

Ethnomedical documentation of and community health education for selected  
Philippine ethnolinguistic groups: the Dibabaon people of Laak, Compostela Valley  
Province, Philippines

A collaborative project of

Philippine Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health Care, Department of Health,  
Sta Cruz, Manila

University of the Philippines Manila, Ermita, Manila

University of the Philippines Mindanao, Bago Oshiro, Davao City

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Philippines has many indigenous people belonging to more than 120 distinct ethnolinguistic groups. Each ethnolinguistic group has a rich culture of practices, including those which refer to healing of their sick people. Mostly living in the mountains, they depend on herbal plants and other natural products to treat their sick. There is need to document, and hopefully preserve the beneficial healing traditions of our indigenous peoples. This study documented the ethnomedical knowledge of five Dibabaon communities in the municipality of Laak, Compostela Valley Province. This included the plants and other natural products being used as medicinal agents by the Dibabaon people and their beliefs and practices on health, diseases and healing. We also prepared culturally acceptable health education messages. Social preparation was established by coordinating with the local government unit of Laak and holding consultation meetings with the leaders of the Dibabaons who gave the approval to conduct the study in the communities. The researcher lived and integrated with these communities during the period from July 1999 to May 2000. Conducting informal meetings, *pulong-pulong*s and community involvement were done to gain trust and closeness with the highlanders. In data gathering, actual interviews among Dibabaons who had knowledge on medicinal plants were conducted. To validate the gathered data the researcher used focus group discussions. Seven major informants were selected and interviewed based on their reputation of active practice of traditional healing in the community. Other informants included mothers and guides who could identify medicinal plants. Participant observation was also done by the researcher in documenting traditional health practice, during rituals, *manawagtawag* or calling of their *abyan* (spiritfriend) for the researcher's blessing and guidance and during child delivery, methods used by the *baylan* and the *managamhunay* for easy and safe delivery. Collection of specimen vouchers was done based on the availability of the plants in the area. Guides were selected based on the recommendation of the *baylan* and his knowledge of identifying the plants. We were able to collect only 23 plant samples as the others were hard to find. The need for a community-based health program should be established in these Dibabaon communities to sustain urgent health services and an educational program to help in the advocacy to preserve their rich tradition not only in health but in all aspects of their culture.

**KEYWORDS**

*Baylan*

Ethnomedical

Dibabaon  
Philippines  
Ethnolinguistic

## INTRODUCTION

Far beyond the fast-paced rhythm of modern life there is another reality, older perhaps than the first recorded civilizations. It is a way of seeing the world that is as old as human consciousness itself. It is the way of the indigenous people's traditional healer or *baylan* who dwells in the realm of spirit and myth. What they do is a mystery to most people. Many believe that the indigenous people have a common origin in our country, the Philippines which is home to more than 13 million indigenous peoples belonging to more than 120 distinct ethnolinguistic groups. Most of the indigenous Filipinos live in the mountains or their fringes, or near the sea. They are found throughout the archipelago.

Modern civilization is slowly overcoming the indigenous culture of the Dibabaon people especially the world of the traditional healers. Many names have been called them: quack doctor, priest, artist, visionary, master of ecstasy. In the past, they have been branded as sorcerers, witch doctors, charlatans and voodoo priests. Today some claim they can perform miracles, while others dismiss their knowledge as worthless superstition. To western civilization, *baylans* and their enduring view of life remain a provocative, challenging mystery. With their ancient traditions, they can give us a sense of what we all once were. In their memories may lie the origin and essence of the entire human race, filled with the scents and sounds and possibilities of an Earth vibrant with life. We must go back to a world where *baylanism* exists, before that world is gone.

Very few studies have been done on indigenous Philippine medicine. We wish to address the need to document, and hopefully, preserve and propagate the beneficial healing traditions of our indigenous peoples. We also wish to search for potentially useful therapeutic agents among the ethnomedical practices of our indigenous peoples before the said healing traditions are overcome by the twin threats of forest and sea degradation, and onslaught of lowland mainstream culture.

We hope that with the information that we shall gather from the research, we shall be able to help in the advocacy for the right of the indigenous peoples and for the preservation of their ancestral homelands in consonance with preserving the biodiversity of our country's forest and seas.

For this particular research we focus on the Dibabaon people of Compostela Valley Province particularly in the municipality of Laak.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Understanding the indigenous healing practices of the Dibabaon people requires a great deal of knowledge about their history, culture, beliefs, and traditions on healing practices. It is on this knowledge that we can arrive and strive to capture the rich traditions of healing practices of the Dibabaon people. Many so-called modern drugs are derived from the medicinal or herbal plants used by indigenous peoples. This study attempted to find out the indigenous healing practices of the indigenous people as a first step in discovering drugs and other uses of plants.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the study were:

1. To document the plants and other natural products being used as medicinal agents by the Dibabaon people;
2. To document their beliefs and practices on health, disease and healing;
3. To prepare culturally acceptable health education messages for the Dibabaon people;
4. To help in the advocacy to preserve the indigenous peoples' ancestral homelands, as well as the biodiversity of their ecosystem

## METHODOLOGY

The researcher gained the acceptance of the community by coordinating with the local government unit of Laak, holding courtesy calls and appointments with the municipal mayor and municipal tribal chieftain down to the barangay and tribal leaders. Several consultation meetings were held with these persons and the community who gave the approval to conduct the study in the Dibabaon communities. The National Commission for Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) also helped the researcher in identifying contacts in the community.

Study sites were selected based on criteria to capture the rich tradition of healing practices of the Dibabaon people.

Key informants were selected based on their reputation of active practice of traditional healing in the community. Eight major informants particularly *baylans* and *managamhunays* were identified and interviewed. Other informants included mothers and guides who could identify medicinal plants that they were using.

The researcher had a hard time searching for written documents on the culture of the Dibabaon people because there were not enough records from different institutions, museums and school libraries.

Actual interviews were conducted to gather information about the medicinal plants and other natural products used by the traditional healers or by community.

The researcher also did participant observation, particularly on the *manawagtawag* calling or recognizing his *abyan* in asking permission and to bless the researcher during the plant collection activity which was done in the dwellings of the *diwatas*. The researcher also conducted focus group discussions among the community's health care givers to validate and evaluate the documented medicinal plants.

Plant collection was done on the last month of the study. Only 23 plants were collected due to the unavailability the documented medicinal plants and the short collection time.

Whenever Dibabaons see themselves on photographs, they seem happy and keep on asking for another shot. They also enjoy listening to their recorded voice and ask to keep on playing it repeatedly for them or for their fellow tribesmen to hear.

The Dibabaon community in the different study sites together with the elders and the traditional healers were gathered to validate the information regarding the medicinal plants and on Dibabaon people whom the researcher was able to document for further corrections and suggestions by the community.

### ACTIVITIES DONE

A literature search was conducted first so the researcher could familiarize himself with culture of the Dibabaon people. Different government agencies were contacted particularly the National Commission for Indigenous Peoples to gain access to the said research. The local government unit of the municipality of Laak was also sought for the permission to conduct the research study. Community meetings, community gatherings and informal meetings were also conducted to gain entry and to help the community understand the importance of the study. Community integration, immersion and involvement were conducted to gain trust from the community. Key informants were selected based on their reputation and knowledge about herbal medicines and traditional healing practices, their uses and preparations for common ailments. Focus group discussions were also conducted to document and validate the effectiveness of the documented *materia medica*.

Several *pulong-pulong*s were also conducted in the usual hangouts of the people such as *sarisari* stores and resting huts (*puroks*) regarding the importance and significance of the study.

The study was conducted in the interior part of the municipality of Laak, Compostela Valley Province where concentration of the Dibabaon people is very high and where they still practice their culture. The areas covered were Sitios Magaad, Kinabalian, Tagmanok and San Miguel, all in Brgy Kidawa and in Brgy Bullocan, Laak, Comval Province.

Data was gathered through actual interviews with the key informants and the people living in the communities. Thirty-one plants were documented in Brgy Bullocan. After gathering information on the traditional healing practices and the different materials used, plant and material samples were gathered for taxonomy and documentation purposes. Photodocumentation and audiodocumentation were also conducted to reinforce and supplement the findings of the study.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **THE DIBABAON PEOPLE OF LAAK**

The Dibabaon people are sometimes referred to as Divavaoan, Dibabawon and Debabawon. A very high concentration of the Dibabaon is found in the interior part of the municipality of Laak, ComVal Province. They are also found in the southern part of Agusan and in the western part of Monkayo, ComVal Province, westward to the Saug River and north of the Maputi creek and the Buan river.

