

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Center for Water Resources Conservation and Development (WARECOD)
Project Title:	Raising awareness on potential impacts of upstream development activities to hydrological regimes, livelihoods and biodiversity in the Plain of Reeds, Mekong
Date of Report:	31th October, 2013
Report Author and Contact Information	Duong Thu Hang (Ms), Project Coordinator E: hang@warecod.org.vn T: +84 4 3773 0828 (ext 104) M: +84 972 136 568

CEPF Region: Indo - Burma Hotspot

Strategic Direction: 3. Engage key actors in reconciling biodiversity conservation and development objectives, with a particular emphasis on the Northern Limestone Highlands and Mekong River and its major tributaries

Grant Amount: US\$20,000.00

Project Dates: November 1, 2012 - October 31, 2013

Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner):

WARECOD recognized that partnership and multi stakeholders' participation largely contributed to the project success. We worked closely with the following key local partners:

Name of Partner	Partner with in	Level of involvement	Comments
An Giang Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DONRE)	Training workshop Closing workshop	A representative from the Department of Natural Resources and Environment shared opinion about the Mekong mainstream development activities. DONRE also sent an officer to join us in conducting project and we will invite them to participate in the closing workshop	Since Dialogue 1 focused on the authorities and local government officials An Giang DONRE helped us connecting with local officials
The Commune's People Committee	Training workshop Closing workshop	Provided some key contacts and helped inviting participants from local community) Participated in the training workshop Committed to work with the monitoring group to manage the water level equipment after the	

		project ends.	
An Giang University:	Gathering information by questionnaires; Training workshop; Closing workshop	Lecturers from AG University prepared the questionnaires, conducted interviews with relevant stakeholders (DONRE, local authority, and local community). They presented questionnaire results in the sharing workshop and we will invite them to present in the closing workshop They also participated in the training on the field	We keep each other updated on the research in the Mekong delta
Can Tho university	Training on the field	Dr Duong Van Ni - an expert from Can Tho was responsible for this activity. Dr. Ni understood the situation of the Mekong delta very well. He gave an agricultural training on how the water and soil quality could be changed by overexploitation or some other reasons. Then he took the soil samples for the quality assessment	Dr. Ni's experience and knowledge are valuable to our work. We learned a lot from him in terms of cropping, soil preservation methods, as well as how to work effectively with local communities in the delta. We look forward to working more with him in other Mekong projects.
Vam Nao hydrological Department	Training workshop Monitoring Closing workshop	Gave a presentation about water level monitoring on sharing workshop; Will be invited to participate in closing workshops and share information with participants	Mr. Ngoi from Vam Nao Hydrological Department contributed significantly to the success of installing the water measure equipment. He was also very helpful in instructing local group in measuring daily water level and disseminating the information to the community.

Conservation Impacts

Please explain/describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile.

The Mekong river in Indo-Burma region ranks the second to Amazon in the world in terms of biodiversity. For thousands of years, this is the home of approximately 1,500 different species. It feeds million people who live in the riverbank. Mostly livelihoods of the local communities rely on the river. Unfortunately, there are many threats from overexploitation of resources and upstream development projects, which affect people's lives. The hydrological regime, according to the local people, became very unpredictable, unlike before.

Vam Nao village is located on the confluence between Vam Nao River and Hau River (one of the two biggest Mekong tributaries in Vietnam). In the past, local people mostly planted vegetables in the dry season and went to catch fish in the rainy season. The number of species, recently, has been extremely reduced because of overusing of pesticides, catching by destruction fishing tools and narrowing the habitat by building the dyke system. It could be more difficult for their livelihood because of the upstream dam cascade which is being planned and built without mutual agreement among the Mekong countries. We recognized that local community' awareness was still low because they received very little information about the upstream development projects which have much potential to negatively affect their lives.

