CEPF Final Project Completion Report

Instructions to grantees: please complete all fields, and respond to all questions, below.

Organization Legal Name	*Southeast Asia Development Program (SADP)*
Project Title	*Providing Appropriate Support to Cambodian Nongovernmental Organizations and Peoples Groups Working on Sustainable Resource Management*
CEPF GEM No.	*#64049*
Date of Report	*19 January 2017*

CEPF Hotspot: Indo China

Strategic Direction: Strategic Direction 8: Strengthen the capacity of civil society to work on biodiversity, communities and livelihoods at regional, national, local and grassroots levels, particularly:

    8.1 Support networking activities that enable collective civil society responses to priority and emerging threats

    8.2 Provide core support for the organizational development of domestic civil society

Grant Amount: US$122,558.00

Project Dates: 01 July 2014 – 31 December 2016

1. **Implementation Partners for this Project** *(list each partner and explain how they were involved in the project)*

SADP support was provided to partners on the basis of 5 criteria as below (from the proposal):

    1. *They are either CEPF, McKnight or SADP grantees*
    2. *The partner wants and request support*
    3. *The partner has a high need for organizational or program support (above that which normal donor-support can assist with) or can bring strength and experience to group learning processes.*
    4. *SADP can see potential for results/strengthening coming from support efforts.*
    5. *Partners have a focus on grassroots civil society development and social change (which is seen as essential for resource conservation).*

In the end, this meant that SADP worked with SADP/McKnight Foundation partners. Some of them were also CEPF grantees (funded by both SADP/MF and CEPF). These partners received organizational and program strategy support from SADP as described in the report below. The results section below details which partners and what work was done.

Conservation Impacts

2. Describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF investment strategy set out in the ecosystem profile

SADP worked to strengthen partners. Partners then worked on natural resource management.

SADP support was in the area of partner organizational and management capacity. It was also in the area of approaches to peoples led development (how to work on community or peoples-led approaches). These things were seen as essential to sustained change and civil society being able to address the socio-political root causes of the massive environmental degradation currently happening in Cambodia.

3. Summarize the overall results/impact of your project

During the period of the project, it became very clear that effectiveness of local partners working on resource rights was limited by some very systemic issues. Most local partners had multiple funders, each funder with their own approach and many were counter-productive-to-SADP approaches. Each local NGO partner was also surrounded by an NGO culture reinforced by other organizations operating around SADP-CEPF partners. Some of the dominant discourses and models within that NGO culture were counter-productive to grassroots civil society being able to address the socio-political root causes of the massive environmental degradation currently happening in Cambodia.

SADP, however, would say that, *despite the very real barriers to organizational development, program effectiveness and inter-organization collaboration,* the project has resulted in some very real change. It was also obvious that the results of the project need to be further developed and solidified.

4. Actual progress toward long-term impacts at completion

Planned Long-term Impacts - 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Local NGOs and people groups working on biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management (through civil society development) are more efficient in their programs, because they have strong governance, management and collaboration.

Actual Long Term Impacts:
Most of the SADP/McKnight/CEPF partners that SADP has worked with have significantly improved governance, management and collaboration and in a number of cases this has resulted in more efficient programs (in terms of community based resource conservation and challenges to the root causes of biodiversity and resource rights loss)

5. Actual progress toward short-term impacts at completion

Planned Short-term Impacts - 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Peoples' groups report that they are collaborating together with each other, with increased efficiency, and that NGOs are working effectively and are collaborating together to support people's plans.

Actual Short-term impacts:
People's groups have found it hard to report major changes in local NGOs working together. Despite this there has been increased and solid collaboration around:
- Indigenous NGOs working on community organizing around mining issues in Ratanakiri
- NGOs working together on land clearance and dispossession related to Hoa Anh Gai Lai company in Ratanakiri.
- INGO-funders working on issues of their own due diligence when funding to local NGOs
- INGO-funders working to support improved governance of local NGOs they fund.
- INGOs working of hydro-dam issues in northeast Cambodia (and having difficulties in finding reliable local partners).

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

It is SADP's assessment that slow but solid progress has been made: the project has had positive impacts. Other sections of this report outline results and successes, so SADP use this section to outline some of the major challenges are explained. As mentioned above, it was discovered that there were many aspects of the NGO-aid system that reinforced models and approaches contract to those sought to be promoted by the project.

1/. NGO Governance. In exploring why local NGO governance has been so weak for so long, it became apparent that many funders actually undermined governance. Funders often deal only with and reinforce the dominant power of Executive Directors. This undermines the role of local NGO Boards.

One major funder even said they were happy that Boards were not involved and that governance of local NGOs be effectively the mandate of funders. Such funders, while requiring that local NGOs have Boards, often ignored them. The funders also denied any budget to capacity strengthening of Boards.

What this meant was that any effort that SADP made was often undone by the action of other funders. It was already a formidable task to support behavior change away from "strongman" management toward a more collective and accountable form of management/governance, but this approach of many funders made it even more difficult.

In order to respond to this challenge, SADP worked with a small group of funders who were inherently interested in better local governance. They were funders who agreed they and other will need to partially withdraw from Cambodia at some stage – and need to leave local NGOs with accountability and the check-and-balances in place. With this small funder group, was possible to establish a collective governance support project nominally located in Cooperation Committee

Cambodia (which was the logical place for it but there were significant capacity issues in CCC that had to be addressed – which meant the project could be in CCC but had to have an active multi-funder steering committee).