#### **The beginnings of the Dibabaon people**

Datu Makawoy was the son of a couple whose names could not be recalled by even their forefathers who told the story. Datu Makawoy was known by their tribe as a man of mystery. He was born on the grave of his mother as she was pregnant when she died. When his father visited the grave of his mother on the ninth month of her death, he saw a baby on the grave. Without any hesitation, he took the baby and believed that the baby was his son. He called the baby Makawoy or in Cebuano term Makaluod because he breastfed himself on his dead mother.

Datu Makawoy became the bravest man who ever lived during his time. He was also the first *bagani* or warrior of his tribe. As time went by, he was rewarded with two sons, Mandavon and Dagohoy. Together they fought in times of war and were never defeated. They became the most respected and feared men in their place and in neighboring towns. Their names were popular not only in terms of fighting or war but also in leading their tribe. They were known to be mighty and strong, always on top, and always settled on top of the mountains. Since then Datu Makawoy called themselves Dibabaons or Debabawons which means *ibabaw* in Tagalog and Cebuano for they were superior and lived on top of the mountains.

#### **Beliefs of the Dibabaon**

Talihan is the one whom Dibabaons believed to be their guide in everyday living. If they have a journey, they ask Talihan if they should pursue the journey. Talihan is the one who gave signs of danger and good ways of their journey or other activities in life.



It is also believed that Talihan came from the *tagamalings* who are invincible, good spirits sent by God to protect and watch over them. *Tagamalings* are the good spirits who were sent by God to protect and watch them. *Tagamalings* are the ones who warn the people if misfortune is coming their way. *Tagamalings* were also the ones who took care of Datu Makaway when he was inside the womb of his dead mother.

### **Customary laws of the Dibabaon**

The Dibabaons have their own laws and judicial proceedings. If one broke the law, he was tried by their own judge called *maghuhukom*. *Hustesiya sa Debabawon* was first made by the first *Maghuhukom* in the person of Ampunan, one of the sons of Mandavon. Together, the *maghuhukom* and the *babaylanon* or the *baylan* are the ones who interrogate the person suspected to break the law. For the ceremonies and rituals prior to the hearing or trial, the *babaylanon* prepares a huge pan called *kawa* with boiling water in it, fueled by firewood made of an *alho* (a wooden mortar). The *baylan* also places a bracelet under the *kawa* and the *babaylanon* and the *maghuhukom* starts the trial.

The suspect's hands are placed inside the *kawa* with boiling water. If he feels the heat, then he is guilty of the crime. If the suspect cannot feel anything, he is acquitted of the crime.

### **Dibabaon soldiers/warriors**

The Dibabaons called their warriors *amada*. *Amadas* were created by Mandavon to protect them and kill whoever attacks their tribe. In times of war (*pangayaw*), these men with no forgiveness kill all men and capture some for slaves.

### **Social-political structure**

Males are more powerful. They are the heads of the family and even of the community. Females are the ones who do the household chores. In farming, males swidden and plow the field. The females do the rest of the work until the crop is harvested.

### **Hunting**

In hunting, Dibabaons used the *kawit*, a spear they use to kill wild pigs. A *kawit* approximately weighs a kilo. It has an iron head and a long wooden body. There are two kinds of spear which they use, the *kawit*, one with an iron spearhead and the *iwagud*, a spear with a bamboo spearhead, used as a *batik* or trap.

*Busog* and the *pana* or the bow and arrow are also used by the Dibabaons for hunting. Other hunting equipment includes the *bari*, a curved knife with an outer edge blade and the *sundang* or the jungle bolo used to cut a tree or branch of a tree.

### **The making of a *datu***

According to Alfredo T Tiamsom, Mandayas, Atas, and Dibabaons attended the ceremony. It was the installation of two new *datu*s. Early in the morning, two altars were erected in the grounds adjacent to the palace of Carlito Buntas. Instead of blood sucking, the blood of a chicken was allowed to trickle down the flooring of the altar, then to a bundle of *anitos* (around 15) tied together. The man to be installed was seated in a throne surrounded by all the chieftains present.

A *baylan* received from Buntas a chicken egg, and with this in one hand, and the other brandishing a *kampilan*, the dancing commenced until a trance-like effect became discernible (this took around 15-20 minutes). The *baylan* then approached the candidate, one end of the egg was opened to remove the white, and then the *baylan* dropped the yolk on the palm of the candidate. If the yolk breaks, the ceremony is immediately stopped. This is understood to mean that the *diwata* is not favorably inclined to the man being made a *datu*.

### **Marriage**

Dibabaon male and female do not make their own arrangements in marriage. The parents are the ones who make arrangements. If the parents see their daughter making arrangements with a fellow, the parents will send their daughter to a relative in a far place. The boy's father informs the girl's parents on his initial visit that his son would like to marry their daughter. If the girl likes this fellow, her father now decides and makes arrangements on the bride's dowry. The boy's parents must take care of paying debts incurred by the girl.

### **Economy**

#### Agriculture

During the dry season, men burn and till the land until is ready for planting rice or root crops. Clearing and burning of primary vegetation (in Dibabaon term *galas*) on areas to be planted with rice had to be completed before the planting season begins, particularly from mid January to March. Cultivation of upland rice and plowing the field for corn production are major concerns during these months. During this time, farming takes priority over other activities.

Women play a major role in this season. After the men have cleared and tilled the land, they are the ones who continue cultivating the land and maintaining the field. Both men and women plant rice. The upland method of planting is called *hasok* where the ground is dug using a pole and rice is placed in the hole in the ground.

Besides planting and cultivating the farm, women also spent much time as primary caregivers to their children and doing domestic activities such as food preparation and firewood collection.

### Abaca

Dibabaons have for a long time engaged in the abaca fiber industry. Abaca plants are abundant in the interior and forested part of the municipality. Some of the Dibabaons go to the hinterlands of Agusan Sur to gather abaca. They also use these fibers for their dresses. They weave and dye them and make them into clothing materials.

### **Ethnic musical instruments**

The *kudlong* is a two-stringed musical instrument used by Dibabaons for expressing one's self and for rituals done by the *baylans*. Sometimes they play it for relaxation and as an accompaniment for a lullaby. The *kudlong* is also used for special occasions. Adela Andao, a *kudlong* player from Sitio Magaad learned to play it when she was young. She learned it from an uncle who gave her the *kudlong*. Now, she is sad that her children and grandchildren do not know how to play the *kudlong*. She is afraid the rich ethnic music of the Dibabaons will vanish. The *gimba* is a musical instrument of the Dibabaon like a drum or a tam-tam with deerskin. It is used in rituals, war dance and other social gatherings. The *pa-indag* or a bamboo flute with a deep-toned rhythm usually played during quiet moments.

### **Dibabaon tale of creation**

Long before the dinosaurs lived, there was no land in this planet. There was water that enveloped the Earth. God or Magbabaya then called all the birds and asked them if they saw land. All of the birds that had shook their heads save for one – the *limukon*, who said, “yes, I saw a portion of land”. Magbabaya told him to get some soil. The *limukon* flew and brought some soil. When the *limukon* arrived, Magbabaya equally divided the soil among the birds and commanded them to scatter the soil. Magbabaya used his power to create the beauty and wonders of the Earth which was then full of water. He created all creatures, great and small. As the soil brought by the *limukon* was, still the biggest portion of the Earth is water. *Limukon* is considered by the Dibabaons as a bird of luck.

## STUDY SITE DESCRIPTION

### **Geographic location**

Laak is located at the north central of Compostela Valley Province, at 8°00' to 7°38'51.73" latitude and 125°40' to 125°59'30" longitude. It is bounded on the north by the province of Agusan del Sur; on the east by the municipality of Monkayo; on the southwest by Kapalong and on the south by Aasuncion (all of Davao province). It is approximately 110 kilometers northeast of Davao City, the regional center, 55 kilometers north of Tagum City and 80 kilometers from Nabunturan, the provincial capital.

### **Land area**

The municipality of Laak covers a total land area of 85,500 hectares representing 10.5 percent of the total land area of Davao Province. The municipality is composed of forty regular *barangays*, the largest of which is Brgy Kidawa covering an area of 22.14 percent of the municipality of Laak.

