

**Process Framework
for restrictions on access to natural resources**

Date: January 24, 2023

CEPF Grant: 113597

Grantee: Oxfam America

***Project Title: Strengthen Community-Based Conservation for Fishery Management in
KMH29 and KMH33***

Project Location: Ratanakiri Province of Cambodia (KMH29 and KMH33)

Grant Summary

1. **Grantee organization:** Oxfam America
2. **Project title:** Strengthen Community-Based Conservation for Fishery Management in KMH29 and KMH33
3. **Grant number:** 113597
4. **Grant amount (US dollars):** 150,000 USD (One Hundred and Fifty Thousand USD only)
5. **Proposed dates of grant:** April 2023 – March 2025 (24 Months)
6. **Countries where activities will be undertaken:** Cambodia
7. **Summary of the project** [copy and paste Project Rationale and Project Approach from proposal].

Project Rationale

Threats from illegal fishing to ecosystems in the Sesan and Srepok rivers remain high. Despite the fact that communities have better capacity to manage and control illegal fishing in the community fishery areas along the Srepok and Sesan, communities reported that they still continue to face challenges to effectively controlling illegal fishing. According to Oxfam's interaction with fishing communities in the Srepok and Sesan Rivers, fast fluctuation of water and less catch of fish is affecting their livelihood. Illegal fishing methods such as electrocution and the use of illegal fishing equipment, gear, and nets are the main concerns of the communities. This has caused a significant imbalance between supply and demand. The illegal fish catch is reducing the population of high-value fishes, which reduces the income of fishing communities using legal practices to catch fish. The communities continue to seek collaboration and supports from the fishery cantonment and local authorities to promote law enforcement and conduct more regular patrolling.

From 2013 to 2022, Oxfam in Cambodia implemented the People Protecting Ecosystems in the Mekong (PEM) project. PEM contributed to the conservation of aquatic resources and river ecosystems in the Mekong, Sesan, and Srepok Rivers by strengthening community-based management of terrestrial and riverine ecosystems in highly biodiverse areas of the Mekong and its tributaries. Our teams are looking to build on the outcomes and impacts of PEM project to achieve even stronger management of community fisheries along the Srepok and Sesan Rivers. Through Oxfam's implementation of PEM, communities have organized themselves through community fishery committees, developed community fishery management plans, and good relationship with local stakeholders. The PEM project produced a good base from which we can increase the project's impact. This project could bring the outcomes, impacts, and sustainability of those sites to the next level.

Existing fish sanctuaries are threatened: Through PEM, Oxfam and its partner supported 13 communities to develop site-based management plans for local fish sanctuaries. Communities identified interventions related to conservation, creating new fish conservation areas, community livelihoods, and capacity building. This project will support the implementation of these 13 management plans as well as the creation and implementation of a management plan in a 14th community.

Enforcement of conservation actions remains weak: The project will strengthen the capacity of community fishery committees. The proposed project will build the capacity of the community fishery committees in terms coordination, knowledge sharing, relationship building, and communication in order to deepen collaboration with local authorities who can support patrolling and other enforcement activities. These capacity needs were identified by the committees through the PEM project.

There is opportunity to create new fish sanctuaries: The project will identify and support the creation of eight new fish sanctuaries and deep pools. Communities from 14 Cfis (Community Fisheries) will identify new conservation sites including deep pools and natural wetland areas that have significant biodiversity conservation significance. Communities want to propose 8 new deep pool sites situated along the Sesan and Srepok Rivers to be recognized by relevant national

authorities and local authorities. The project will support them to identify and propose those sites to be recognized for conservation.

Promoting the implementation of community fishery management. This project will support the implementation of 13 site-based management plans and the development and implementation of a management plan for one additional site (total of 14 sites). By the end of the project, we want to see communities take greater initiative to conserve ecosystems in those 14 sites.

For conservation efforts to succeed, they must take into account the fact that local communities rely on the conserved areas for their livelihoods. To support the integration of conservation and livelihoods, the project will support communities to develop their plans to promote eco-tourism in one site as well as plans for women-led fishery processing businesses, aquaculture, and flooded forest replanting.