What this strategy a critical mass of funders has been created in combination with a diverse group of leading local NGOs who can collectively work to strengthen governance on local NGOs more generally (starting first with their own learning and improvement).

2/. Partner financial management. SADP would like partner programs to be peoples led: which requires responsively and flexibility. That actually means that finance systems need to be stronger in order to cope with non-mechanistic approaches whilst not also opening for corruption.

The challenge was been that many donors' systems actually undermine or frustrate strong partner finance management. Others provided perverse incentive by funding differentially toward groups supposedly active but with gaping holes in their management (ie low diligence in grant-making)

In order to illustrate the issues, SADP supported a professional social/management researcher (Roger Henke who is also SADP Board Chair and worked on an expenses-only basis), to undertake objective research on the state of local NGO financial management and the impact of donor systems on it. In 2014 a survey was conducted with 7 funding agencies providing information about the level of financial management capacity and issues within their grantees (a pool of 51 local NGOs). That research found (in an objective manner triangulated with key audit company data) that funders were ignoring the state of financial management in partners, funding them with glaring deficiencies and sometimes even after serious fraud. Basic financial controls were often not a pre-requisite for much funding and, as a result, there was actually a very high (although under reported) occurrence of fraud and misappropriation.

This brought a level of awareness to a wider group of funders. Then in 2015 an expanded survey was possible – with 18 funders and 93 local NGOs covered. Again it was discovered that a major root cause of fraud, misappropriation was lack of funder diligence and also poor auditing.

LNGOs with fraud issues	13%
Serious governance problems	18%
Serious Finance management problems	15%
All three problems	9%
Serious financial management issues not raised in previous external audits	62%
Fraud cases where susceptibility was not raised in previous external audits	82%

And the interaction of both poor governance and financial management was intensely problematic:

Statistical risk of fraud	
– if weak governance	53%
– if weak finance systems	79%
– if BOTH weak governance and weak governance	89%

Still, however, even with this research data, there was the constant challenge that funders have not been so interested in addressing their own weak diligence. Some funders were made aware of financial management or fraud issues in some of their grantees and even then displayed alarming disinterest in even knowing about it.

This has necessitated SADP working quietly, slowly and strategically with key players in the donor community. A key ally has been The Asia Foundation – a major funder with major back funders. The collaboration was a presentation of the issues to major back donors and now a program is being developed to deepen research and engagement with the issues – so that back funders can start understanding the issues and insisting that their intermediaries be more diligent.

At more operational level, it was also found that many external audits (and the auditors themselves) were not reliable. Adding to that was that many funder insisted on project audits – audits that often do not detect systemic fraud or mismanagement. To rectify this, SADP has developed guidelines and model TORs for audits where project audits can be integrated with global, organizational audits and the quality is much higher. These guidelines are being made available to other funders and SADP will adopt them as standard for SADP grants.

Another challenge was that funders' pre-grant finance systems assessments of partners were also often weak (or non-existent). By developing a set of quality approaches and tools to finance systems assessment (taking the best from funders and from finance companies/consultants), SADP was able to provide a framework for other funders to use in order to get reliable systems assessment prior to funding (which may not preclude funding but would inform what strengthening work would be required to reduce risk of mismanagement and fraud).

In addition to the challenges with funders, there were challenges associated with local NGOs. When mis-management or weak management had been condoned and supported by funders for a long period of time, asking local NGOs to implement the basics of strong financial management, felt to them like an unrealistic imposition. Many resisted and were defensive. "Fortunately" SADP had some partners that virtually imploded because of finance issues. SADP was, therefore, able to allow partners to share experiences – and partners with major problems were able to say they had massive problems *because* they has weak systems and they failed to respond to the assessment that they needed major overhaul of their systems. This dramatically reduced the aggression or suspicion toward he message that improvements and diligence was required.

3/ People's led approaches and community organizing. A major challenge on the program side (after the major institutional issues were addressed), the NGO development aid system has produced

systems and approaches to community organizing in Cambodia that have been orientated toward short-term results and easily quantifiable indicators. What has become entrenched has been focusing on things like establishment of community *committees* (regardless of the quality of them), registrations of community forestry/fisheries/collective land *titles* and interactions with government agencies (even if those interactions were disempowering for communities). Such approaches report "results" but have replaced or undermined organic community processes and structures (a negative impact).

This combination was seen to drive local organizations to NOT do strong peoples led approaches. Real peoples' led development is longer term and difficult to quantify but is essential to effective advocacy and protection of rights and resources.

When SADP has tried to work with partners on models of genuine community organizing (models successful in peoples' movements around the world), often there was resistance. Partners say they are "already doing community organizing" (except that it is *COMMITTEE* organizing or community organizing for NGO-led development and the mode is more reactive rather than proactive).

To work around this issue, SADP has been working with partners to help them understand that community organizing is an approach of working with communities *on issues of priority to communities* (not pre-set outputs and priorities). It is also recognized that sometimes community priorities may change over time and that community organizing must adapt to follow and support those changing priorities whilst also promoting increased collective action.