### **Location and accessibility**

The study site is located in Barangay Kidawa, particularly the two *sitios* of San Miguel and Magaad which have high concentration of the Dibabaon cultural group. It is 150 km northeast of Davao City, 95 km north of Tagum City and about 180 km from the eastern side of Butuan City. It is found at geographical coordinates latitude 7°54'00" to 7°56'00" and longitude 126°50'00" to 126°56'00". The area is approximately 200-500 m above sea level. It can be reached through public transportation using bus or a motorcycle locally named *habal-habal* from Davao City passing through Asuncion town, Compostela Valley or through Trento from Agusan del Sur side at Brgy Bullocan.

### **Climate**

The area has a typical type II climate characterized by a short dry season and a very pronounced rainy period. The mean average rainfall is about 168.37 mm. From June

to December, the average rainfall is 172.52 mm. Average lowest temperature is 27.24°C and the average highest temperature is 28.22°C recorded in January and May, respectively.

### **Topography**

Topography of most of the *barangays* is characterized by undulating hills to rolling uplands with elevation ranging from 100 to 300 meters and slopes greater than 8 percent. This covers about 80.11 percent of the land. The most suitable land is used for agro-forestry and for planting corn, bananas and vegetables.

The lowlands represent only about 13.92 percent of the land. This provides the most important development resources for various agricultural, industrial and settlement needs of the future population growth in the area.

The highlands correspond principally to mountainous areas with extremely steep slopes. This is where most of the remaining forest covers of the area are found, located in the northwestern part of the municipality.

The highest peak is Mt Ampawid approximately 844 meters above sea level.

Kidawa has rolling rugged terrain. It has a wide range of hilly and rolling uplands with an elevation of 200-500 meters above sea level and average slopes of 25-30 percent. The land is suitable for farming and agroforestry employing diversification of species and multicropping. The lowland can be converted to rainfed and irrigated rice production areas.

The *barangay* site and its flat areas are suitable for irrigated rice farming but needs expertise to realize the development plans. Three major mountains are found in the northeastern portion of Barangay Kidawa proper, namely, Tagmanok, Kinabalian and Maroot.

### **Water resources**

The water resources of Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province come from three major rivers (Kinabalian, Tagmanok and Baubo) and from several minor tributaries and noticeable patches of wetlands at the lower slope near the flat areas. The water resource system has several head water sources which are potential sources of potable water and for agricultural water requirements. Some of these rivers and wetlands are currently undergoing development such as for irrigation and fishpond activities.

### **Mother tongue**

In 1995, Cebuano ranked first as the principal tongue of 68.85 percent of the people of Laak, followed the Dibabaon at 11.59 percent, Boholano at 8.14 percent and others at 11.52 percent. At the study site, 85% of the people are Dibabaon.

## DIBABAON CONCEPT OF ILLNESS, HEALTH AND HEALING

Dibabaons perform a solemn sacrifice called *balilig* (*balilic*) to reap a good harvest, to achieve victory over the enemy and to cure some ailments. They also believe that offended deities in forested parts or in some areas where their dwellings are disturbed by any person can cause sickness. If not propitiated, the offended deity can even cause death. It is the *baylan's* task to ask the offended *busaw* (evil spirit) for forgiveness and to leave the ailing person. Also, they believe that when the lowlanders come to their place and cut the trees, many misfortunes have come to their lives and they think that the offended deities that own and live in the forest have punished them.

A person who is healthy is a person who is lively, works in the field for their food and to earn money and has no ailment that attacks his/her body system. Some of Dibabaons hide their ailments and body conditions. They have to work even if they do not feel well. They feel that they have to work for the benefit of their families and due to poverty.

## LIFE STAGES

The life stages of the Dibabaons are as follows:

Infant – *Maintuk pad na bata*

Child – *Maaslag na bata*

Adolescent – *Ulitawhay ud*

Adult – *Manigaun*

Elder – *Apo*

## DIBABAON HEALING PRACTICES

### **Practices of the *baylan***

The *baylan* is a spiritual healer, a person who is thought to have healing powers that come from the supernatural, often through dreams and visions. It is also believed that he is able to cast out evil spirits as well as cure sick people.

The *baylan's* healing practices differ in various areas. In performing rituals, some *baylans* use white chicken and its products (egg, heather, etc) as their sacrifice in

calling the offended deities to recognize their offenders. Others use pigs depending on the illness and the weight of the offense. As they chant to call their *diwatas*, they throw a spear or a *kawit* to the pig and then suck the pig's blood.

The *baylan* would often call earthly spirits in healing practices or other Dibabaon rituals. These spirits are called their *abyan*. In performing rituals, the *baylan* uses an *agong*, *gimba* (their term for *tambol*, a wooden drum covered with deerskin) and *humaginghings* (brass bells) and performs a *baylan's* dance.

In their world, the individual, the community, and the environment are woven together in the world of spirits. In each community there is one *baylan* who mediates between all these forces and keeps them in balance.

The *baylan* and his community share a set of beliefs that form a collective worldview that dominates the psychological and physical experience of each person. One difference between their view and ours is that we separate the physical and the spiritual world. They do not. In their minds there is no barrier between dream and reality, and they move easily between one and the other.

The *baylan* is both physician and priest, and the condition of the spirit is as important as the body's physical state. Having dealt with the spiritual aspect of the illness, the *baylan* will now prescribe a herbal remedy to deal with the physical ailment.

Young generations of the Dibabaon people, distracted by the fast-paced rhythms of modern world, and are losing interest in becoming *baylans*.

### **The making of a *baylan***

Salvador Ente, aka, Eday, a *baylan*, got his knowledge when he was just 25 years old in his workplace. He was an abaca fiber worker, *manghagkutay* or extractor. One day in the field an abaca fiber stood in front of him. He tried to strike it with a *sundang*, a jungle bolo. He struck it several times but was not able to hit it. He stopped striking it and a man appeared and talked to him, "why are you hitting me when I will not do harm to you. I appeared to you because I want you to cure people. Accommodate anyone who needs your knowledge and curing power for I will be at your side helping you." Since that time, he knows when someone needs his help. At first, he was afraid he could not cure people but when the time came for him to cure people the *abyan* helped him.

Abraham Dilag, aka Abla, is a *baylan* and at the same time, a *managamhunay*. He said he has been in the practice of traditional medicine for almost 30 years. He got his knowledge as a *baylan* a long time ago and developed it. His knowledge as *managamhunay* or local midwife was learned from his ancestors. He is also a registered midwife in his *barangay*.

### **Practices of the *managamhunay* or *mananabang***

The *managamhunay* is a female local midwife and herbal healer. Most of the *managamhunays* have their own methods of assisting births and healing. Her forefathers taught the knowledge she has.

She applies *hilot* or traditional accupressure to expectant mothers during their pregnancy period to place the fetus in its proper position or to induce pregnancy. In the practice of *hilot*, most *managamhunays* apply certain herbs to expectant mothers for their health and for their babies'. On the day of birth, *managamhunay* uses previously heated *palwa sa pasan* (rattan leaf sheath) to cut the umbilicus (*pusod*) of the infant. The *matenanu* or placenta is below the house for safekeeping and for the good health of the baby. Most of the *managamhunays* are female.

### **The making of the *managamhunay* or *mananabang***

Pacita Ente is a *managamhunay*. She got her skills from her forefathers and by participant observation in times of actual delivery.

Rosalinda Amak, aka Manang Sapián, a *managamhunay*, from Sitio Magaad also got her skills from her forefathers who taught her at an early age. She enhanced her knowledge by watching and helping her mentor deliver babies.

Luisa Tabag, a *managamhunay* and key informant from Brgy Bullocan got her knowledge from assisting delivery of babies when she was young. She enhanced her knowledge and skills during her younger days. Her *abyan* also help her in assisting deliveries.

### **OTHER ACTIVITIES DONE**

The researcher also interacted with the Dibabaon children in Bullocan during their play time. He helped in household chores like fetching water, feeding the animals (carabaos, etc). The researcher also participated in social gatherings like *panagtigum* where the elders and women gather and play their ethnic instruments, dance and sing to refresh their traditional songs, music and dances.

### **Witnessing a child delivery**

The researcher witnessed an expectant mother together with the *baylan* and the *managamhunay* waiting for the infant to come out. The expectant mother was on labor for 3 days, it was her first expected baby. For 3 days the *managamhunay* never left the expectant parents to assist them in delivering their first baby. The expectant mother held on to a hanging rope with her husband, while the *managamhunay*, the *baylan* and others awaited for the baby to come out. The *baylan* examined the womb of the mother after she passed water.

