

CEPF Final Project Completion Report

Organization Legal Name	<i>Center for Water Resources Conservation and Development</i>
Project Title	<i>Enhancing Co-management towards Sustainable Aquatic Resources in TuyenQuang Province</i>
CEPF GEM No.	65764
Date of Report	Feb 15 th 2017

CEPF Hotspot: Sino Vietnamese Limestone

Strategic Direction: Strategic Direction 4: *Empower local communities to engage in conservation and management of priority key biodiversity areas.*

Grant Amount: US\$100,000

Project Dates: April 01st 2015 – December 31st 2016

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

- Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in TuyenQuang province: Provide comments on draft regulations as well as directing the district agriculture Division in facilitating and participating in activities of the project; advise the province's People Committee in replicating the model to other districts in the province.
- TuyenQuang Department of Fishery supported information about the local and government's policies related to aquatic resources conservation. The department also received official documents or working plans from WARECOD and made suggestions for these documents.
- Division of Agriculture and Rural Development in NaHang District: Provide comments and information about the aquatic resources exploitation status of local; direct communes to co-ordinate with project's group in whole process of the project implementation; help disseminate the project's information.
- People's Committee in SonPhu commune and NaHang town worked as the direct local partners in establishing and maintaining two co-management groups.

Conservation Impacts

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

The project follows CEPF's Investment Priority 4.2 "Pilot and Amplify community forests, community fisheries and community-management protected areas". This project set up the first official co-management groups in Na Hang district. The project and co-management groups focused on Mo and Pac Hau waterfalls which were designated as protected areas in Na Hang district, Tuyen Quang province. With support from WARECOD's staff and with capacity to be built via trainings, these groups have developed their own plans to do the monitoring work, conduct communication activities, collaborate with different actors (authorities, other communities, fish traders, etc.) to protect their designated areas.

3. Summarize the overall results/impact of your project

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

List each long-term impact from Grant Writer proposal

- To enhance co-management towards sustainable aquatic resources in TuyenQuang Province
- To have co-management model replicated in other parts of TuyenQuang province in particular and the Gam River basin in general

4. Actual progress toward long-term impacts at completion

The results of recent activities shown positive signs for achievement of the long term goals of the project, as follows:

- The district People Committee has approved the applications for managing aquatic resources of 2 co-management groups. Son Phu group has been allocated more than 120 ha of surface water in the reservoir to manage, while Na Hang group has been allowed to patrol the area surrounding Ben Thuy.
- The District People Committee has also approved villages' conventions on environmental and aquatic protection
- Groups' members have started to contribute money for sustaining the groups' activities.
- By composing and practicing their plays, through playing games and trainings organized by project staff groups' members have been familiar with these new communication methods which have been applied not only for aquatic resources conservation but also for other social issues.

- Activities such as monitoring, communication have been implemented effectively and created remarkable results such as: significant waste reduction in Ben Thuy area; reduction in destructive fishing tools; people's awareness in environmental protection have been improved etc. Both local people and authorities have very much appreciated these results.
- An agreement on long-term cooperation in water and aquatic resources protection was signed among 4 provinces in December 2016.

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

List each short-term impact from Grant Writer proposal

- Two sets of regulations for fishing groups in Son Phu and Na Hang town will be approved at their commune and then district level, which will help mitigate destructive fishing in the reservoir.
- Two co-management groups will operate sustainably and they will become a model for replication in the whole province
- Project results are shared and learned among various communities, which helps increase local authorities and communities' awareness and understanding about co-management model and its importance in resource conservation in the area.

5. Actual progress toward short-term impacts at completion

- The regulations of aquatic resources conservation were completed and mainstreamed in convention of all hamlets in NaHang district.
- Two co-management groups were established in NaHang district. Groups self-equipped devices such as boats; loudspeakers; microphones etc. have supported their work in monitoring and communication more effectively.
- Through monitoring and communication activities groups' members and local people have experienced positive changes in their awareness of aquatic resources conservation and environment protection which has led to more active participation in environmental protection activities.
- Members' capacity has been improved through monthly setting up action plans and reporting for their co-management groups.
- Local authorities show their appreciation and strongly support the monitoring activities. As a result, the groups have opportunities to cooperate with the interdisciplinary monitoring team from Na Hang DPC. This has helped the team's monitoring and communication activities more effective.

- The groups have different choices in communication methods (directly communicate at households using leaflet or mobile devices; organize events including plays as Forum Theatre), which makes this task more flexible and suitable to certain objects.