The Srepok River flows from the Central Highlands of Vietnam through Ratanakiri Province and joins with the Sesan River in Stung Treng Province of Cambodia to join the Mekong River near Stung Treng Town. Srepok River's mainstream comprises a total length of 290 kilometers. The river is rich in biodiversity and aquatic resources supporting local communities to meet their food needs and generating income for approximately 6,781 households. According to Asian Development Fund (ADB), fish still provide over 80% of the protein in the national diet in Cambodia. The river's biodiversity is being reduced due to hydropower projects on Mekong River and its tributaries: 70% of capture fisheries in Cambodia are under threat due to 45 dams already built in the Mekong Region. The river basin is facing multiple threats including water pollution and changing water flow due to upstream developments, hydropower dams, illegal fishing methods, and overfishing. Riverine communities living around Sesan and Srepok Rivers are facing threats to their livelihood and food security due to change of water flow, illegal fishing, and water pollution. Communities are dependent on aquatic resources because there are no alternative livelihood options for them to adapt and sustain their lives. Therefore, this project will help in conserving the aquatic resources in 41 deep pools and in adding 8 new pools. Without this project, endangered and high-value fish species will be extinct and depleted.

Oxfam has longstanding presence in the targeted areas along with local partners, and we understand the impact on the lives and livelihoods of people if fishery conservation is not supported. We have successfully concluded a project with the financial support of Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies (MACP) which has successfully established a long-term community-based fish conservation and management model focused on empowering communities to take action to protect land, forests, and freshwater aquatic resources (primarily fisheries). The project has established community fisheries, recognized by local governments, who have developed community action plans to take joint actions to protect the ecosystem and aquatic resources. However, lack of funding is obstructing their plans to properly roll out the implementation of community fishery management plans. Community fisheries face a loss of livelihoods and a danger to the Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) if these plans are not put into action. Hence, Oxfam has designed this project in close coordination with local partners, government authorities and community fishery representatives to support 14 fishery communities operating along Sesan and Srepok Rivers to take community based sustainable actions to protect aquatic resources and riverine ecosystem.

Project Approach

Long-term impacts:

1. By 2028, households living in fishing communities along the Sesan and Srepok Rivers have increased income from climate smart fishery management.
2. By 2028, the status (population of species, area of key habitats etc.) of aquatic resources and river ecosystems in the Sesan and Srepok Rivers have improved compared to the 2022 baseline.
3. By 2028, 14 Cfis have improved leadership and governance to protect and conserve aquatic resources and ecosystems in Sesan and Srepok Rivers of Ratanakiri Province.

Short-term impacts:

1. By 2025, 41 existing and 8 new deep pools along Sesan and Srepok Rivers are formally recognized by communities and local authorities as conservation zones of 14 Cfis.
2. By 2025, populations of endangered fish species in Sesan and Srepok Rivers are stable compared to April 2023 baseline as demonstrated by fish-catch monitoring data.
3. By 2025, 14 plans are submitted by Cfi Management Committee to commune and district council to take joint initiatives to conserve aquatic resources and river eco-systems.
4. By 2025, at least 28 women in 14 CFi committees have improved leadership skills to mainstream gender into community plans.
5. By 2025, at least 35 households living along Sesan and Srepok Rivers have increased income from climate smart fishery management compared to 2023 baseline.
6. By 2025, at least 4 hectares of flooded forests in the conservation area in Sesan and Srepok Rivers are reforested compared to 2023 baseline.
7. By 2025, co-management model of community-based fish monitoring supported by the project adopted by at least two other CSOs.

The project will focus on promoting governance and a co-management model by increasing community participation in local dialogues and planning processes to increase joint actions for conservation and protection of the ecosystems and aquatic resources in partnership with local government. The project will strengthen leadership of the community fishery committees and sub-committees to implement the conservation activities of 14 existing community fishery management plans. These plans include protecting 41 existing deep pools and establishing 8 new deep pools. The project will also facilitate a community planning process to integrate livelihoods initiatives into conservation activities to improve local community wellbeing.

8. Date of preparation of this document: December 12, 2022

9. Restrictions on access to natural resources: This section will describe how the project will introduce new or more stringent restrictions on access to natural resources. It should also describe the process by which affected persons participated in the project design.

This proposed project has been designed based on the input from relevant community members, local authority, and Oxfam's NGO partner (3SPN) through a consultation workshop and on recommendations from Oxfam's PEM project. Poor local fishers (approximately 3 fishers per pools) are the most affected people from the restriction of the fishing activities. To contribute to the restriction on access to natural resources in the target areas, the project will carry out several activities and strategies.

Stringent Restriction: First, the project will conduct awareness raising events, using IEC materials and campaigns to local fishers to avoid fishing activities in the 41 existing and 08 new deep pools during prohibited season in collaboration with local authority and FiA. At least 8 new educational signboards on illegal fishing and prohibition in the new identified deep pools will be demarcated. Second, the project will support the CFi committees to implement the CFi community management plans to prevent the conservation areas. Third, planning and organizing co-patrolling activities to the protected areas is also key to protection and prevention of ecosystems.