The *managamhunay* offered a chicken and did some ritual prior to the delivery of the child. The offering to the *diwatas* and gods was for safe delivery. The



*managamhunay* utter Dibabaon words, offered the chicken up into the air and put some blood on the abdomen of the expectant mother in pain.

The researcher together with the key persons had waited for the baby to come out for almost two hours of heart-pounding tear-dropping moment when the expectant mother cried in pain and struggled for dear life. A healthy baby was delivered at 11:40 am, May 14, 2000.

The researcher shed a tear after a tremendous and wonderful moment in his life witnessing the delivery of a baby. The reason for the delay was the umbilical cord was coiled around the baby's body. For the Dibabaons, when the umbilical cord is coiled around the body they should place a floor scrub (made from coconut husk) above the head and tap it for some unexplainable reason.

The *baylan*, who is also a registered midwife, cut the umbilical cord of the baby using medical scissors. He said that before, they used the leaves of rattan to cut the umbilical cord. The baby was given her first bath.

The researcher also conducted community gatherings in validating information on the documented medicinal plants. At the same time, the Dibabaon community rendered their various ethnic dances and played traditional musical instruments. The Dibabaon community together with the *baylans*, *managamhunays* and the elders also showed some methods of healing patients spiritually and physically including the *baylan's* dances and chants.

### **Case history**

The researcher encountered an interesting male traditional healer. He had a soft-toned voice, like that of an old woman's, and tattoo in his eyebrows. Abraham Dilag, aka, Abla, is a transvestite *baylan* who is also a registered or licensed *barangay* midwife whose occupation is traditional healing and handling child deliveries in Laak and nearby towns. Abla does not have a wife and lives alone in his small house situated near the *barangay* proper, ready for emergencies. Despite his being a cross dresser, he has a good reputation and is one of the most respected people in the community. Unlike other male healers, he hangs around with his fellow *managamhunays*. He plants *camote*, corn and vegetables in his farm for his and his relatives' consumption.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

We have all these long years under foreign influence and orientation dismally failed to look inward and deep into our roots on which to base what and how we are to learn. The researcher recommends the development of well-defined and direct educational plans and actions for our indigenous people. Establishment of formal schools developing a culture of their own, rich in knowledge, skill and values. Such knowledge, skills and values should be transmitted to succeeding generations through techniques and methods arising from the indigenous people's own ingenuity and tradition.

The need for a community-based health program should be established in these Dibabaon communities to sustain urgent health services. An educational program should also be established to help in the advocacy to preserve their rich tradition not only in health but in all aspects of their culture.

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## APPENDICES

Table 1. Average rainfall of Laak

Laak experiences 2 prevailing wind directions; the northeasterly wind or the *amihan* which prevails from December to April while the southwesterly winds or the *habagat* occurs from June to November.

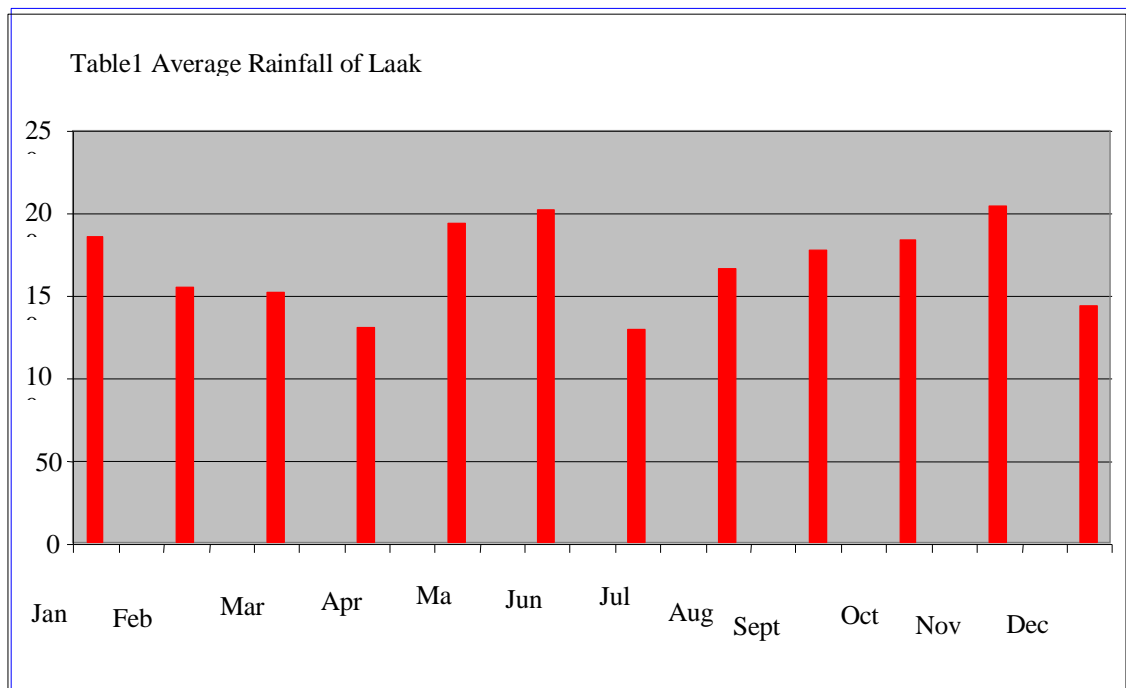


Table 2. Average temperature of Laak

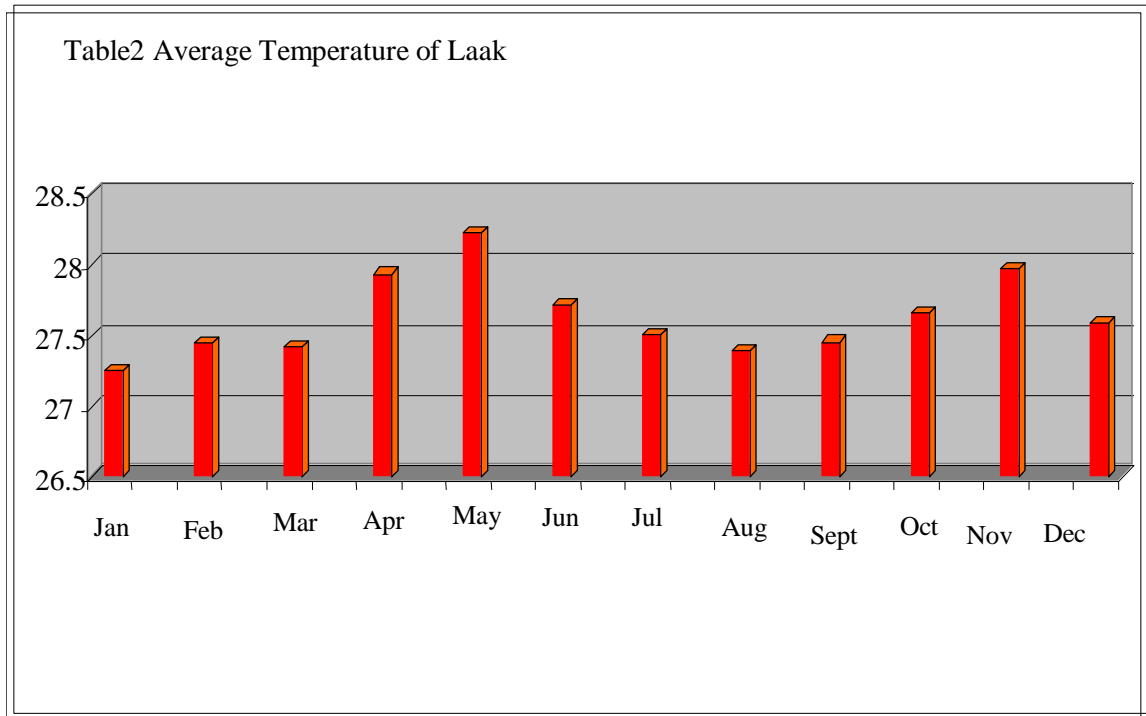


Table 3. Documented *materia medica* of the Dibabaon people of Laak

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Agutay* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Wounds	<i>Ubod</i>	Get the sap of the <i>ubod</i> .	Drop some sap on the affected part.	3 individual interviews 1 FGD of 5

