

Annual Report



Grassroots Capacity Building Program for REDD+ in the Asia-Pacific Region

August 2011-July 2012

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for Asia and the Pacific (RECOFTC), Bangkok

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Vision:

Local communities in the Asia-Pacific region are actively involved in the equitable and ecologically sustainable management of forest landscapes.

Mission:

To enhance capacities at all levels to assist people of the Asia-Pacific region to develop community forestry and manage forest resources for optimum social, economic and environmental benefits

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Abbreviations

CAMKID	Community Association for Mobilizing Knowledge in Development
CBNA	Capacity Building Needs Assessment
CFET	Centre for Forestry Education and Training
CFUG	Community Forestry User Group
COFSUN	Community based Forestry Supporters' Network
COP	Conference of Parties
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FECOFUN	Federation of Community Forestry Users
FFI	Flora and Fauna International
FKKM	Forum Komunikasi Kehutanan Masyarakat
FORDA	Forestry Research and Development Agency
FPIC	Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
HIMAWANTI	The Himalayan Grassroots Women's Natural Resource Management Association
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
LATIN	Lembaga Alam Tropika Indonesia
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MHP	Maeying Huamjai Phathana
MTR	Mid Term Review
NAFES	National Agriculture and Forestry Extension Services
NEC	National Executive Committee
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NUoL	National University of Laos
PADETC	Participatory Development and Training Centre
PAREDD	Participatory Land and Forest Management for Reducing Deforestation
RECOFTC	Regional Community Forestry Training Centre for Asia and the Pacific
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and foster conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN-REDD	United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation
VFI	Village Focus International
VDC	Village Development Council
WREA	Water Resource and Environment Agency
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
YAKOBI	Yayasan Komunitas Belajar Indonesia

Executive Summary

This annual progress report highlights key achievements and lessons learned of the “Grassroots Capacity Building for REDD+” project in the Asia-Pacific region, between August 2011 and July 2012. The Grassroots Project is being implemented in four countries – Indonesia, Lao PDR, Nepal and Vietnam, since August 2009 in partnership with currently a total of 15 organizations. The project has a total of four outputs – i) developing REDD+ training package for the grassroots stakeholders, and refining it; ii) delivering REDD+ training and capacity building programs; iii) synthesizing feedback and lessons learned; and iv) disseminating the project’s experiences, including lessons learned widely in the project countries and beyond.

During the last year, the grassroots project has developed a number of REDD+ training and capacity building materials and products. These include facilitators’ training manuals on REDD+, and FPIC in REDD+, and a number of other awareness generation materials, such as handbook, posters, fliers etc. in English as well as in national languages of the project countries.

Following a cascading approach, the project has delivered a total of 7 national level training and capacity building programs for nearly 650 participants, 70 different types of training and capacity building events at sub-national level, benefiting nearly 1200 participants, and nearly 300 community level awareness events to reach out to approximately 15,000 grassroots stakeholders. With a strong focus on gender mainstreaming in the project, on an average training and capacity building programs have around 30% women participants. The project team has also put substantial efforts in disseminating and sharing project’s lessons and experiences, in project countries, and at regional and global levels.

Simplifying REDD+ language for the benefit of the grassroots stakeholders and managing their expectations, meeting the growing demands for capacity building on REDD+, and scaling up the effects and impacts of the training and capacity building programs through partnerships, networking and knowledge sharing, remain key challenges.

Positive feedback on the training materials produced and delivered training programs indicates that the grassroots project is addressing some of these challenges quite effectively. Facilitators’ manuals on REDD+ and FPIC in REDD+, and a booklet with nine basic questions and answers for the local level facilitators have received encouraging response. UN-REDD appreciated the publication of the question answer booklet in their newsletter mentioning that *“providing answers to each question is a laudable effort, especially because the guidance has been produced in five languages”*.

Independent evaluations of training programs conducted in Nepal and Lao PDR have reported more than 80% of the training participants have used their new knowledge and skills in different ways. At the grassroots level, local people have taken additional initiatives to reduce their dependence on the community forests, by finding alternatives to fuelwood and regulating grazing practices.

An independent mid-term review of the project has concluded that except for some delay in Indonesia and Vietnam, the project is progressing well. The review further states that the *“grassroots project is making important and unique contributions to raising awareness and building capacity on climate change and REDD+ on the local level in the respective countries”*.

The training organized by RECOFTC under the Grassroots Project appreciably added to my competency and understanding of climate change and REDD+ topics. I got ample opportunities to conduct district level training and capacity building activities. This gave me confidence to become a resource person in this field – Mr. Kamal Bhandari, Trainer from ForestAction, Nepal, responding to an independent evaluation mission in Nepal

Introduction

The annual progress report highlights key achievements and challenges of the “Grassroots Capacity Building for REDD+” project in the Asia-Pacific region (hereinafter called the Grassroots Project) from August 2011 to July 2012. This Norad funded project is in its second phase, starting from August 2010, until July 2013. The first phase of the project was completed between August 2009 and July 2010. In the first phase, the project covered three countries – Indonesia, Lao PDR and Nepal, while Vietnam was added as a fourth project country in the ongoing second phase.