Alternative Livelihood Options: To some extent, the above interventions will be affected the local fishers who mainly depends on fishing to support their living. Key alternative livelihood options that the project will support the most effective people include: i) provision of skills and material support to at least 35 trained households to pilot climate smart agriculture for fishery management; ii) establishment of one (01) ecotourism site; iii) and capacity building on women-led entrepreneurship in fishery (fish processing). These alternative livelihood options could be replicated for the benefit of the other affected people as well as the whole community.

The project will try to leverage the other livelihood options for the affected people implemented by other NGOs and actors in the target villages. It is anticipated that communities will stop their illegal fishing and start new way of income generation through the intervention of the project.

Participation Promotion: To promote meaningful participation from the most vulnerable groups in the project areas, the project will consult with poor local fishers, e.g. IPs, female-headed households and PWD and members from ID poor families to assess and understand their perception about the alternative livelihood during the project inception stage. Next, the project will tailor its intervention to meet with their needs of the preferred alternative livelihood.

10. **Participatory implementation:** This section will establish a process of meaningful consultation whereby affected persons will be involved in identifying adverse impacts and assessing of the significance of any impacts. It will also establish the criteria for eligibility for identifying persons eligible for any mitigation or compensation measures necessary.

At the start of the project, a **project launching workshop** will be organized with key relevant project stakeholders to reinform them about the project objective, expected results and operation plan and to seek for their collaboration and involvement in the project implementation. The project will work with our partner, local authority and community members to **identify 08 new deep** pools to be recognized as conservation areas. Clear role and responsibility with effective staffing structure of the CFI committees will be reviewed and updated in order that they could effectively run the CFI co-management plans for the 41 existing and 08 new deep pools. **CFI committee members will be equipped with negotiation and conflict resolution skills** to enable them to address conflicts and to seek stronger collaboration with and supports from local stakeholders in protecting and conserving their natural resources. Communities, CFI committees, and local authority will be consulted to set up a criteria and process for selecting the 35 households to be trained and supported with alternative livelihood activities; criteria may include: female-headed household, IPs, PWDs, and household income level. **Awareness raising campaigns** on the adverse impacts of illegal fishing and importance of ecosystem conservation will be organized. It is expected that at least 4 hectares of new flooded forest will be identified and recognized by the authority as the protected areas. The project will also plan and conduct co-patrolling activities to the conservation areas. Furthermore, the project will conduct different **networking and collaboration meetings/workshops** with relevant stakeholders and authority to discuss the conservation issues and to find solutions to those arisen issues.

11. **Measures to assist affected persons:** This section will describe the mitigation measures to minimize and, where possible, avoid adverse impacts on income and livelihoods. Where needed, measures will be identified to assist affected persons in their efforts to improve their livelihoods or restore them, in real terms, to pre-project levels. This section will also describe methods and procedures by which communities will identify and choose potential mitigation or compensation measures to be provided to persons adversely affected, and the procedures by which adversely affected community members will decide among the options available to them.

The targeted communities living around Sesan and Srepok Rivers are facing threats to their livelihood and food security due change of water flow, illegal fishing, and water pollution. Communities are dependent on aquatic resources because there are no alternative livelihood options for them to sustain their livelihoods. Above all, fishermen from vulnerable groups (poor communities and IPs) who have limited livelihood options will be affected when the new 08 deep pools are recognized as protected areas. As stated in Section 9, the affected communities/persons will be introduced to new income generation sources via three measures to mitigate impacts on livelihoods: 1) the establishment of ecotourism site, 2) capacity building for women-led entrepreneurship in fishery (possibly in fish processing) and 3) support to pilot climate smart agriculture fishery management (e.g., fish raising a plastic tent at home). The project will continue to consult with communities and affected person during the project implementation so that the project could address the desired alternative livelihood to them. As a result, the communities are expected to reduce and/or stop illegal fishing in the protected areas, which will contribute to the conservation purpose of this project.

12. **Timeline and resources:** This section will present an implementation timeline for each measure listed in Section 11, together with an estimate of resource needs.

To achieve the indented results, the full project needs at least 24 months (April 2023-March 2025) with at least 150,000 USD to implement the planned activities.