Scientific name:

Local name: *Amayong* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
As child's vitamin	Roots	Boil in water and let it cool.	Drink the decoction.	5 individual interviews

Scientific name: *Blumea balsamifera*

Local name(s): *Alinkakan* (Dibabaon), *gabon* (Cebuano), *sambong* (Tagalog)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Rheumatism	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Rub on the affected part.	4 individual interviews 2 FGD of 7
Malaria	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	3 individual interviews
Cough	Leaves	Extract the juice of the leaves.	Drink the juice.	5 individual interviews 2 FGD of 5
Colds	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	5 individual interviews 1 FGD of 7
Swelling	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Place the preheated leaves on the affected part.	4 individual interviews
Excessive bleeding	Leaves and roots	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	5 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Adgao* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
<i>Galing sa sakit</i> (For recuperating patients)	Leaves	Boil in water.	Use the water in taking a bath.	3 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Anagdong* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Cough	Bark	Get some bark.	Boil the bark in water and drink.	4 individual interviews
Body pains	Bark	Cut the bark.	Boil the bark in water and drink decoction.	3 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Aga-un* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Stomachache	Bark	Boil the bark in water.	Drink the decoction.	3 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Abihid* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Stomachache	Root bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	2 individual interviews

Scientific name: *Persea americana*

Local name(s): *Avocado*

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Stomachache	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the	5 individual

			decoction.	interviews 2 FGD of 5 and 7
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Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Amangpangan* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Sore eyes	Sap	Cut the young branch and get the sap.	Drop some sap on the affected eyes.	2 individual interviews 2 FGD of 5 and 7

Scientific name: *Cassia alata*

Local name(s): *Asunting* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Tinea	Leaves	Clean the leaves.	Rub the leaves on the affected part.	5 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Bawbagun* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Abortifacient	Trunk	Boil it in a small amount of water.	Drink the decoction.	4 individual interviews 2 FGD of 5 and 7
<i>Bughat</i> (Post partum relapse)	Trunk	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	4 individual interviews 2 FGD of 5 and 7

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Ba* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Birth spacing	Water or sap	Cut the plant and get the sap or water.	Drink the water or sap.	4 individual interview 2 FGD of 5 and 7

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Balite* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s)	Preparation	Direction for use	Source of
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	used		and remarks	information
Fracture	Bark	Get the bark which is equivalent to the fractured part.	Place the bark on the fractured part.	5 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Babanganon* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Wounds	Sap of the bark	Cut the bark and get the sap.	Drop some sap on the wounds.	4 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Bianggud* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
<i>Bughat</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	3 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Cogon* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
To induce delivery	Roots	Collect roots equivalent to an arm then boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	6 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Dabo-dabo* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Cough	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	2 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Dugo-an* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
<i>Bughat</i>	Root bark	Boil the root bark in water.	Drink the decoction.	3 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Dita* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Malaria	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	4 individual interviews 2 FGD of 5 and 7

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Gapas* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
<i>Bughat</i>	Roots	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	5 individual interviews
Headache	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Place the preheated leaves on the head.	4 individual interviews

Scientific name: *Psidium guajava*

Local name(s): *Bayabas* (Dibabaon, Tagalog)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Stomachache	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	4 individual interviews
	Shoots	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	4 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Hayagna* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Goiter	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	4 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Hilbas* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
<i>Bughat</i>	Leaves	Boil in water.	Use the water in for bathing.	6 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Hagonoy* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Infected wounds	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Extract the juice and drop it on the	7 individual interviews

			infected wound.	
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Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Handamay* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Swelling	Bark	Pound the bark.	Place the pounded bark on the affected part.	4 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Ipil-ipil* and deer bone

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Rheumatism	<i>Ipil-ipil</i> wood and deer bone	Burn the bone using the <i>ipil-ipil</i> wood as firewood. Wait until it turns to ashes and dilute in a glass of water.	Drink the concentrate.	2 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Kalabo* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Cough	Leaves	Preheat the leaves and extract the juice.	Drink the juice.	5 individual interviews 1 FGD of 7

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Kisol* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Cough	Sap of the fruit	Pound the fruit and extract the juice.	Apply on the patient's chest.	3 individual interviews
Convulsion	Sap of the fruit	Pound the fruit and extract the juice.	Apply all over the patient's body.	3 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Kosta* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Swelling	Leaves	Pound the leaves.	Place the pounded leaves on the affected part.	

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Lauan*

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Cough	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	5 individual interviews 1 FGD of 5

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Lunas* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Abortifacient	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	3 individual interviews 2 FGD of 5 and 7
Snake bite	Bark	Chew the bark or mix with snake oil.	Apply around the bitten part.	5 individual interviews 2 FGD of 5 and 7
Stomachache	Bark	Boil the bark in water.	Drink the decoction.	4 individual interviews 2 FGD of 5 and 6

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Langilan* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Eye disorder	Sap	Extract the juice of the bark.	Put some drops on the affected eyes.	3 individual interviews 1 FGD of 7

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Lakatan* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Wounds	Leaves	Pound the leaves.	Put the pounded leaves on the wound.	5 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Labana*

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Fracture	Leaves	Collect leaves which are equivalent to the affected part.	Preheat the leaves and place on the swollen part.	3 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Litan-ag* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Stomachache	Root bark	Get one handspan of the root and boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	5 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Libugananon* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Sore eyes	Sap	Cut the stem and get the sap.	Put some drops on the affected eyes.	4 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Mansanitas* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Stomachache	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	3 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Mayana*

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Swelling	Leaves	Pound the leaves.	Place the pounded leaves on the swollen part.	6 individual interviews
Cough	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	5 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Nato* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Swelling	Roots	Pound the roots.	Place the pounded roots on the	3 individual interviews

			swollen area.	
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Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Naga* (Dibabaon), *narra* (Cebuano)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Malaria	Bark	Boil the bark in water.	Drink the decoction.	5 individual interviews 2 FGD of 5 and 7

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Paitan* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Abortifacient	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	6 individual interviews 1 FGD of 7
Diarrhea	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	6 individual interviews 1 FGD of 7
Infected wound	Bark	Burn the bark and get the ash.	Put the ash on the wound.	6 individual interviews 1 FGD of 7
Snake bite	Bark	Chew the bark.	Rub it around the bitten area.	6 individual interviews 1 FGD of 7
Malaria	Bark	Boil the bark in water.	Drink the decoction.	6 individual interviews 1 FGD of 7
Stomachache	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction	6 individual interviews 1 FGD of 7
<i>Kabuhi</i> (Epigastric pain)	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	6 individual interviews 1 FGD of 7
Colds	Bark	Soak the bark in a hot cup of water.	Drink the decoction.	6 individual interviews 1 FGD of 7
Diarrhea with vomiting	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	6 individual interviews 1 FGD of 7

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Pan-pan* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
<i>Bughat</i>	Sap	Get the sap.	Drink the sap.	3 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Santol* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Cough	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	7 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Sampinit* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Abortifacient	Roots	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	2 individual interviews
<i>Bughat</i>	Roots	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	2 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Panyawan* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Toothache	Sap	Cut the vine and get the sap.	Drop some sap on the aching tooth.	5 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Sili*

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
<i>Tetano</i>	Fruit	Collect some ripe fruit.	Press the fruit into the infected part.	4 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Saplid* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Diarrhea with vomiting	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	3 individual interviews
Diarrhea	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	3 individual interviews
Stomachache	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	3 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Saging dinurado* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Excessive bleeding	Roots	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	3 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Payao* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Snake bite	Stem	Cut the stem which is equivalent to the bitten part.	Place the stem into the bitten part.	2 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Saging tundan* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Diarrhea	Unripe fruit plus dried leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	4 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Tanglad* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Cough	Leaves and roots	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	2 individual interviews 1 FGD of 5

Scientific name:



Local name(s): *Tubod* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
To initiate and increase lactation	Roots	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	4 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Tuba-tuba* with red leaves (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
<i>Buyag-buyag</i> (Ailment caused by earthly spirits)	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Rub on the entire body.	3 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Takipan* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Wounds	Bark	Cut the bark and extract the juice.	Drop the juice on the wounds.	5 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Togop* (Diababon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Diarrhea	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	4 individual interviews 2 FGD of 5 and 7
Stomachache	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	4 individual interviews 2 FGD of 5 and 7

