

Day Ku Aphiwat - Natural Resource Management for Safeguard Livelihood

Social Assessment

Indigenous Peoples in the project area

One village is found within the project area - Tomnup village, Trapang Tav Commune, Anlong Veng district. A total of 12 Phnong families live there, including 56 people, of which 29 are women.

Expected project impacts (both positive and negative) on them

Positive Impacts:

Through the establishment of a CBO, the villagers will become better informed about their rights, better able to assert their rights, more interested in voting for their representatives, and more confident about those they choose to be their representatives. A positive impact will be a change in the behavior of the villagers - with the community becoming less dependent on others, and more self-sufficient. In particular, there is a need for the community to become more able to protect their own natural resources.

Through building the capacity of the civil society network, the various elements of civil society represented will become more able to work together, will have a stronger 'voice' for protecting their interests, and will be more able to solve the problems that current face this community. If they are to be successful in this, then capacity building efforts are essential. A positive impact will be a change in behavior from working alone, to working together and resolving problems through discussions as a group.

The success of this work will depend on the capacity of DKA to successfully implement it. Therefore, efforts to build the capacity of DKA are an important aspect of this work. The DKA staff working directly with the community is an essential link between the community, and the management staff of DKA.

As all family leaders (men) and Household leaders (women) are members of the savings group, all of them will receive benefits from the project. Through the capacity building efforts conducted by the project, these indigenous people will receive education and training on financial management (including the importance of transparency and accountability), human and women's rights, gender, self development, and motivation.

Negative Impacts:

We do not anticipate that this work will have any significant negative impacts. While projects may result in both positive and negative impacts, based on DKAs experience working on these issues, preparation before the start of the project can help reduce the likelihood of producing negative impacts. For example, by building the capacity of community members, and giving them a leading role in project implementation, there is a much reduced risk of the community becoming dependant on the support of DKA. The role of DKA should be to support the community in implementation of project activities. For example, by building the capacity of the members of the women's savings groups, there is a higher chance that these groups will continue to function when DKA eventually stops working with this community.

We do not anticipate negative impacts relating to gender, as DKA is run primarily by women, and focuses its work on women's issues.

DKA makes use of its rules and regulations to ensure transparency and accountability, and reduce the likelihood of negative impacts on the community.

While DKA does not have a specific code of conduct for work with ethnic minority communities, DKA's general staff policy and code of ethics (which forms a part of DKA's staff contracts) ensures that DKA staff do not behave inappropriately when working with local communities. In addition, DKA staff have many years of experience working with a variety of different ethnic groups, and have never found this to be an issue. However, we are well aware of the importance of ensuring that DKA staff do not behave inappropriately when working with local communities.

There is a possibility that neighboring communities may become jealous that they are not receiving benefits from working with DKA. In the past we have only had sufficient resources to work with a very limited number of communities in this area. We intend to expand our work to additional communities. We have found that the surrounding communities are happy to work with DKA, and hope that we can expand our work to include them. To date, we have not found this to cause any problems, but we will continue to be aware of this potential issue.

There is always a risk with work of this kind that community empowerment may result in conflict with others who see it as a threat to their interests. In the past we have sometimes found that Local Authorities may be complicit with businesses doing illegal fishing, for their own benefit. Some powerful people may use their power and influence to take land from other people. Some members of the community may participate in illegal fishing activities, and may see our efforts as an attempt to stop them. DKA always tries to address these kind of issues by working closely with the community, so that our work is driven by the priorities of the community, not by "outsider's" priorities. We provide communities with education and build capacity to deal with these kinds of conflicts.

How has free, prior and informed consultations been carried out with affected communities during project design?

DKA has worked in this area since 2007. Following initial social surveys, this commune was selected as a priority as it has many very poor people. The natural resources of this area (particularly forestry and fisheries resources) are not currently well managed. No other CSOs are currently focusing their efforts on this area (some visited briefly in order to collect information and work on human rights education in 2007). Since 2007 we have observed a significant decline in the area's natural resources, and so have developed a strategy for work, based on 4 approaches:

- We carried out surveys of needs and problems faced by the community.
- We initiated the establishment of grass-roots civil society organizations (Community Fisheries, Community forestry, and savings groups). We supported community development by helping the poorest families with animal raising, buying bicycles, shelter building, and running a small business in the village.
- We worked to build the capacity of these CSOs through the work of three permanent staff who have experience of community organizing and working closely with communities. These staff members have worked closely with the community to educate them on how to work together as a team in order to protect their natural resources. Community members recognized the necessity to protect their natural resources, and accepted the ideas of the forestry and fishery committees.
- We have created networks between committees in the district, in order to bring committee members together and update them with information about their resources, and share technical information about protecting these resources.

This project was developed directly based on the input of these communities. The activities that will be implemented are based on discussions with these communities.

Measures to avoid adverse impacts and provide culturally appropriate benefits

This project has been designed to be easy to monitor. It includes indicators that can be measured against established baselines. As DKA has many years of experience working with these people, we expect to be able to successfully facilitate village-level discussions about the issues that they are facing, and help them take action to address these issues.

In Oddar Meanchey, regulations guiding fisheries committees were developed with significant input of the committee members. Roles and responsibilities of the committee were agreed in 2010. DKA has a permanent staff member who works directly with this committee in order to collect information related to the fishery, act as a facilitator, and coordinate between the community, and DKA. DKA staff regularly participates in patrolling of the community fishery and forest.

How will these measures be monitored?

DKA will implement a monitoring system as part of general project management. We will seek input from IUCN to guide the implementation of this monitoring system.

The establishment of the Fisheries Committee (FC) was conducted with participation from the provincial fisheries department. Following the FC annual work plan, the provincial fisheries department regularly coordinates with the FC. The FC is established under a by-law, signed by the President of the CF, which describes all regulations regarding the CF (membership, governance, management, etc.). This by-law is implemented by the FC.

Grievance mechanism.

To date, DKA has never faced any problems with its work with the community. DKA project staff work very closely with the community, and so are able to address issues before they become serious problems. However, it is very important that the community members are able to raise concerns, if they wish to. Whenever we receive a grant for community-based work, the first step we carry out is to hold an event with the community, explaining what we hope to achieve. During this event we will publicize contact information for DKA's Executive Director (Ms. Prok Vanny), board member (Mrs. Chea Muoy Kry), and the CEPF RIT National Coordinator Mr. Lou Vanny. In addition, they can raise concerns through their village representative, through Facebook (Dka Daykuaphiwat), the DKA email account (dka.023@gmail.com), or the DKA website (dka-cambodia.blogspot.com).