For the three specific measures to mitigate impacts on livelihoods, here are the resource needs and timelines:

- **Establish an ecotourism site:** the project has allocated some budget (200 USD for Activity 3.1.1 and 1,400USD for Activity 3.1.2) to work on the establishment of one ecotourism site; this will be started in year 1 and continue into year 2. Other local available resources including, in-kind, materials and labor would be ideal for the establishment.
- **Capacity building for women-led entrepreneurship in fishery:** project has allocated some budget for this activity (600 USD for Activity 3.2.2) and this work is ongoing throughout the project period (24 months)
- **Climate smart agriculture on fishery management for most vulnerable groups:** a certain amount of budget from the project has been allocated to support this intervention (training and material support) and this task will be carried starting in year 2 (Activity 3.2.1 = 700 USD and Activity 3.2.2= 7,000USD).

13. **Monitoring and evaluation:** This section will outline arrangements for participatory monitoring of project activities as they relate to (positive and adverse) impacts on persons at the project site(s), and for monitoring the effectiveness of the measures listed in Section 11.

The project will involve all key relevant stakeholders through the project life cycle, including project launching workshop, implementation, regular meetings, and annual reflection workshops to reflect on project achievements against the planned activities and key expected results. In addition, the project is going to work with other likeminded NGOs, government officials and communities to review and update the fishery/ecosystem conservation monitoring tools. Field visits by project staff of Oxfam and partner NGO will be regularly conducted to the project sites to collect information and data for reporting. An external consultant will be recruited to conduct the end of project evaluation.

14. **Disclosure:** CEPF requires that process frameworks are disclosed to affected local communities and other stakeholders. Please describe your efforts to disclose this plan.

As mentioned in other sections above, the project will share all the planned activities, expected results, information of Oxfam, partner and donor with all relevant project stakeholders through the project life cycle. Most importantly project launch workshop, networking and coordination meetings and annual reflection workshops are key to inform project stakeholders about the project.

15. **Grievance redress mechanism:** For all CEPF-funded projects, the grantee must provide local communities and other relevant stakeholders with a means to raise a grievance, and whereby this grievance may be considered and satisfactorily resolved.

This mechanism must include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- Email and telephone contact information for the grantee organization.
- Email and telephone contact information for the CEPF Regional Implementation Team.
- The contact information for the CI Ethics Hotline (telephone: +1-866-294-8674 / web portal: <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/10680/index.html>).
- A statement describing how you will inform stakeholders of the objectives of the project and the existence of the grievance mechanism (e.g., posters, signboards, public notices, public announcements, use of local languages).

- A statement that you will share all grievances – and a proposed response – with the Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Grant Director within 15 days. If the claimant is not satisfied following the response, they may submit the grievance via the CI Ethics Hotline (toll-free telephone line: +1-866-294-8674 / secure web portal: <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/10680/index.html>).

Following the guidance above, describe the grievance redress mechanism that you will use.

The project will establish a project grievance redress mechanism, based on Oxfam's Speak Up Protocol. This will enable the communities and project stakeholders to report any dissatisfaction to the project team effectively and in a timely manner. This mechanism will consist of clear reporting flow, channels and assigned focal point. The message on grievance tools will be developed in Khmer language, printed onto posters/leaflets, distributed to the project stakeholders, and posted in the communities. The mechanism will include focal points from Oxfam and 3SPN with contact information, telephone numbers, email address and/or hotline so that it will make an ease for the communities and stakeholders to report the case. Communities, local authority and project stakeholders will be constantly informed and encouraged to report through this redress mechanism when they have noticed that staff of Oxfam and/or partner misconduct on child abuse, sexual misconduct, other types of unwanted behaviors, financial misconduct during the course of the project implementation and other un-intended project negative effects on the communities. The assigned focal point will act promptly and ethically to respond to the reported case(s).

Below is a brief process for implementing grievance mechanism for this proposed project:

- The ED of 3SPN will be the first contact point for grievances. His details will be shared on project communications such as posters and leaflets, together with the contact details of the Oxfam project team, and he will be present at stakeholder meetings/workshops to enable face to face communications. He will be based in Ratanakiri Province.
- Any grievances received by Oxfam or 3SPN will be reported to the CEPF Secretariat within 15 days, together with a proposed plan to address the grievance. With approval from CEPF, Oxfam will then implement the plan, reporting back to CEPF on progress
- Oxfam in Cambodia will support 3SPN in resolving complaints. The process will involve discussions with all affected persons and other involved people (local authorities, communities, project teams...etc.) to identify a common solution to which all are able to agree within the law and without negatively affecting others.
- If complainants are not satisfied with the way in which their grievance has been handled by Oxfam, they will be given the opportunity to raise it with the CEPF Executive Director via the CI Ethics Hotline at <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/10680/index.html>