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Tuba-tuba* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Body/muscle pains	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Place the leaves on the aching part.	6 individual interviews
Fracture	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Place the preheated leaves on the fractured portion.	6 individual interviews
Stomachache	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the	4 individual

			decoction.	interviews 2 FGD of 5 and 7
Swelling	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Place the preheated leaves on the swollen part.	6 individual interviews

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Tubod* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Plant part(s) used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
Stomachache	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	4 individual interviews 2 FGD of 5 and 7
To initiate and increase lactation	Roots	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.	4 individual interviews 2 FGD of 5 and 7

Scientific name:

Local name(s): *Kasili* (Dibabaon)

Indication	Part used	Preparation	Direction for use and remarks	Source of information
To induce delivery	Tail	Burn the tail until it turns to ashes.	Place the ash on the abdomen.	3 individual interviews

Table 4. Index of plants used according to diseases

Plant	Part(s) used	Preparations	Directions
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Cough

<i>Dabo-dabo</i>	Leaves	Boil the leaves in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Anagdong</i>	Bark	Get a portion of the bark which is chewable.	Chew the bark.
<i>Mayana</i>	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Tanglad</i>	Leaves/Roots	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Kalabo</i>	Leaves	Extract the juice.	Drink the extracted juice.
<i>Santol</i>	Bark	Boil in enough water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Alikakaam (Gabon)</i>	Leaves	Boil in enough water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Kisol</i>	<i>Duga sa unod</i> (Sap of root)	Pound the <i>unod</i> and get the sap.	Apply it to the patient.
<i>Lauan</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink decoction or chew the bark.

Convulsion

<i>Kisol</i>	<i>Duga sa unod</i>	Pound the <i>unod</i> and get the sap.	Apply it on the patient.
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*Kabahung*

<i>Paitan</i>	Bark	Burn the bark until it turns to ashes.	Put the ashes on the affected part.
<i>Unname</i>	Trunk	Preheat the trunk.	Place the heated trunk on the affected part.
<i>Hagonoy</i>	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Extract the juice and drop on the affected portion.

Wounds

<i>Agutay</i>	<i>Ubod</i>	Get the sap of the <i>ubod</i> .	Put some sap on the affected part.
<i>Babanganon</i>	Sap of the bark	Cut the bark and get the sap.	Drop some sap on the affected part.
<i>Takistan</i>	Bark	Cut the bark and get the sap.	Drop some sap on the affected part.
<i>Lakatan</i>	Leaves	Pound the leaves.	Apply on the wound.

#### Snake bite

<i>Pay-ao</i>	Trunk	Cut some trunk which is equivalent to the bitten part.	Place the trunk on the bitten part.
<i>Paitan</i>	Bark	Cut bark into chewable size.	Chew the bark and with the saliva rub it around the bitten part.
<i>Unname</i>	Fruit	Roast the fruit and pulverize.	Place it on the bitten part.
<i>Lunas</i>	Bark	Chew the bark.	Rub it around the bitten part.

#### Malaria

<i>Dita</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Alikakaam (Gabon)</i>	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Paitan</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Naga (Narra)</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.

#### Piang

<i>Balite</i>	Bark	Get some bark which is equivalent to the affected part.	Place the bark around the affected area.
<i>Tuba-tuba</i>	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Place the leaves around the affected area.
<i>Labana</i>	Leaves	Get some leaves which is equivalent to the affected part.	Place the leaves around the affected area.

#### Toothache

<i>Panyawan</i>	Sap	Cut the stem of the vine and get the sap.	Put some drops on the eyes.
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### Stomachache

<i>Mansanitas</i>	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Aga-un</i>	<i>Dalag sa panit</i>	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Togop</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Lunas</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Saplid</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Lunas na kahoy</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
Guava	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
Guava	Shoots	Get enough shoots.	Chew the shoots.
<i>Abihid</i>	Root bark	Get one <i>dangaw</i> of root bark and boil in water.	Drink decoction
<i>Litan-ag</i>	Root bark	Get one <i>dangaw</i> of root bark and boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Paitan</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
Avocado	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.

### Kabuhi

<i>Uway</i>	<i>Dalin sa uway</i>	Peel the <i>uway</i> and soak in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Paitan</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink decoction.

### Colds

<i>Alikakaam</i>	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Paitan</i>	Bark	Soak bark in hot water.	Drink the decoction.

### Sore eyes

<i>Libugananon</i>	Sap	Cut the stem and get the sap.	Drop some sap on the affected eyes.
<i>Uwag</i>	Sap	Cut the stem and get the sap.	Drop some sap on the affected eyes.
<i>Amang pangan</i>	Sap of <i>palwa na lingshod</i>	Cut some <i>palwa</i> and get the sap.	Drop some sap on the affected eyes.

### Swelling

<i>Alikakaam (Gabon)</i>	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Place the heated
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			leaves on the affected area.
<i>Tuba-tuba</i>	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Place the heated leaves on the affected area.
<i>Nato</i>	Roots	Cut some young roots.	Chew clean roots.
<i>Kosta</i>	Leaves	Pound.	Place on the affected area.
<i>Handamay</i>	Bark	Pound.	Place on the affected area.
<i>Mayana</i>	Leaves	Pound.	Place on the affected area.

#### *Noka-noka*

<i>Hagonoy</i>	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Press the leaves and let the juice drop on the infected portion.
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#### Rheumatism

<i>Ipil-ipil + Deer</i>	Wood + Bone	Burn the bone using the <i>ipil-ipil</i> wood until it turns to ashes. Soak the ashes in a glass of water and wait until the water is clear.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Alikakaam (Gabon)</i>	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Place on the affected part.

#### Abortifacient

<i>Sampinit</i>	Roots	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Lunas</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction or chew the bark
<i>Paitan</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction or chew the bark.
<i>Bawbagun</i>	Trunk	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction or chew the bark.

#### Goiter

<i>Hayagna</i>	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
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*Tetano*

<i>Sili</i>	Fruit	Get some ripe fruits.	Press the fruit on the affected part.
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Birth spacing

<i>Ba</i> ( <i>Uway na tunukon</i> )	Water or sap	Cut some and get the sap or water.	Drink.
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Diarrhea with vomiting

<i>Saplid</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Paitan</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.

Diarrhea

<i>Aga-un</i>	<i>Dalag sa panit</i>	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Saging tundan</i>	Unripe fruit + dried leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Togop</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Saplid</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Paitan</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.

*Gikan nasakit*

<i>Adgao</i>	Leaves	Boil in water.	Use the water for bathing.
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*Himughat*

<i>Hilbas</i>	Leaves	Boil in water.	Use the water for bathing.
<i>Vicks</i>	Leaves	Boil in water.	Use the water for bathing.
<i>Bawbagun</i>	Trunk/ Sap	Boil in water./ Get the sap.	Drink the decoction./ Drink the sap.
<i>Gapas</i>	Root	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Sampinit</i>	Root	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Pan-pan</i>	Sap	Get some sap.	Drink.
<i>Dugo-an</i>	Roots/ Bark	Boil in water.	Let the mother drink the decoction.
<i>Bianggud</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.

*Panuhot*

<i>Tuba-tuba</i>	Leaves	Preheat the leaves	Place the leaves into the affected area
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Eye disorder

<i>Langilan</i>	Sap	Get the sap.	Put some drops on the eyes.
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To initiate or increase lactation

<i>Tubod</i>	Roots	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
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*Buyag-buyag*

<i>Tuba-tuba</i> (red leaves)	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Rub on the entire body.
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Excessive bleeding

<i>Saging dinurado</i>	Roots/ <i>Puso</i>	Boil in water. Boil in water.	Drink the decoction. Drink the decoction.
<i>Gabon</i>	Leaves/ Roots	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.

To induce delivery

<i>Kasili</i>	Tail	Burn the tail until it turns to ashes.	Place ash on the stomach.
<i>Cogon</i>	Roots	Collect as many roots as you can and boil in water.	Drink the decoction upon labor.

Headache

<i>Gapas</i>	Leaves	Collect some leaves and preheat.	Place heated leaves on the forehead
<i>Avocado</i>	Leaves	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.

*Kalintura*

<i>Abihid</i>	Root bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Litan-ag</i>	Root bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.
<i>Alikakaam (Gabon)</i>	Leaves	Preheat the leaves.	Place heated leaves on the forehead.
<i>Paitan</i>	Bark	Boil in water.	Drink the decoction.