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

The project was successful in promoting local authorities and people to take actions in aquatic resources conservation. Before 2015, there were some efforts to raise people’s awareness but the results were limited and not everyone cared about this issue. WARECOD had supported local people to develop the regulations for a long time as long as advocate for mainstreaming them in official documents. As a result, the whole community is now seriously following them. With strong experience in community development, WARECOD also facilitated to the establishment of the first co-management groups in TuyenQuang province, which created a more effective way to protect aquatic resources in the area.

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

N/A

Project Components and Products/Deliverables

8. Describe the results from each Component and products/deliverables

Component 1: To revise the co-management regulations proposed by fishermen community at district level

The regulations of aquatic resources conservation were developed in WARECOD’s previous project. Based on that result, WARECOD staff together with local people and authorities revised these regulations in 2015 in order to make them suitable to the current situation. After four months, the new regulations were completed and sent to the People’s Committee of NaHang district (NaHang DPC) to get approval and issue. As a result, on May 13rd 2016, NaHang DPC issued Decision #138/QĐ – UBND about “Mainstreaming the regulations of aquatic resources conservation in villages’ conventions”.

Activities	Products/deliverables
Activity 1: Establish the task-force groups and the groups revise the Regulations and update according to real circumstances under the support from	In May two task-force groups were established in Na Hang town and Son Phu commune. The two groups have been working with WARECOD's staff and representatives of the district's Legal Department

WARECOD and aquatic expert.	and Department of Agriculture and Rural Development on revising the regulations which fit to each site condition.
Activity 2: An aquatic expert to revise the Regulations in conform with the applicable Laws	Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development came to the sites and joined a couple of their meetings.
Activity 3: Discussion to finalize the Regulations in 2 sites	Two meetings were conducted. The draft convention is reviewed by fishery expert in term of its contents and wording in line with the current regulations. After reviewing, the draft was agreed between parties (group members, WARECOD, and fishery expert). So we worked to finalize the draft. The final draft was submitted to the local government.
Activity 4: Meeting with Na Hang district authorities to combine into a Regulation	After receiving this final draft, the local government organized a meeting to give agreement and approval for the draft content. The approved content was put into the convention of villages of SonPhu commune, and NaHang town and even other communes of the district. On May 13rd 2016, NaHang DPC released the Decision #138/QĐ – UBND released on about “Mainstream the regulations of aquatic resources conservation in hamlets’ convention”.
Activity 5: Mid-term Workshop	In terms of the mid-term workshop, that we were supposed to organize in December 2015, since we were having meetings every month with both the authorities and communities over the last few months of 2015 and we had to discuss with the authorities to update the work, we felt it was not really necessary to have a sharing meeting in December. In the meantime, in December, VRN organized its 10th annual meeting, so we requested permission to bring villagers’ representatives to VRN meeting in Hanoi to present about their work. So, on 12/2015, representatives from 2 groups and local governments came to Hanoi to attend the meeting,

	and the representatives presented the project as well as works implemented to almost 100 participants in the VRN meeting.
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Component 2: To establish and maintain and enlarge co-management groups

Two co-management groups were established at the end of 2015. At least twice a month 2 groups implemented activities of monitoring and communication in their designated areas. After one year, 2 co-management groups have significantly contributed to aquatic resources conservation in Na Hang reservoir. Fishermen now only use friendly-to-environment tools such as shrimp muzzle, wide-mesh nets which follow the law and hamlet’s convention. The status of using destructive fishing tools had reduced remarkably. Up to December 2016, there were one or two cases a month in average that people from other areas came and used illegal tools. These cases, however, were detected and dealt with quickly by the co-management groups and local authority. The respondents highlighted two reasons: first, local people found that destructive tools were no longer suitable for fishing in the reservoir; and second, 2 co-management groups frequently had communication activities about harm of destructive tools.

Activities	Products/deliverables
Activity 1: Select group members in 2 sites (Na Hang town and Son Phu commune) and Establish the groups (elect the group leader, finalize group members, develop rules of the groups)	Two groups were established. There are 20 members in the Na Hang group and 15 ones in Son Phu group. Each group has 01 leader, 01 vice-leader, 01 secretary. The regulations of each group were finalized at the beginning of 2016 and followed seriously by all members.
Activity 2: Organize training sessions for the 2 groups to implement the monitoring (monitoring, team-work, presentation, report, analyze skills)	After establishment of 2 monitoring groups, their members have been trained about skills such as: monitoring, team-work, presentation, report, skill analysis. In order to make it easy for learning and understanding, useful games were applied during the training class. As a result, group members were excited with this method and got good results. After attending these training sessions, group members themselves have written an application and doing necessary works to submit to local government to get approval for the their right to