In order to understand how the Mekong River could be affected in very near future to various stakeholders, especially at grass-root level, we conducted the project **“Raising awareness on potential impacts of upstream development activities to hydrological regimes, livelihoods and biodiversity in the Plain of Reeds, Mekong”** funded by CEPF. Many stakeholders were beneficial from our project in terms of receiving information, connecting people together who either knew the issues very well or heard about them for the first time. They had chances to understand more about the Mekong delta and its potential threats. In this project, we used various communication approaches and implemented a series of diverse activities, including research, training workshops, field trips, factsheets, and documentary film. Especially, we provided a water measuring equipment and trained local people to monitor the river by themselves. During the course of implementation, we realized that many people from local communities knew about the Mekong dams for the first time. At the end of the project, many of them agreed that they understood much more about the challenges the Mekong delta is facing thanks to joining the project. It was also our joy to bring local communities and government officials together to share their views and stories about the difficulties caused by development projects on the river or the hardship of resources management at their local. The local monitoring group is now able to raise their voice and ask the government officials to channel their voices to higher levels. Potentially affected people can voice up was one of the evidences for the success of our project. It helps local people to be more active in protecting the river and its biodiversity. Our activities contributed to the empowerment for local people in participating in local issue and protecting biodiversity in their villages.

Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project against the expected results detailed in the approved proposal.

- With 3 trainings, 2 sharing workshops and the Vam Nao Hydrological Department' continuous support, members of the monitoring group understood the importance of flood pulse to their livelihoods.
- The results of the monitoring were disseminated to the communities via local radio system, and it will continue with the support from the local authorities and Vam Nao Hydrological Department after the project ends.
- We also conducted local knowledge research, which provides information about changes of the local ecosystems caused by development activities. The community, then, also understood very well about the biodiversity and potential impacts of development activities including the mainstream dams on the Mekong River
- Also in Vam Nao village of An Giang province, WARECOD conducted a local knowledge research of which objective is to document the impacts of human activities to natural resources of the village. The two projects (Local knowledge research and CPEF-funded project) were supplemental for each other in terms of activities, capacity building, skills and human resources. Results from the two projects helped to advocate not only at the local level but also at the national and regional level (by report, short films and sharing workshops)
- Representative of An Giang Department of Natural Resources and Environment and the local authority officer, actively participated in the project. This helped build up a good relationship among them. Government officials understood more about the local biodiversity issues as well as concerns of the local people. Local communities trust government officials and express their opinions in constructive ways. We believe that government officials will take local concerns and knowledge into consideration for their decision making in the future.

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected:

Species Conserved:

Corridors Created:

Describe the success or challenges of the project toward achieving its short-term and long-term impact objectives.

Success:

- The short term objectives have been achieved and we tried to continue collaborate with the local authorities to raise people's awareness about the local water issues.
- The activities attracted attention from government agencies and are supported by them
- The voices from different levels, especially from communities were recognized, which were supportive to the advocacy work of the Vietnam Rivers Network.

Challenges:

- The water level changes frequently and it makes it difficult for the community to monitor it. Water monitoring group was very enthusiastic but their ability was still limited. Not all of them could provide the information in the most effective way to their communities.
- Limited number of people taking part in the research, and not all had high commitment to the activities

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

One officer from An Giang Department of Natural Resources and Environment came to conduct the local knowledge with us. She also joined us in this project. She was very active and provided us with helpful ideas and support. This shows the attention and interest of related government officials into our project and their respect about local knowledge.

Lessons Learned

Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building. Consider lessons that would inform projects designed or implemented by your organization or others, as well as lessons that might be considered by the global conservation community.

Project Design Process: (aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

- The design must take into deeper base on the project site back ground
- The design must take into account the differences in working environment between regions and stakeholders. For example, the working style of agencies in the North might be different from that of the South. Working with farmers might require a simple way of delivering information, compare with scientists or government officials,
- The project officers must bear in mind that reality might take longer than plan. So it is better not to set the schedule too tight to implement activities and be flexible, if appropriate.