The challenge then has also been that other funders work with the local NGOs that SADP work with. Often as SADP works to support peoples' led approaches, other funders push or force partners to follow pre-planned projects with inflexible outputs. Often the approaches are not related to the social cohesion and do not address the socio-political issues that undermine national governance.

It is also important to recognize that genuine community organizing for peoples' led development is inherently difficult and risky. When it is effective, it challenges vested interests. Then, other funders promoting pre-planned, disempowering approaches get major traction - because they offer an easy way out for NGOS – funds for not supporting communities to make changes in power dynamics.

Again, SADP's approach has had to be working in collaboration with a cluster of most like-minded funders. This started to create an environment more conducive to local NGOs supporting of peoples led approaches. SADP spent time and effort in facilitating multi-funder examinations of issues surrounding "peoples' representation". Multi-stakeholder workshops found that there were serious issues in the dominant way NGOs and funder operate.

SADP then led the cluster of funders (under the recommendations from the initial workshop) to undertake further scoping research and deeper analysis.

This brought forward the work of Misereor on "peoples' led development" in the Asian region. SADP, therefore, was able to lead a large conference on peoples' led development. This moved discourse forward by differentiating between:
1. community organizing for government and industry led development
2. community organizing for NGO-led development
3. community organizing for peoples' led development

This combined with an exposure trip for a number of partners working with indigenous peoples to see community organizing for peoples led development in the Cordillera region of northern Philippines. In this manner, it was found that *some* partners could grasp the idea that they needed to develop different approaches to community work and re-adjust their program to avoid NGO-led development.

SADP was also able to bring in regional experts on community organizing for peoples led development to help some partners start to adopt such approaches. Again, however, this work was held back by the dominant and dysfunctional models still supported by the majority of the development aid system in Cambodia.

4/. NGO Collaboration. A major objective of the project was to promote NGO collaboration in support of community led initiatives. Again there were large systematic challenges associated with that. The culture and industry processes have put often local organizations in competition for funds with each other. This has resulted in an often-ingrained resistance to working together.

In addition to this, funders and higher level network projects pull local NGOs in different directions. At times it was impossible to facilitate local partners to communicate together because they are so often busy in national and Asia regional network (usually to not much effect, but with large per diems and travel payments).

In dealing with all the other challenges of the work, it was hard for SADP to do anything about these issues. Exposure trips and workshop about community organizing and peoples movements in Cordillera Philippines acted as a gathering point for partners working with indigenous peoples. Unfortunately, this work was set-back by one non-indigenous partner using a gathering as a venue to promote their own dysfunctional form of "community organizing" – fortunately SADP had two regional experts present to help reduce this impact. Again, it reminds SADP that the work is slow and needs constant attention (one cannot expect water to flow in the artic – surrounding conditions sometimes do indeed affect what one can expect).

SADP supported partner involved in advocacy against Hoang Anh Gai Lai rubber plantation company to have other partners be engaged with the issues and the approaches (using investment chain analysis for the basis of advocacy against exploitative companies). This did get broader support but this was limited because of the sometimes severe organizational dysfunction of some of the partners involved (weak management and finance).

5/. Low management capacity and few suppliers of appropriate organizational development support. One component of the project was to provide small grants to partner organizations. This was so they could contract organizational development advisers. This proved difficult. One reason was that there were/are very few *appropriate* organizational development consultants/advisers. Some advisers were very much of a NGO- led development specialists. SADP even found some service providers engaging with the partners and creating problems for peoples' led development and basic good practice. As an example, Highlanders Association is meant to be supporting community organizing but strategic planning consultants promoted NGO pre-planning.

Another aspect of the issue was that many partners did not have the capacity to recruit or supervise suitable advisers. Because of the surrounding environment of doing business as NGO-style advisers, the partners with most need had the least capacity to manage support.

To address these challenges, SADP put a lot of effort to align SADP staff and have a pool of appropriate consultants and provided those human resources rather than providing funds to partners.

6/. Increasing intimidation by government. To make things even more challenging, the pre-disposition to avoid effective work and peoples led approaches was exacerbated by increasing intimidation of civil society by the Cambodian government.

Following the 2013 national elections, when there was a strong political movement against the government (which subsequently seems to have died), there was increased suspicion of NGOs by government (which is ironic as many NGOs actually tried to decrease their exposure by distracting or prohibiting community groups from being active). There was increased attack and intimidation of NGOs (and community groups).

One partner that was active in support of community groups was targeted by spurious legal cases, there being obvious political manipulation of the courts. It was obvious that this was part of a program by government to put all NGOs "on notice".

7/. SADP's own limited capacity. Another challenge has been SADP's own capacity. SADP has a belief that new approaches to grant-making and support to social change require people who have commitment to those new approaches. Those people are hard to find. There are many "capacity development" or training/university courses that support skills development for NGO-led development but few that help the development of skills to support peoples led development. This has meant that SADP has had to take on relatively young and inexperienced staff. That in turn has meant that SADP has had to devote much time to staff development and still there has been a lack of maturity on the SADP team.

This has been recognized by a number of partners saying that SADP program is well placed but the staff are young. SADP has attempted to complement the staff with program consultants but this too has been difficult (see discussion above).