	<p>manage aquatic resources in the reservoir: Na Hang district people’s committee has issued agreement paper for the management right of the surface water 120ha of the reservoir to Son Phu group; and the Nahang government also gave agreement for co-management group in Nahang district to implement the monitoring and communication to protect aquatic resources in Ben Thuy area.</p>
<p>Activity 3: Develop the annual working plan for the group</p>	<p>An annual working plan was developed in each group. In addition, two groups often had a meeting at the beginning of every month to set up the monthly action plans.</p>
<p>Activity 4: Maintaining group activities</p>	<p>Two groups have been maintained for over one year. There were different activities conducted by both groups every month. They were: monitoring and mobile communication trips, mobilizing local people to clean the wharf areas, implementing communication events.</p>
<p>Activity 5: Develop long-term funding strategy for the groups and discuss with local authorities on financial support</p>	<p>In Na Hang town, the town PC will directly provide financial and technical support to the co-management groups. As incentives for group’s members, the town PC agreed to prioritize the groups in joining other programs and projects in the local while keep mobilizing various funds to maintain the group. Mr. Hoang Van Hieu – Vice Chairman of the town PC would be directly in charge of supporting the co-management group.</p> <p>In Son Phu commune, the local co-management group has developed a long-term funding strategy since July. Although the group regularly has monitoring trips around the area, there were some periods that the boat was not in use. Group’s members agreed to rent the boat in idle time. Earnings from renting the boat would be divided into two parts: one for group’s fund and one for the member in charge of maintenance the boat.</p>

	<p>Regulations in using the boat were developed and reported to Son Phu commune PC. In addition, Mr. Trieu Tien Phin – Chairman of Son Phu commune PC will directly monitor group’s activities after the project ends. The commune PC also has the plan to maintain the group by involving members to different programs related to aquatic resources protection in the local. Two local officials would be assigned to collaborate with the group in conducting activities in the future.</p>
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Component 3: To communicate the co-management regulations to target audience

Applying Forum Theatre method in training sessions on communication led to success of spreading the co-management regulations to local people. The plays produced by the villagers were performed as the highlight point of each event. Because the play was arranged to perform on the frame that was the most crowded, most people in the area and local authorities watched it and listened to the message that they wanted to convey about aquatic resources conservation and environmental protection.

Activities	Products/deliverables
<p>Provide training to 2 group members regarding to communication method in 2/2016.</p> <p>Collaborate with group members to develop communication plan as well as implement communication activities from 3-12/2016.</p>	<p>Training sessions were provided to co-management groups. There were around 15 people participating in each session and two issues related to aquatic resources conservation raised to produce plays.</p>
<p>Activity 4: Side-events and events</p>	<p>Two events were held in October and December 2016 in different places by co-management groups. There were 10 to 20 performances in each event, which attracted hundreds of audiences.</p>
<p>Activity 5: To survey at the start & end of the project on awareness of local people at the project sites</p>	<p>Surveys on 40 households in Na Hang district at the start & end of the project were conducted.</p> <p>Respondents chosen were local people and some members of both groups. We also conducted in-depth interviews with local authorities at different levels in order to ensure the objectivity of the view</p>

	and assess the results from different perspectives
Activity 6: writing policy brief	A policy briefing was developed. It included information about current situation in Na Hang reservoir; summary of groups' establishment and maintenance; and some recommendations for duplicating and upscaling the model. This document has been shared to the local authorities and NGOs in order to promote the co-management model in other areas. The policy briefing includes five parts: (i) Key findings; (ii) Aquatic resources in Na Hang reservoir; (iii) Government's policies; (iv) The model of Co-management groups; (v) Recommendation.
Activity 7: Final workshop in the district	A final workshop was organized in December 2016. There were representatives from four provinces in Lo-Gam rivers basin, which included different communities but also local authority at all levels. At the workshop, the establishing process and activities' results of the two Co-management groups were showed and evaluated by all participants. The highlight point of the workshop was that representatives of Provincial People's Committee in TuyenQuang, CaoBang, HaGiang and PhuTho together signed on the document "Cooperating program about protecting and developing aquatic resources in the Lo-Gam rivers basin".