Project Implementation: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

- Good partnership helped to ensure good results. When working with stakeholders in the issue, we had chances to make new acquaintances which helped us a lot in implementing later activities,
- Flexibility while implementation could give better results, given the same budget amount and the same resources. For example, we could change the schedule according to the circumstances; and we saved much time and energy,
- Early and well preparation leads to better outcomes.
- Collaborate with the local agency helped to ensure the sustainable results.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

It is necessary to connect with other organizations working on the same issue to learn experience, avoid overlapping or seek for collaboration opportunities,

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
WARECOD	B	2,870 USD	Fund for the closing workshop

***Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:**

- A** *Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)*
- B** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF project.)*
- C** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

Sustainability/Replicability

Summarize the success or challenge in achieving planned sustainability or replicability of project components or results.

All our communication works are made with the purpose of spreading information on the biodiversity of the Mekong delta at local level. To be specific:

- The picture of ecosystem in project site had been disseminated by VTV3 news. It's help to raise the awareness of the local community
- The short film about the important role of water and how the local people could monitor the water level by themselves was taken and sent to 5 television channels (both regional and national levels)
- The local knowledge research provided a research on biodiversity and the result had been sent to many stakeholders by poster, photos and short films
- The water level equipment had been exchange to the local community under the support from local authority and Vam Nao hydro-regime Department. They will keep monitor the water level and disseminate results to the local community

- Expert from Can Tho University and An Giang University had the plan to conduct further research and support the local community adapts with the water changing issues.
- Furthermore, the results of local villagers' activities in Vam Nao were shared in the 3rd Mekong Forum in Hanoi and received good feedbacks of audiences.

Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

The result of this project, along with local knowledge research in Vam Nao was shared to various stakeholders in the 3rd Mekong Forum in Hanoi in November 2013. It received good reaction and interest from the audiences. After this event, Oxfam Australia and Oxfam America asked for detailed information about the activities in Vam Nao and offered to sustain the project, especially those activities with local people. More importantly, it is vital to discuss on the next steps of the results. WARECOD are working on this to expand the results.

Safeguard Policy Assessment

Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.

No safeguard monitoring trip is required in this project. However, during the project, the communities were consulted and informed about our activities. We always made clear about our activities, objectives, how we wanted them to involve in the project and encouraged them to raise their ideas or feedbacks on the activities of the project. In the activities that engaged the local communities, we asked for their voluntary involvement.

Performance Tracking Report Addendum

CEPF Global Targets

(Enter Grant Term)

Provide a numerical amount and brief description of the results achieved by your grant.
Please respond to only those questions that are relevant to your project.

Project Results	Is this question relevant?	If yes, provide your numerical response for results achieved during the annual period.	Provide your numerical response for project from inception of CEPF support to date.	Describe the principal results achieved from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014. (Attach annexes if necessary)
1. Did your project strengthen management of a protected area guided by a sustainable management plan? Please indicate number of hectares improved.	NO			Please also include name of the protected area(s). If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	NO			Please also include name of the protected area. If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
3. Did your project strengthen biodiversity conservation and/or natural resources management inside a key biodiversity area identified in the CEPF ecosystem profile? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	NO			During the course of the project, we worked to raise awareness of stakeholders in the Mekong delta of Vietnam on the rich and precious natural resources of this area. Our communication campaign spread information through a wide range of means such as dialogues, factsheets, documentary films and articles.
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	NO			
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	NO			

If you answered yes to question 5, please complete the following table.

Additional Comments/Recommendations

Information Sharing and CEPF Policy

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned, and results. Final project completion reports are made available on our Web site, www.ceph.net, and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

Please include your full contact details below:

Name: Hang Duong

Organization name: Center for Water Resources Conservation and Development (WARECOD)

Mailing address: Suite 801, Building Hacisco, No 15 Lane 107, Nguyen Chi Thanh Street, Hanoi, Vietnam

Tel: +84 4 3773 0828 (ext 105)

Fax: + 84 4 3773 9491

E-mail: hang@warecod.org.vn