Tinea

<i>Asunting</i>	Leaves	Collect some healthy leaves.	Rub on the affected part.
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Bath for newborn

<i>Gabon</i>	Leaves	Boil in water.	Use the boiled water as bath for the newborn.
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Table 5. List of diseases and plants used

<b>Diseases/Ailments</b>	<b>Plant(s) used</b>
Swelling	<i>Tuba-tuba, alikakaam, handamay, nato, kosta</i>
<i>Piang</i>	<i>Tuba-tuba, balite, labana</i>
<i>Panuhot</i>	<i>Tuba-tuba</i>
Wounds	<i>Lakatan, takipan, babanganon, agutay</i>
Stomachache	<i>Avocado, litan-ag, abihid, bayabas, lunas nga kahoy, saplid, togop, aga-un, lunas, mansanitas</i>
Headache	<i>Avocado, gapas</i>
Diarrhea	<i>Avocado, saplid, togop, aga-un, saging tundan</i>
<i>Kalintura</i>	<i>Litan-ag, abihid, alikakaam</i>
<i>Rayuma</i>	<i>Alikakaam</i>
Colds	<i>Alikakaam, paitan</i>
Cough	<i>Alikakaam, dabo-dabo, kalabo, santol, mayana, anagdong, tanglad</i>
Malaria	<i>Alikakaam, bita, paitan, dita</i>
<i>Gikan nasakit</i>	<i>Adgao</i>
<i>Kabahung</i>	<i>Unname, paitan</i>
Sore eyes	<i>Uwag, amang-pangan</i>
Snake bite	<i>Unname, paitan, pay-ao, lunas</i>
Diarrhea with vomiting	<i>Saplid, paitan</i>
Toothache	<i>Panyawan</i>
Abortifacient	<i>Lunas, paitan, sampinit</i>
<i>Himughat</i>	<i>Pan-pan, gapas, hilbas (vicks or minted and non minted)</i>
<i>Diperensya sa mata</i>	<i>Langilan</i>
To initiate or increase lactation	<i>Tubod</i>
<i>Buyag-buyag</i>	<i>Tuba-tuba nga pula og dahon</i>
Tinea	<i>Asunting</i>
Excessive bleeding	<i>Saging dinurado</i>
Birth delay	<i>Ikog sa kasili</i>
<i>Pasmo</i>	<i>Sampinit</i>

Table 6. Dibabaon terms and translation

<b>English</b>	<b>Filipino</b>	<b>Dibabaon</b>
Head	<i>Ulo</i>	<i>O</i>
Hair	<i>Buhok</i>	<i>Bubul</i>
Face	<i>Mukha</i>	<i>Nawong</i>
Eyes	<i>Mata</i>	<i>Mata</i>
Ears	<i>Tainga</i>	<i>Talinga</i>
Nose	<i>Ilong</i>	<i>Simod</i>
Mouth	<i>Bibig</i>	<i>Baba</i>
Teeth	<i>Ngipin</i>	<i>Ngipon</i>
Breath	<i>Hininga</i>	<i>Gin-awa</i>
Hands	<i>Kamay</i>	<i>Buwad</i>
Feet	<i>Paa</i>	<i>Po-od</i>
Breast	<i>Suso</i>	<i>Du-du</i>
Blood	<i>Dugo</i>	<i>Langsa</i>
Saliva	<i>Laway</i>	<i>Luway</i>
Urine	<i>Ihi</i>	<i>Ihi</i>
Stool	<i>Tae</i>	<i>Indus</i>
Nail	<i>Kuko</i>	<i>Su</i>
Skin	<i>Balat</i>	<i>Kindu</i>
Father	<i>Ama</i>	<i>Amuy</i>
Mother	<i>Ina</i>	<i>Inuy</i>
Grandfather	<i>Lolo</i>	<i>Apo</i>
Grandfather	<i>Lola</i>	<i>Apo</i>
Son	<i>Anak</i>	<i>Anak</i>
Daughter	<i>Anak</i>	<i>Anak</i>
Husband	<i>Asawa</i>	<i>Asawa</i>
Wife	<i>Asawa</i>	<i>Asawa</i>
Root	<i>Ugat</i>	<i>Dalid</i>
Leaf	<i>Dahon</i>	<i>Da-on</i>
Flower	<i>Bulaklak</i>	<i>Bulak</i>
Seed	<i>Buto</i>	<i>Liso</i>
Fruit	<i>Bunga</i>	<i>Bugas</i>
Unhusked rice	<i>Palay</i>	<i>Umay</i>
Husked rice	<i>Bigas</i>	<i>Bugas</i>
Cooked rice	<i>Kanin</i>	<i>Kaunan</i>

Gruel	<i>Lugaw</i>	<i>Bibog</i>
Rice water	<i>Am</i>	-
Fruit	<i>Bunga</i>	<i>Bugas</i>
Sky	<i>Langit</i>	-
Cloud	<i>Alpaap</i>	-
Earth	<i>Lupa</i>	<i>Pasak</i>
Wind	<i>Hangin</i>	<i>Kamag</i>
Lighting	<i>Kidlat</i>	<i>Kilat</i>
Thunder	<i>Kulog</i>	<i>Lugong</i>
Water	<i>Tubig</i>	<i>Wahig</i>
Rain	<i>Ulan</i>	<i>Udan</i>
Spring	<i>Bukal</i>	<i>Tubod</i>
Brook	<i>Batis</i>	<i>Maintuk</i>
River	<i>Ilog</i>	<i>Sapa</i>
Mountain	<i>Bundok</i>	<i>Untod</i>
Farm	<i>Bukid</i>	<i>Uma</i>
Forest	<i>Gubat</i>	<i>Guwangan</i>
Rock	<i>Bato</i>	<i>Bato</i>
Typhoon	<i>Bagyo</i>	<i>Bagyo</i>
Sky	<i>Langit</i>	<i>Langit</i>
Cloud	<i>Alapaap</i>	<i>Gabon</i>
Black	<i>Itim</i>	<i>Maitum</i>
White	<i>Puti</i>	<i>Puti</i>
Red	<i>Pula</i>	<i>Malugdug</i>
Blue	<i>Asul</i>	-
Green	<i>Berde</i>	<i>Malunaw</i>
Yellow	<i>Dilaw</i>	<i>Mala-ag</i>
Violet	<i>Lila</i>	-
Orange	<i>Dalandan</i>	-
Chicken	<i>Manok</i>	<i>Manok</i>
Pig	<i>Baboy</i>	<i>Baboy</i>
Carabao	<i>Kalabao</i>	<i>Karabaw</i>
Dog	<i>Aso</i>	<i>Iro</i>
Cat	<i>Pusa</i>	<i>Kuko</i>
Rat	<i>Daga</i>	<i>Ambao</i>
Mosquito	<i>Lamok</i>	<i>Tagnok</i>
Fly	<i>Langaw</i>	<i>Langaw</i>
Snake	<i>Ahas</i>	<i>Mamang</i>
Banana	<i>Saging</i>	<i>Saging</i>
Papaya	<i>Papaya</i>	<i>Kapayas</i>
Coconut	<i>Niyog</i>	<i>Niyog</i>
Narra	<i>Narra</i>	<i>Naga</i>
Weed	<i>Damo</i>	<i>Bagnot</i>