Component 4: Social Safeguard policy monitoring

In order to access impacts of the project to the local, we conducted regularly surveys on around 40 households in Na Hang district. Respondents chosen were local people and some members of both groups. We conducted in-depth interviews with local authorities at different levels in order to ensure the objectivity of the view and assess the results from different perspectives. There were five issues which we focused on:

- Affecting on local fishermen' behaviors
- Affecting on relationship among fishing communities
- Affecting on their livelihood and income

- Affecting on local government:
- Benefits of the project activities for its members

Activities	Products/deliverables
Conduct survey at the beginning of the project (will be combined with the assessment on awareness)	Two surveys were conducted at the end of the project to assess the impact on the livelihoods and food security. We have learned that in general, local people tend to shift from natural fishing to aquaculture and breeding valuable fish species.
Six-monthly safeguard monitoring conducted and report submitted to CEPF (the report will also include periodically assessment of impacts on income and livelihoods)	Four six-monthly safeguard monitoring assessments were conducted by WARECOD staff along the project time. In general, households' income had no big change after all activities while local people's awareness of aquatic resources conservation has been improved. Fishermen did not catch by using destructive ways as they used to do and local people wanted to invest more on aquaculture and breeding for a more sustainable livelihood. As a result, according to villagers, the fish yield in Pac Hau waterfall area has been increasing slightly. However, for people in Na Hang town, the fish yield in Ben Thuy area did not increase as they expected. They have highlighted that the main reason was that the low water level for a long time had shortened fish spawning time.

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

All activities were conducted following time duration.

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

Forum Theatre was applied in Component 2 and 3 of the project. Skill games were the main content in Forum Theatre's training days. Each training day had 3 parts:

1. Warming-up to make participants break the ice.
2. Discovering participants' trouble within the topic of aquatic resources conservation.
3. Creating different scenes basing on shared troubles.

Many local issues were shared by that way and all participants have chosen 2 of them as the most pressing ones to create plays. Those are: (i) Some households still use electric fishing tools because of poorness and no alternative livelihood; (ii) Grocery shopkeepers at Ben Thuy have low awareness about environment protection and rarely remind their customers to keep Ben Thuy area clean. The process of making the script also provided participants chance to practice the communication skills. Each play had a protagonist and some antagonists. While the antagonist kept giving different arguments to not follow the co-management regulations, the protagonist had to try any way possible to persuade them. If this protagonist cannot handle the confliction, other participants who have better solution will go to the stage and replace former protagonist. As a result, Forum Theatre's participants had chance to discuss and remind each other more about their regulation. That was the first and most important target of this method. Plays performed in events will spread out their messages to more local people.

Benefits to Communities

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

Lessons Learned

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

Project officers should possess knowledge about not only aquatic resources but also different sustainable livelihood models. The fact shows that when local people care more about aquatic resources conservation, they will find other livelihood model to ensure their income. Project officers need to consult on time to make them trust more on their activities of conservation.

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

A remarkable success of the project is that co-management groups were established and empowered with local authority's official documents. This was a strategic step in WARECOD's project design process, which creates a legal framework for groups' activities as well as ensures the model's sustainability. A similar step should be applied in other projects which includes establishing community groups.

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

- For the entire project we have closely coordinated with fishermen and local authorities. We have facilitated monitoring groups to work with the authorities, especially the district patrol group to develop relevant mechanisms so they are able to communicate effectively and timely with each other when they encounter illegal fishers.
- Since we very well understand that it is very important to understand cultures of ethnic minorities, we have our team stayed with the communities and created close relationship with them from the project onset. We have strictly followed the work's code of conducts and learned local culture. That has helped us to build trust with the communities and authorities. Thus we were able to discuss most of the matters in a very open manner and created positive feedbacks on the work.
- In the monthly meetings, we developed working plan for the following month with consensus of the groups' members. We also contact the groups to revise/adjust time and plan before go fieldtrips. As a result, we made each trip very productive.

15. Describe any other lessons learned relevant to the conservation community

Due to the nature of work of the group members (agricultural production), they spend much time for production and their time is very changeable. In the meetings as well as training sessions, many members were unable to attend or could only join parts of the meetings. To address this issue the project staffs often had to work with them in the evening.

Sustainability / Replication

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

Each group had developed action plans before the project ended. Especially, the group in SonPhu commune plans to self-raising fund for future activities. In addition, local authorities also planned to maintain and support the groups as well as establish new groups in other area in the reservoir. Therefore, the project's results will be sustained and has potential of replicating.

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

In the final workshop in Dec 2016, representatives of Provincial People's Committee in TuyenQuang, CaoBang, HaGiang and PhuTho together signed on the document "Cooperating program about protecting and developing aquatic resources in the Lo-Gam rivers basin". This activity will promote close cooperation in aquatic resources conservation between local authorities in the Lo-Gam rivers basin, which creates conditions to replicate the model of co-management group. In addition, it will strengthen capacity of aquatic resources management in the basin, especially in adjacent areas between provinces.

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