Another factor has been that in order to have strong staff and have further staff development, it takes time and investment. This is often seen as competing for funds that could otherwise go to grantees. On one hand SADP has contracted research that has shown that funder lack of diligence with regard to assessing and monitoring partner finances systems has been a major factor in promoting widespread financial mismanagement in the Cambodian NGO sector. Also many partners have adopted mainstream NGO-led development approaches which limit the grown of grassroots civil society. But to change these things requires a solid SADP staffing - and requires more funds being for what many see as "overheads" which are to be minimized.

6. Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

1/. Funder collaboration. As the project was implemented, SADP became more aware that funders having a profound effect on partner management practices. Lack of funder diligence promoted and rewarded poor management practices and even fraud. Funders pushing high (short-term) results based on pre-planned projects blocked the ability of partners to work on peoples led development. Funder's focus on easily quantifiable indicators pushed partner work away from the more difficult to monitor (and slower) social work which is required for long term impact and sustainability. With these realizations, SADP had to shift partly away from the original focus of promoting NGO collaboration toward promoting funder collaboration.

In this area of funder collaboration, there were impacts which were outside of the original scope of the project (as per the proposal). This was especially the case with regard to work on community representation and peoples led development. SADP was able to work with a group of about 10 funders to conduct workshop and research. This has led to the German funder who has no office in Cambodia, funding to SADP for 3 years from July 2016 to promote peoples led development. Part of that project is that the broader funder collaboration will be involved in the project.

A similar thing has happened with regard to supporting strengthened local NGO governance. The research done by SADP involved information from a group of interested funders. It showed that local NGO governance and lack of funder diligence were major causes in weak local NGO finance management. At the same time a collective workshop on local NGO governance spawned a working group of 8 funders when then became a steering group for a project to support strengthening of local NGO governance.

2/. Unmet expectations related to training about NGO governance. Perhaps a negative impact was some discontent about SADP not being able to follow on from a trial of providing governance training to community people who were on NGO Boards. This trial was done in Ratanakiri and there were 9 training units provided. What SADP, however, found was that it was difficult to sustain the program and that it was a "drop in the ocean" compared to the needs. An assessment of the initiative was made. It identified that people who had received the training, while now more knowledgeable about their governance role, really needed ongoing coaching support – but SADP was not able to provide that. This has perhaps led to a sense of disappointment with SADP.

3/. A revised SADP situation analysis and program outline. Some CEPF funds were also used to support an external evaluation of SADP's program from 2013 to 2015. Funds were also used for staff and consultant time to be involved in developing an updated Cambodia situation analysis and developing a revised SADP Theory of Change or program outline.

These activities have led to a strengthening of SADP. They were activities that promoted critical thinking and social analyses.

4/. Difficult relationships between SADP and partners. In some cases relationships between SADP and some partners became strained. SADP's expectations for management and program were different or higher than the norm. SADP saw the norm as not functioning for the betterment of local people's rights and resources so insisted that there be changes. In some cases, there were not, and SADP had to phase out a number of partners.

7. Project Components and Products/Deliverables

(from the proposal) Component 1: 11 Cambodian NGOs have revised their governance, management and finance systems to meet the most important aspects of the NGO Governance & Professional Practice (GPP) certification scheme;

Deliverables:
- *Organizational assessments at the start of the program.*
- *Organizational assessment at the end of the program*

Activities:
- *Conduct preliminary survey of potential partners*
- *Develop preliminary project plan for organizational development support*
- *Conduct more detailed management, governance or financial systems assessments*
- *Develop management, governance and financial systems strengthening plans*
- *Provide technical and organizational development support.*
- *Conduct end of program management, governance or financial systems assessments*

Results: The objectives expected results of the project were ambitious. SADP worked with 14 different partners to strengthen management and governance. Some of the challenges have been discussed in a previous section. One main issue is that "you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink". In some cases that institutional commitment to better management has not been strong. In others it has been. In some cases SADP had to drop partners because of a low commitment to minimum standard management practices. In other cases, management was reasonable but the organization drifted away from peoples led approaches (often following donor projects not fitting with community needs).

(from the proposal) Component 2: A service and support program to Cambodian NGO Boards has been established and is helping and supporting capacity of NGO Boards.

Deliverables:
- *Feasibility study report developed and shared with partners and other donors. This will be done by consulting with donors and NGO boards to ascertain what are the needs for support to Boards. This is because there are a variety of possible ways to set-up "governance services" but it is important to have many stakeholders expressing being involved - so that the services is used when established. There will also be discussions with various supply options (INGOs, LNGOS, legal firms etc).*
- *A governance support institution as commenced with proper legal and Institutional arrangements in place. At this stage, the form of this is being kept open and will be decided through a participatory feasibility study. SADP does not want this institution to be owned by SADP. It may be that a legal firm like Vishnu Law Group, who have experience in NGO governance issues develop the capacity to provide support. It may be that an NGO such as CCC or VBNK are the best "house" for such a program. These will have to be considered in the feasibility stage.*
- *A report has been prepared by the new institution outlining NGO Governance support provided.*

Activities:
- *Conduct research and feasibility study (best done in collaboration with other donors)*
- *Workshop to review and discuss the results of feasibility study*
- *Call for expressions of interest to provide services*

Results: SADP contracted research into the factors influencing financial management in local NGOs. This was chosen because there had been long-standing issues with many local NGOs' financial management. It was also quite tangible and could offer insights to the root causes of weak governance (it is governance that has the role of making sure financial management *systems* are solid).