Plant	<i>Halaman</i>	-
Sweet potato	<i>Kamote</i>	<i>Kamote</i>
Yam	<i>Gabi</i>	<i>Apuy</i>
Onion	<i>Sibuyas</i>	<i>Sibuyas</i>
Squash	<i>Kalabasa</i>	<i>Kaubasa</i>
Salt	<i>Asin</i>	<i>Asin</i>
Sugar	<i>Asukal</i>	<i>Asukar</i>
Cooking oil	<i>Mantika</i>	<i>Mantika</i>
Meat	<i>Karne</i>	<i>Karne</i>
Fish	<i>Isda</i>	<i>Isda</i>
Honey	<i>Pulot</i>	<i>Duga</i>
Cassava	<i>Kamoteng kahoy</i>	<i>Balanghaiy</i>
Sun	<i>Araw</i>	<i>Aruw</i>
Moon	<i>Buwan</i>	<i>Buwan</i>
Stars	<i>Bituin</i>	<i>Bito-on</i>
Shooting star	<i>Bulalakaw</i>	-
Clean	<i>Malinis</i>	<i>Malinis</i>
Dirty	<i>Madumi</i>	<i>Maligsum</i>
Good	<i>Mabuti</i>	<i>Madayaw</i>
Bad	<i>Masama</i>	<i>Maroot</i>
Cold	<i>Malamig</i>	<i>Mahagsig</i>
Hot	<i>Mainit</i>	<i>Mapasu</i>
Big	<i>Malaki</i>	<i>Maaslag</i>
Small	<i>Maliit</i>	<i>Maintuk</i>
East	<i>Silangan</i>	<i>Silatan</i>
West	<i>Kanluran</i>	<i>Saupan</i>
North	<i>Hilaga</i>	<i>Amihan</i>
South	<i>Timog</i>	<i>Abagatan</i>
Upstream	<i>Ilaya</i>	<i>Diraya</i>
Downstream	<i>Ibayo</i>	<i>Bayo</i>
Eat	<i>Kumain</i>	<i>Kaun</i>
Drink	<i>Uminom</i>	<i>Inum</i>
Plant	<i>Magtanim</i>	<i>Magtanum</i>
Harvest	<i>Mag-ani</i>	<i>Magani</i>
Wash	<i>Maghugas</i>	<i>Hugas</i>
Fetch water	<i>Umigib</i>	<i>Magsauk</i>
Rest	<i>Magpahinga</i>	<i>Pahuway</i>
Brush teeth	<i>Magsipilyo</i>	-
Wipe	<i>Magpunas</i>	<i>Pamaid</i>
Boil	<i>Pakuluan</i>	<i>Ugsabo</i>
Clean	<i>Maglinis</i>	<i>Maglinis</i>
Tired	<i>Pagod</i>	<i>Kapoy</i>

Soul	<i>Kaluluwa</i>	<i>Ispirito</i>
Body	<i>Katawan</i>	<i>Lawa</i>
God	<i>Diyos</i>	<i>Magbubuot/Magbabaya</i>
Nature	<i>Kalikasan</i>	<i>Pamatasan</i>
God	<i>Diwata</i>	<i>Diwata</i>
Day	<i>Araw</i>	<i>Aruw</i>
Week	<i>Linggo</i>	<i>Susimana</i>
Year	<i>Taon</i>	<i>Katuigan</i>
Morning	<i>Umaga</i>	<i>Masaum</i>
Afternoon	<i>Hapon</i>	<i>Ma-apon</i>
Night	<i>Gabi</i>	<i>Madukilum</i>
One	<i>Isa</i>	<i>Sabook</i>
Two	<i>Dalwa</i>	<i>Daruwa</i>
Three	<i>Tatlo</i>	<i>Tatuw</i>
Four	<i>Apat</i>	-
Five	<i>Lima</i>	-
Six	<i>Anim</i>	-
Seven	<i>Pito</i>	-
Eight	<i>Walo</i>	-
Nine	<i>Siyam</i>	-
Ten	<i>Sampu</i>	<i>Sampu</i>
One hundred	<i>Sandaan</i>	<i>Isa gatus</i>
One thousand	<i>Sanlibo</i>	<i>Sa libo</i>
Fever	<i>Lagnat</i>	<i>Ingluw</i>
Cough	<i>Ubo</i>	<i>Ubo</i>
Diarrhea	<i>Pagtatae</i>	<i>Inindus</i>
Colds	<i>Sipon</i>	<i>Sipaun</i>
-	<i>Ginaw</i>	<i>Mahagsig</i>
Dysentery	<i>Disenteria</i>	<i>Inindus</i>
Malaria	<i>Malaria</i>	<i>Ingluw</i>
Wound	<i>Sugat</i>	<i>Pali</i>
Abdominal pain	<i>Sakit ng tiyan</i>	<i>Masakit to gutok</i>
Headache	<i>Sakit ng ulo</i>	<i>Masakit to u</i>
Rheumatism	<i>Rayuma</i>	<i>Takud</i>
Hemorrhage	<i>Pagdudugo</i>	<i>Maaslag to langsa</i>
Tinea	<i>An-an</i>	<i>Ap ap</i>
Measles	<i>Tigdas</i>	<i>Tipdas</i>
House	<i>Bahay</i>	<i>Bauy</i>
Window	<i>Bintana</i>	<i>Bintana</i>
Floor	<i>Sahig</i>	<i>Saug</i>
Roof	<i>Bubong</i>	<i>Atup</i>
Toilet	<i>Kubeta</i>	<i>Kasilyas</i>

Clothes	<i>Damit</i>	<i>Sabinit</i>
Slippers	<i>Tsinelas</i>	<i>Sinilas</i>
Friend	<i>Kaibigan</i>	<i>Amigo</i>
Foe	<i>Kaaway</i>	<i>Kadumot</i>
Neighbor	<i>Kapit-bahay</i>	<i>Silingan</i>
Relative	<i>Kamag-anak</i>	<i>Parinti</i>
Leader	<i>Pinuno</i>	<i>Datu</i>
Elder	<i>Matanda</i>	<i>Apo</i>
Rich	<i>Mayaman</i>	<i>Sapi-anan</i>
Poor	<i>Mahirap</i>	<i>Pobre</i>
Love	<i>Mahal</i>	<i>Liyag</i>

## **Figures**

Figure 1. View from Bullocan, Laak, Compostela Valley

Figure 2. Bamboo raft (*gakit*) in Baubo river



Figure 3. Dibabaon traditional dance with coconut leaves

Figure 4. *Araw ng Laak* 2000 (Laak Day)

Figure 5. *Kudlong* player

Figure 6. *Gimba* player

Figure 7. A Dibabaon *baylan*

Figure 8. A Dibabaon traditional birth attendant (*managamhunay*) applies chicken blood on the expectant mother's abdomen

Figure 9. Dibabaon upland farm

Figure 10. Abaca worker

Figure 11. Gathering information in a drinking session

Figure 12. Collecting plant specimen in the forests of Bullocan, Laak

## **Maps**

Map 1. Municipal map of Laak with the study sites highlighted

Map 2. Map of Davao Province with San Vicente (Laak)



## **Key informants**

Egmedio I. Bangoy  
ca 50  
Male  
Farmer  
San Miguel  
Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province

Arsenio Andao  
71  
Male  
Farmer  
Magaad  
Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province

Adela Andao  
ca 50  
Female  
Farmer  
Magaad  
Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province

Godofredo Bangoy  
ca 50  
Male  
Farmer, Tribal chieftain  
San Miguel, Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province

Molinda Amak  
ca 40  
Female  
Farmer  
Upper Magaad  
Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province

Abraham Dilag, aka Abla

ca 50  
Male  
Registered midwife, *baylan*  
Bullocan, Laak, ComVal Province

Luisa Tabag  
60  
Female  
Registered midwife, *managamhunay*  
Bullocan, Laak, ComVal Province

Rosalinda Amak  
45  
Female  
Farmer, Local midwife  
Lower Magaad  
Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province

Datu Cruz Bacudan  
ca 50  
Male  
Farmer, Tribal leader  
Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province

Datu Buhay Ampunan  
ca 50  
Male  
Farmer, Tribal leader  
Kinabalian  
Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province

Salvador Ente  
78  
Male  
*Baylan*  
Bullocan, Laak, ComVal Province

Pacita Ente  
61  
Female  
Local midwife, *managamhunay*  
Bullocan, Laak, ComVal Province

## **Contact persons**

Hon Rogelio C Arambala  
Municipal Mayor  
Municipality of Laak, ComVal Province

Mangone M Sumaliday  
Municipal Tribal Chieftain  
Municipality of Laak, ComVal Province

Godofredo Bangoy  
Tribal Chieftain  
Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province

Cruz Bakudan  
Tribal Leader  
Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province

Junie Andao  
Tribal Leader  
Sitio Magaad Lower  
Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province

Medino Andao  
Tribal Leader  
Sitio Magaad Upper  
Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province

Lazaro Tomas  
Tribal Leader  
Sitio San Miguel  
Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province

Ramon Pay-ao  
Tribal Leader  
Sitio Kinabalian  
Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province

Joseph Espadon  
Brgy Captain  
Kidawa, Laak, ComVal Province

Jonathan Dela Cruz  
OIC ComVal Province  
National Commission for Indigenous Peoples  
Tagum City

Ricardo B Ente  
Brgy Captain  
Bullocan, Laak, ComVal Province

Adolfo Uno  
Tribal Chieftain  
Bullocan, Laak, ComVal Province

Marcelo Baguio  
Tribal Council member  
Bullocan, Laak, ComVal Province