

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Legal Name: Alianza para la Conservación y el Desarrollo (ACD)

Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement): Strengthening Local Capacity in the Naso Teribe Region of Bocas del Toro, Panama

Implementation Partners for This Project:

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): March 1, 2005 – November 30, 2005

Date of Report (month/year): January 31, 2006

II. OPENING REMARKS

Provide any opening remarks that may assist in the review of this report.

This project was extremely important to facilitate other conservation initiatives in the Naso and Ngobe territories in Western Panama, and implementation was successfully extended until November 2005. Currently, we are completing a follow-up economic-environmental valuation study with the Conservation Strategy Fund (also a CEPF grant), and working on proposals with other organizations for a continued presence in the region.

III. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

1. What was the initial objective of this project?

To enhance the capacity of Naso (and Ngobe) leaders to respond to the challenges posed by the construction of hydroelectric facilities in the La Amistad Biosphere Reserve (Panama).

2. Did the objectives of your project change during implementation? If so, please explain why and how.

The objectives of the project never changed, but they were expanded and refocused to respond to the construction of three other hydroelectric projects in the same watershed, which increased the need to obtain credible and objective information about the environmental and social impacts of these projects.

3. How was your project successful in achieving the expected objectives?

Naso leaders, in particular, are much more prepared to discuss and make their own decisions about hydroelectric development in the Naso Territory, in comparison with the prevailing lack of information and understanding of legal matters and technical issues before the implementation of the project. In addition, these Naso leaders are currently and by their own initiative sharing their knowledge and experience with Ngobe leaders

from other local communities affected by hydroelectric projects that were not originally considered as main beneficiaries of this project.

4. Did your team experience any disappointments or failures during implementation? If so, please explain and comment on how the team addressed these disappointments and/or failures.

The first main unexpected limitation was the lack of internal resources to administer the project. Although many activities we coordinated with other organizations, like CEALP, CEASPA, ANAI, and Planeta Panama Consultores, we soon realized that we needed to contract professional services for accounting, managing, and communication services. For this purpose, we redistributed some of the funds that were originally allocated for professional services contracts in the approved budget.

Secondly, and most important, we always harbored the hope that we will be able to foster an understanding among all the contending factions within the Naso leadership. Unfortunately, we were never able to achieve this goal entirely, although few weeks before the end of the project, the imminent discussion of the legalization of the Naso Territory by the National Assembly brought forward a minimal reapproachment between all the different factions of the Naso leadership.

5. Describe any positive or negative lessons learned from this project that would be useful to share with other organizations interested in implementing a similar project.

As negative lessons, organizations should be aware that administering a small grant (\$5000) may not be cost-effective unless staff time was hired or donated by other projects in the organization. In addition, expectations should be relatively low in the area of conflict resolution, as many external variables constrain the openness of the different factions to sit all together in the same table.

With regards to positive lessons, we discovered that a small grant had the potential to catalyze much larger initiatives that traveled beyond the original scope of the project. In addition, we found that the collaboration of other organizations – international, national, and local - was critical for amplifying the impacts of the project.

6. Describe any follow-up activities related to this project.

In the month of July, we partnered with ANAI (Costa Rica) and the Conservation Strategy Fund (CSF), with financing of Conservation International – CEPF and TNC, to develop a pilot study of economic-environmental valuation for the four proposed hydroelectric projects in the Teribe-Changuinola Watershed within the La Amistad Biosphere Reserve. In addition, in December, with financing of Greengrants Fund, we conducted preliminary participatory planning in the Naso Territory, generating proposals for the legalization of the Naso territory, improvement of productive activities, and cultural preservation. We also expect to conduct similar exercises in neighboring Ngobe communities within and outside of the areas affected by the hydroelectric projects.

7. Please provide any additional information to assist CEPF in understanding any other aspects of your completed project.

Most of the grant resources were utilized to organize and develop the legal issues and environmental impact workshops in the months of May and June. These were developed in collaboration with CEALP, CEASPA, ANAI, ODESEN, Alianza Naso, and Planeta Panama Consultores. CEPF funds also facilitated an agreement with ANAI and Conservation Strategy Fund to develop the first pilot study of the CEPF grant for economic-environmental valuation of infrastructure projects in Mesoamerica. The rest of the funds, especially in the budget line of conflict resolution, contributed to the organization of a regional forum about indigenous people and hydrologic resources, sponsored by ODESEN, Alianza Naso, CEASPA and IUCN in the month of October, and to direct meeting with government officials with regards to the Naso elections (April), the Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) of the hydroelectric projects, and the discussion of the legalization of the Naso Territory in the National Assembly (November).

IV. 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
Conservation Strategy Fund (CSF)	Grantee and Partner leveraging	14,448.00	As part of a Mesoamerican initiative funded by CEPF and TNC
Greengrants Fund	Grantee leveraging	2,500.00	These funds facilitated participatory planning in the Naso Territory, follow up on the Bonyic EIA, and difusing the results of the CSF-sponsored economic valuation study

****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*** *Complementary funding (Other donors contribute to partner organizations that are working on a project linked with this CEPF project)*
- C*** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF project.)*
- D*** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

Provide details of whether this project will continue in the future and if so, how any additional funding already secured or fundraising plans will help ensure its sustainability.

We envision the continuation of this project in three main directions: 1. Enhancing the capacity of Naso and Ngobe leaders to respond to the challenges posed by hydroelectric development, 2. Improving productive activities in the Naso and Ngobe territories, and 3. Cultural documentation and preservation. In all of these three areas, additional funding is critically needed, and we hope that CEPF can partner with other organizations, like TNC and IUCN, to continue funding these initiatives within the La Amistad Biosphere Reserve and the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor.

V. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We truly appreciate the opportunity granted by the CEPF to develop this project in such a critical moment. Today, we certainly have an enhanced information base for decision making, and we have successfully transferred and socialized this knowledge among the majority of the Naso leaders and even some of the Ngobe leaders affected by the other three hydroelectric projects. We hope that a project like CEPF can finance some of the follow up activities, especially those related with sustainable productive activities in the Naso and Ngobe territories within the La Amistad Biosphere Reserve, which becomes a critical need after plans to build new access roads towards the La Amistad International Park (World Heritage Site) as part of regional development for hydroelectric production.

VI. INFORMATION SHARING

CEPF aims to increase sharing of experiences, lessons learned and results among our grant recipients and the wider conservation and donor communities. One way we do this is by making the text of final project completion reports available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and by marketing these reports in our newsletter and other communications. Please indicate whether you would agree to publicly sharing your final project report with others in this way.

Yes

No

If yes, please also complete the following:

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