Two grant-maker surveys were done and showed that funders were highly implicated into prevalence of poor governance and financial mismanagement. Basically many funders were providing funds with very low diligence.

Because of these findings it was thought that only a collective effort with some more interested funders would be effective. Working with such a group SADP led a workshop of key local NGOs and funders to look at why and how there was weak governance in local NGOs. This came up with that there was a lack of guidelines to describe and support strong governance and that a collective learning program was required.

The workshop also involved Cooperation Committee Cambodia (CCC) who are an umbrella group for NGOs in Cambodia and had a theoretical role in addressing these issues. With CCC being an obvious home for a program to support better governance, but having limited capacity to do so, SADP led a steering group of 9 funders to guide a governance strengthening project, with CCC as a secretariat.

The project has two project phases as follows:
Phase 1 – Inception and establishment of pilot learning group (June 2016 – April 2017)
Phase 2 – Establishment of new learning groups and provision "board services" to groups that have passed through the capacity development program (May 2017 – April 2021)

CEPF funds were used to support the first phase (a $4,000 sub-grant). This phase commenced in 2016 and has included:
- Appointment of a Governance Specialist to coordinate the project;
- Selection of a Steering Committee to manage the project, guided by an agreed Terms of Reference, and meeting on a regular basis;
- Self-selection of participating agencies (15) and individuals (a Board member and Director from the same organisation);
- Agreement about principles guide the way each participating NGO will work with its Board, donors, and communities;
- A baseline survey, documenting relevant conditions in participating agencies;
- Quarterly workshops to develop approaches and learning materials for solid NGO governance in the Cambodian context.

Still to be done in early 2017:
- Production of advocacy resources in multiple media;
- Outreach and advocacy to other interested agencies, including MoI and donors;
- A final workshop to review and consolidate the lessons learned from the action research and to evaluate overall success of the pilot change initiative.

SADP has provided $5,000 of McKnight Foundations to the project for completion of the first phase and start of the second phase. SADP has also actively been soliciting more funds for the project. It is possible

that USAID will fund the project for another 3 years and 75 local NGOs get to access the capacity development program.

> *(from the proposal) Component 3: 15 of MF and CEPF Cambodian NGO partners will have commenced collaboration on supporting people's led development.*
>
> *Deliverable*
> - *A report has been produced that outlines at least 5 cases where NGOs have collaborated to support behind plans developed by emerging people's organizations*
>
> *Activities:*
> - *Facilitate meetings of peoples groups and NGOs to analyses problems, root causes and collective strategies.*
> - *Provide backstopping and coordination for collective action.*

Results: Partner collaboration was a difficult aspect of the project. SADP found that funder collaboration had first to be worked on in order to support local NGO collaboration. It can also be said that there were so many institutional issues in local partners that it was difficult to work on more advanced options such as collaboration.

Nevertheless there was some solid collaboration:

1/. Collaboration on the Hoang Anh Gai Lai rubber plantations in Ratanakiri. This collaboration was initiated by Partner 1. Partner 1 had a program on investigating the financing systems behind large companies abusing people's rights. SADP played a role in supporting the collaboration of the groups supporting communities to lodge a complaint to the IFC ombudsman. SADP also facilitated a few larger gatherings to explain the complaint and how they can support the 5 agencies directly involved in it.

The collaboration was, however, not without difficulties. The basic management capacity of some groups was limited. The bulk of the work was left to the thers, and SADP had to provide an addition grant to partner 1 to do that work.

With the combination of international , national and local groups, however, it was possible to have a large company like Hang Anh Gai Lai dragged into negotiation and being required to withdraw from a significant portion of their land concession and provide compensation to local communities.

2/. Collaboration on mining company. A Canadian-registered company had acquired large mining exploration licenses in Ratanakiri and Mondolkiri. They are basically a mining speculation company that brings in more genuine exploration companies and actual mining companies. In 2013 SADP contracted a researcher to look into what the company was (something quite different to the Public Relations materials). Despite sharing that information, SADP saw a number of local and international NGOs promoting the company based on only the public relations materials produced by the company.

SADP collaborated with an international organization to get a thorough investment chain and historical analysis of the company. The international organization collaborated with a University to do that. The research showed that companies involved had a very dubious history and quite a record of abuse of rights. This was presented to a large group of local and international NGOs to get them to stop publically

supporting the company (which was developing mining on indigenous peoples' lands and not meeting international standards as claimed).

As part of the advocacy work Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, two local groups developed a video recording community peoples' concerns about the mines.

3/. Collaboration for learning on community organizing and indigenous peoples associations. In a lot of cases SADP has seen that Cambodia lacks the models of strong people's associations and alliances/federations. The work has been very NGO-centered and not so effective. In Ratanakiri there was a growing recognition that the standard way of operating in Cambodia were not resulting in strong peoples' groups that could challenge development aggression.

In 2015, SADP facilitated so that 14NGO and community peoples from some SADP partners and SADP went on an exposure trip to the northern Philippines, to see that work of Cordillera Peoples Alliance. The trip was able to show the participants that they needed to work on genuine community organizing and that NGO led programs would not result in the protection of indigenous peoples rights.

