrispforr.net

Generally,

- Men benefitted more from the projects both in terms of number and aggregate amount.
- Economic marginalization of women was exacerbated by the oil spill
 - women's livelihoods were affected more than any other sector
 - they received less of the benefits
 - their needs were considered less important leading to minimal institutional interventions

Conclusion and Recommendation

- The results of the study affirm that disasters affect men and women differently.
- It also highlights the importance of using gender perspective in analyzing economic impacts of disasters.
- Economic interventions for disaster victims (relief operations, income provision and food security) must consider the spheres of economic activity of men and women for equitable distribution of benefits
- Disaster preparedness and response programs from mitigation (e.g. early warning systems) to rehabilitation (e.g. relief operation) should be gender-sensitive and gender-fair.

Thank you!