

Promoting Resilient Community Fisheries in Koh Kong Province (PRCF-KK), Cambodia



Brief

Summary of Action

Through the implementation of the Action “Promoting resilient community fisheries in Koh Kong Province”, the knowledge and capacity of villagers, local authorities and stakeholders on sustainable fisheries resources management has significantly improved in the field of fisheries resource management and alternative livelihood options. The project was funded by the European Union (EU) through the Fisheries Administration (FiA), and was jointly implemented by IIRR and RHRD in Koh Kong Province.

A total of 453 villagers (201 females) have enhanced their understanding of fisheries law, and more particularly, the management committee of the CFIs are now more actively patrolling the fisheries resources within their CFI territories. The CFI management plans were clearly developed and implemented by the CFIs. However, among the three CFIs, one CFI in Chip Phat commune is currently still completing the registration process. The registration of Chip Phat CFI needs more support and cooperation among stakeholders at national and subnational levels.

Overall, the project provided positive benefits to fishermen, farmers, local authorities, and stakeholders.



They all have increased their knowledge of sustainable fisheries resource management, aquaculture techniques, alternative livelihood options, etc. In addition, and especially, they have gained confidence and enhanced mutual cooperation which are essential for the sustainable management of fisheries resources and livelihood options among the target groups.

During the project intervention, 100 aquaculture model farms were developed. They are performing well and will be able to host visits from other projects or development partners. In other words, local human resources in the target communities have significantly improved. The model farmers can share their good practices and

successful experiences with other farmers inside and outside their communities, which is seen as a good spontaneous dissemination of successful innovations from farmer to farmer. It is to note that the model farmers have significantly improved their knowledge and technical capacities, enabling them to train other farmers in their respective communities. Again, this is beneficial for the dissemination of good practices among farmers of the same community.

In addition, the project worked closely with the target groups, local authorities, the Fisheries Administration Cantonment at provincial level and the Fisheries Administration at national level to support the



conservation of fisheries resources in the target communities. One community fishery refuge was set up under the project intervention, and at least 40,000 local adaptive fingerlings were released to the fish refuge and are now being developed. In total, 83,350 fingerlings were distributed for both the fish refuge and farmers.

Six savings groups were established and the average loan size was 2.1 million riels with an interest rate of 2-3% per month. The group members have benefited

from the savings groups. They borrowed money from the groups to buy fishing materials/equipment and more importantly, the savings groups allocated some money to carry out community development activities, such as the replanting of mangrove trees in the CFI areas for example. This is considered a positive outcome for the savings group, not only in terms of the group members' loan accessibility, but also regarding the general development of activities within communities.



Moreover, 6 women groups were established. The women in these groups enhanced their knowledge and skills in alternative livelihood options, which include the shrimp processing technique, how to make banana chips, the process of making dish washing soap, etc. The producer group members have gained technical skills, and have enhanced group solidarity and cooperation.

In general, the project has achieved many fruitful results if compared to the planned, expected outputs. The savings groups and the women producer groups, were seen as successful achievements of the project, as they provided opportunities for replication and upscaling to other communities. The achievement of these outcomes are the result of good cooperation and support from all relevant stakeholders, including target groups, local authorities, and government line departments at national and subnational levels. The Fisheries Administration Cantonment and Fisheries Administration provided tangible support and cooperation in regards to the implementation of this project, by, for example, supporting the awareness raising on fisheries law, strengthening and developing CFIs, etc.

Results and Activities

Result 1: Community fisheries and networks developed and strengthened

- Establishing community fisheries
- Training on community fisheries development and management for farmers

- Women group mapping and formation of women supporting groups
- Capacity building for local authorities and local stakeholders on community fisheries management, and attendance at national level meetings on fishery development and management issues

Result 2: Local authorities and other local stakeholders improve their knowledge and participation in sustainable fisheries resources management

- Organizing community fisheries, environment, and livelihood awareness at provincial commune and village levels
- Organizing community fisheries, environment, and livelihood awareness at commune level
- Organizing community fisheries, environment, and livelihoods awareness at village level

Result 3: 80% of direct beneficiaries, with the support of local authorities, implemented aquaculture and alternative agriculture and sustainable livelihoods for the next two years.

- Training CFI members on aquaculture and alternative livelihoods
- Establishing aquaculture models
- Organizing farmer exchange visits



Result 4: Enhance support mechanisms for production and business services provision for aquaculture and offer alternative livelihood options

- Establishing collective marketing networks

Result 5: Increased access to collective micro-credit and markets by direct beneficiaries

- Training farmer groups on collective saving and credit
- Training farmer groups on the establishment of farmer producer groups

Key lessons derived from project implementation

By implementing the Action, IIRR and RHRD learned that joint effort created good synergy during the project

implementation. Below is the summary of the key lessons learned from the Action:

- A multi-stakeholder approach that encourages the involvement and participation of different stakeholders at the national and subnational level to support and strengthen the Community Fisheries is necessary to enhance the performance of the CFis. An example is the development and implementation of the CFi management plans. It is important to ensure that the CFi management committee as well as the CFi members underset the CFi advantages and that each of them, as the CFi members, can be involved in the conservation and sustainable use of the fisheries resources.
- The ownership and participation of the target groups or community members are the keys to sustainability. The Action requested a 50% contribution from farmers to set up a demonstration farm. However, to encourage the participation from the poorest of the poor, the contribution rate should be affordable for the poor. Based on the experience in implementing

this Action, the community members, especially the poor, requested for their contribution to be less than 50% if the latter needed to be in cash.

- The diversification of families' income sources is a main catalyst to the sustainable management of fisheries resources. This means that the fishermen/farmers do not rely solely on fisheries resources, but they have other sources of income to support their families.
- Setting up the mangrove tree nursery enabled the community members to learn how to germinate and propagate mangrove seedlings, and especially how to appropriately plant mangrove seedlings in different agro-ecological zones. Through the nursery set up, the community members, local authorities, and other stakeholders also learned that working together could produce a greater result. This can be achieved through good cooperation and mutual support.
- The writeshop is an effective approach to document successful case stories or best practices of the Action implementation. It is an intensive, participatory

writing process that aims to produce a written output (book, manual, tool-kit, etc.) by a multidisciplinary team in a defined period of time under the same roof. It aims to write, develop, criticize, revise, and put material into a semi-final form as quickly as possible, while taking full advantage of the multidisciplinary teams who participate in the process. At the end of the Action, the writeshop was conducted with the participation of target groups, farmer group leaders, local authorities and the project's stakeholders. At least 12 case stories were produced as a result of the writeshop. The participants learned about the writeshop process and provided their inputs to develop a publication book compiled of the 12 case stories mentioned above.

- To replicate and upscale the lessons learned from the Action, IIRR and RHRD will integrate them into the existing programs, such as the Food Security and Resilient Livelihood Program, Applied Learning, etc. The publication of the case stories and the project's successful experiences will be published and disseminated to other relevant stakeholders, development practitioners, funding agencies, etc.



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