The group made a video about the visit that also explained more about what community organizing should be. The experiences and the video were shared at a large workshop when the group came back. There was also a second workshop to follow up and reinforce the lessons. SADP also facilitated an exchange session between non-IP and the IP groups so that there could be cross learning of groups interested in and trying to develop community organizing in Cambodia.

As a result of this work, SADP has been able to star to support the development of community organizing for peoples led development in Cambodia. Highlanders Association has started a pilot of community organizing and OPKC are interested as well.

(from the proposal) Component 4: People's groups around Cambodia have been supported to link together to address some of the major root causes to resource depletion and poor governance.

Deliverables
- *A report documenting peoples groups (that are MF and CEPF partners, or associated with MF and CEPF partners) working together for collective action on root causes of resource depletion and poor governance.*

Activities
- *Technical backstopping to people's groups to bridge across NGO territories to analyses problems, root causes and collective strategies.*
- *Provide backstopping and coordination for collective action.*

Results: This was a highly ambitious objective. As outlined above, there have been a number of fundamental barriers to local NGOs supporting peoples group. These have effectively prohibited strong people's groups and collaboration between people's groups.

The concept of peoples groups has also been somewhat questioned by the work in the project The research and collaboration work that SADP did around "peoples representation" and "peoples led development" showed that in many cases "community representatives" in many NGO programs where not well entrenched in or accountable to their communities or constituencies. This was noted to come about as a

result of NGOs forming "committees" or groups of representatives within communities. Usually this was done for NGO projects, and done at a speed that did not build/strengthen the local social system in communities.

The strongest result achieved in the component was the work done with peoples groups around learning about indigenous peoples associations and community organizing (described in component 3 above).

(from the proposal) Component 5: Compliance with CEPF Social Safeguard Policies monitored and reported to CEPF

Deliverables
- *Establishment of a grievance mechanism.*
- *Brief safeguard monitoring report to CEPF every six months*

Activities
- *Establishing grievance mechanism and informing all relevant stakeholder*
- *Preparing 6-month safeguard monitoring reports and sending to CEPF.*

Results:
A grievance mechanism was created. SADP also developed a MOU that set out principles for SADP support to partners. This set that the capacity development support was to be by demand by the partners as opposed to imposed by SADP.

SADP provided safeguard monitoring reports to CEPF every 6 months.

(from the proposal) Component 6: Awarding small sub-grants to support partner's own organizational development. This will be done only after the inception phase when there will be assessments of partners support needs but also their capacity to effectively manage any contracts for their own capacity development. It is envisaged that up to 15 sub-grants will be awarded with a maximum of $5000 and an average of $2246 (a total pool of $29,200). SADP will do this through SADP's internal process with final approval for grants by the SADP Board. SADP will also monitor and provide support/guidance to make sure the organizational development services that are contracted by partners who are awarded sub-grants are high quality and appropriate. SADP's micro-grant standard contract agreements will be used for sub-grants.

Deliverables
- *A report will be produced in July 2015 and June 2014 outlining the sub-grants awarded, the results obtained and the issues encountered.*

Activities
- *Developing guidelines for the awarding of sub-grants based on needs and priorities identified in the inception phase of the program*
- *Reviewing requests/proposals for sub-grants (done by SADP staff but it may be possible to have this process go through a to-be-established Cambodian micro-grant advisory group), obtaining approval from SADP Board, negotiations and signing of contracts.*
- *Reviewing report and other forms of monitoring in order to capture the lessons and results of the sub-granting.*

Results:
As mentioned in the section above about challenges encountered, not all of the funds originally allocated to providing as small grants could be provided as small grants. SADP changed to provide services rather than funds. SADP staff were providing regular support and a number of consultants were managed by SADP to support partners.

In some cases the consultants did work integrated with SADP grant-making. For example, finance consultants assisted doing finance systems assessments as part of SADP grant-making processes (when the partner was most open to such assessments – because it was a requirement of grant-making). The capacity development aspect of this was that each partner got detailed feedback on their finance systems and how they could improve them.

In the end, the following direct small grants were possible:

No	To	For	Amount
1	CCC	Contribution to a project of strengthening local NGO Governance	$4,000.00
2	Partner 2	Support to develop a strategic plan	$1,000.00
		TOTAL	**$5,000.00**

Note that SADP has providing (using McKnight funds) another, ongoing small grant to the project on strengthening local NGO governance.

8. **If you did not complete any component or deliverable, how did this affect the overall impact of the project?**

    This has been explained in the above sections

9. **Please describe and submit any tools, products, or methodologies that resulted from this project or contributed to the results**

    N/A

Benefits to Communities

1. **Please describe the communities that have benefited from CEPF support**
   *Please report on the size and characteristics of communities and the benefits that they have received, as a result of CEPF investment. Please provide information for all communities that have benefited **from project start to project completion**.*

Community Name	Community Characteristics							Size of Community				Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit								
	Subsistence economy	Small landowners	Indigenous/ ethnic peoples	Pastoralists / nomadic peoples	Recent migrants	Urban communities	Other*	50-250 people	251-500 people	501-1,000 people	Over 1,001 people	Increased access to clean water	Increased food security	Increased access to energy	Increased access to public services (e.g. health care, education)	Increased resilience to climate change	Improved land tenure	Improved recognition of traditional knowledge	Improved representation and decision-making in governance forums/structures	Improved access to ecosystem services

*If you marked "Other" to describe the community characteristic, please explain:

10. Lessons Learned

1. Describe any lessons learned related to organizational development and capacity building.

A number of lessons related to capacity development of/for partners have been included in in sections above. With regard to SADP's own organizational development and capacity building, there were also lessons. SADP has developed a framework for organizational development that seems to be working in the sense that staff find it easy to understand. Because of this and a major focus on SADP's organizational development in 2016, this diagram has been referred to repeatedly and progress and work still to be done noted for each area of organizational development.
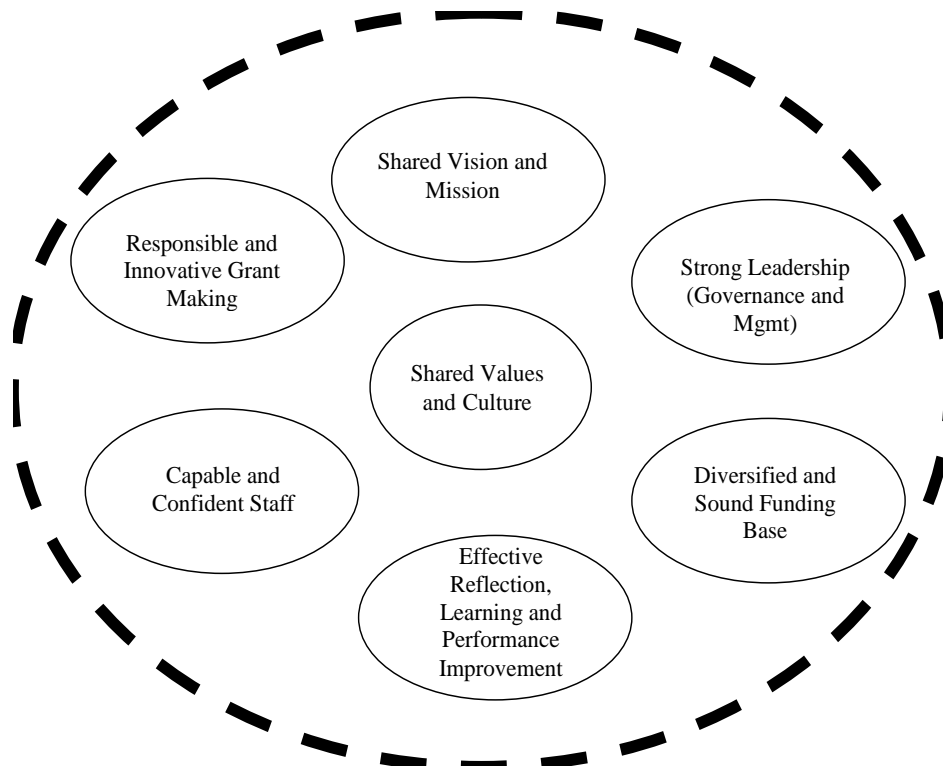
It is also noteworthy that SADP has undergone a leadership succession during 2016. Two Cambodian "Co-Coordinator" have now assumed management responsibility for SADP operations and the Australian who was previous "Country Representative" has changed to be an adviser. This represents a lot of work and means SADP has Cambodian leadership and is not dependent on any one individual.

Other lessons include
1/. It is important to allow a lot of time for promotion of critical thinking and reflection. Politicization and critical thinking is not a strong element in the Cambodian education system. Very intelligent people with huge potential do not have that potential realized through the local education system. It has to be built in the workplace. This takes time but is essential for work on community empowerment.

2/. A collective decision making culture is what is desired within Cambodia as a nation. It is important that an organization working toward this also adopt a collective decision making culture

and processes. Again this takes time. It also requires that things like a management team and staff consultation are embedded within the way SADP works. SADP has placed a high level of importance on developing these systems.

3/. In the area of grant-making, "soft skills" are highly important. They are the skills to deal with difficult decisions and sensitive topics without soliciting too much negative reaction. SADP has at times had to make decisions that have been unpopular and SADP admits there is more work to do in order to be able to make such decisions more palatable.

4/. SADP had an external evaluation at the start of 2016. This was positive in the sense that an outside critical perspective was solicited and received. The process, however, took a lot of time and resources. It is also very difficult for an outsider to get an in-depth understanding of an operation within a short space of time. SADP will be looking at how to do monitoring and evaluation in way that is less-summative and more progressive. SADP will also need to more clearly articulate what SADP is trying to achieve and how monitoring and evaluation can be done. In 2016, SADP developed a revised (and hopefully clearer) program outline. In 2017, SADP plans to prepare a monitoring and evaluation framework in 2017

2. **Describe any lessons learned related to project Design Process** *(aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/shortcomings)*

The SADP project that CEPF funded was very much an action research/learning project. The challenges (as described in section 5) were many and systematic, requiring small progress in a number of different, inter-linked areas. Negotiating through these challenges required flexibility as opposed to a set program. CEPF provided that flexibility, which was appreciated.

Some lessons were:
1/. Be practical, be less ambitious. SADP under-estimated the ingrained nature of many issues entrenched within civil society. This led to inflated expected outcomes from the project. In an environment where a cultural or paradigm change is required, results can only be obtained slowly with persistence and patience.

2/. SADP set two components: one being collaboration of NGOs and another being collaboration of peoples groups. These two are so inter-linked that they could/should have been considered as one larger or more general component.

3/. In the original project design, SADP did not recognize or articulate the changes within the funder community that were/are required for change in the NGO community. As the project developed it became clear that work in the funder community was equally if not more important than work with partners. That really should be been recognized in the original project design.

3. **Describe any lesson learned related to project Implementation** *(aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings)*

A number of lessons have been outlined in previous sections, especially the section on challenges.

4. **Describe any other lessons learned relevant to the conservation community**

SADP find it hard to understand what is meant by "the conservation community". In SADP's revised "Theory of Change" and program outline, SADP sees that so much of conservation relies on solid social controls over those in power in government and the private sector. It also involves change to the neo-liberal free-market economic system that reduces social controls over government and private sector. SADP sees that these changes will only come if there is strong grassroots civil society – so they can change the practices of their government and private sector.

What SADP has seen is that grassroots civil society has life. If one tries to build a tree, one cannot, because a tree has life and cannot be "built". Similarly, a civil society that can control its government and private sector is an organic arrangement of people that cannot be "built". It requires processes that are "nurturing" rather than "building" in nature. They may also involve things that are initially not directed toward "conservation". In this way, there is perhaps an artificial separation between "conservation" and "rights". Both are so integrally linked that separating them is detrimental to both.

SADP has also seen that work of NGOs needs to focus strongly on supporting the politicization of people and communities. It is communities and grassroots civil society that must understand power systems and how they operate – and how grassroots civil society can bring about change in unjust and environmentally destructive power structures. In some ways a focus on technical and legal solutions to these inherently socio-political issues inhibits the development of the socio-political solutions. Those technical solutions have indicators which monitoring the technical progress, which are often a distraction from the socio-political changes that need to take place if environmental and rights protection is to occur and be maintained.

With these realizations, SADP believes that the "conservation community" could shift to a more socio-political approach rather than a technical approach. That would necessarily also involve a shift away from NGO-led approaches and a shift toward community led approaches. Within that, a shift away from NGO-implemented community organizing would be required – toward community organizing and advocacy done by community people but supported from the back from NGOs.

Sustainability / Replication

5. **Summarize the success or challenges in ensuring the project will be sustained or replicated**

It is obvious that civil society strengthening will be a slow process in Cambodia. There are a number of entrenched bad habits and some cultural shifts to happen. Unfortunately this will require resources for a significant period of time.

Some successes in this regard are:

1/. Peoples led Development. A German funder has funded to SADP for a period of 3 years (at about $95,000/year) to promote peoples led development in Cambodia. The objectives of the project are:

> **Overall objective**: At least 20 local organizations in Cambodia have strengthened peoples led development approaches which, in turn, support people in communities to secure and protect their rights and access to the resources they require to survive and lead life with dignity.
>
> **Project Objectives**:
> 1. At least 10 pilot programs of peoples led development have been implemented and the models integrated into local NGO ways of operating.
> 2. Cross learning between practitioners of peoples led development in Cambodia and nearby countries has supported quality implementation of peoples' led development in 20 local partners.
> 3. Monitoring and evaluation tools and resources have been developed that allow the tracking and evaluation of peoples led development work (as a feedback system to promote learning).
> 4. Other funders in Cambodia are aware of people led development, its importance, and have developed appropriate approaches to support it.

This should greatly support the shift t more peoples led approaches. SADP will operate this project together with a collective of aligned INGOs and this should assist in sharing of lessons.

2/. Strengthening of Local NGO Governance. Initial indications from a major funder are that they are interested in supporting the governance strengthening project set up by 8 funders and CCC. The pilot program of the 8 funders and CCC may be able to be funded for 4 years and serve to strengthen a larger number of NGO's governance.

3/. With regard to ongoing work to strengthen local NGO finance management, there are real challenges. There needs to be a close look at how to continue this work in a way that focuses on finance *system* development rather than just training on small scale finance processes and software packages.

6. **Summarize any unplanned activities that are likely to result in increased sustainability or replicability**

    N/A

Safeguards

7. **If not listed as a separate Project Component and described above, summarize the implementation of any required action related to social and environmental safeguards that your project may have triggered**

    N/A

Additional Funding

8. **Provide details of any additional funding that supported this project and any funding secured for the project, organization, or the region, as a result of CEPF investment**

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes

* Categorize the type of funding as:

A   *Project Co-Financing (other donors or your organization contribute to the direct costs of this 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 funded project)*
C   *Regional/Portfolio Leveraging (other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investm*ent or successes related to this project)

   Addressed in a previous question

Additional Comments/Recommendations

9. **Use this space to provide any further comments or recommendations in relation to your project or CEPF**

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.cepf.net, and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

Please include your full contact details below:

10. **Name:** Graeme Brown
11. **Organization:** Southeast Asia Development Program
12. **Mailing address:**
13. **Telephone number:** (855)-12-346-237
14. **E-mail address:** sadp@sadp-asia.org