This annual progress, as summarized below, is presented for each of four outputs, including the administrative and implementation arrangements in the Grassroots Project.

Administrative and Implementation Arrangements

Building on the strong foundation of in-country partnerships in the four focal countries, during the last year the Grassroots Project brought on board new partners and collaborators, helping expand project activities to new locations in each country. Sustainability of the interventions beyond the project span has been one of the key criteria in selecting partner organizations right from the beginning of project implementation. Considering this and the in-country context, the project partners included a mix of government, non-government and civil society organizations. Currently, the Grassroots Project is working with a total of 15 partner organizations in the focal countries, as shown below:

Indonesia – In Indonesia, the Grassroots Project is working with a total of four partner organizations. Following is the list of partner organizations and the geographical locations of the project activities:

Partner organization	Type and location of the project activities
Center for Forestry Education Training, Ministry of Forestry	CFET has organized national level training programs and will be organizing training programs for district officials in West Kalimantan, East Kalimantan and South Sulawesi
Yayasan Komunitas Belajar Indonesia (YAKOBI)	Berau District in East Kalimantan in close coordination with The Nature Conservancy and Berau District REDD+ pilot program
Lembaga, Alam Tropika Indonesia (LATIN)	In and around Meru Betiri National Park in close coordination with Forestry Research and Development Agency (FORDA) of the Ministry of Forestry, Government of Indonesia
Forum Komunikasi Kehutanan Masyarakat (FKKM)	Grassroots training program for forest entrepreneurs in West Nusa Tenggara, West Java, and South Sulawesi

Lao PDR – In Lao PDR the project has partnered with a total of five organizations, as summarized below:

Partner organization	Type and location of the project activities
Department of Forests	National level trainings, material review and advisory roles
National University of Laos	National and sub-national level ToT programs
National Agriculture and Forestry Extension Services (NAFES)	Provincial, district and commune level training programs in Xieng Khaung, Xayabouly, Lungprabang and Houphan provinces
Village Focus International (VFI)	Ten villages in two districts, Laongam and Taoi in Saravan province in Southern Lao PDR
Participatory Development and Training Centre (PADETC)	Students and youth awareness program in eight provinces - Xieng Khaung, Xayabouly, Lungprabang, Vientiane capital, Bolikhamxay Champasak, Saravan and Sekong.

Nepal – In Nepal the Grassroots project is working with two partner organizations in 18 districts, as summarized below.

Partner organization	Type and location of the project activities
Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal (FECOFUN)	National, sub-national and grassroots level training programs in 16 districts - Ilam, Jhapa, Morang, Bhaktapur, Kavre, Sindhupalchok, Nawalparasi, Rupandehi, Kapilbastu, Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Surkhet, Kailali, Kanchanpur and Dadaldhura
Himalayan Grassroots Women's Natural Resource Management Association (HIMAWANTI)	Gender focused training and capacity building programs in two districts – Sarlahi and Makawanpur

Vietnam – In Vietnam, the project has four partner organizations in four provinces, as summarized below:

Partner organization	Type and location of the project activities
The Forestry Sub-Department	Provincial, district and commune level training and capacity building activities in Bac Kan and Ha Tinh provinces
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	Provincial, district and commune level training and capacity building programs in Ca Mau province
The Agriculture Extension Centre of Lam Dong	Provincial, district and commune level training and capacity building programs in Lam Dong province
Centre for Sustainable Development in Mountainous Areas	Development of FPIC in REDD+ material and follow up training programs at provincial and district levels

In addition, the Grassroots Project has collaborated with a few other organizations on specific activities, and also made conscious efforts to establish and maintain links with the climate change working group/taskforce of each national government and also with UN-

REDD (in Indonesia and Vietnam) in order to keep them informed of progress and also to complement project activities with other ongoing initiatives on REDD+.

Progress of the Project Outputs

Following is the description of the progress made against each of the four key outputs in the Grassroots Project during the last year.

Output 1

A training package designed for REDD+ introduction and implementation, targeted at grassroots forest sector stakeholders is developed, and continually revised and adapted to fit country-specific conditions and the evolving structure of REDD+

Action plan development

Action plan preparation for the second year of the project in each focal country was based on the capacity building needs assessment (CBNA) organized in the first phase of the project (2009-2010) and later reviewed in the first year (2010-2011) of the current phase (2010-2013). Complementarities with ongoing REDD+ initiatives in the project countries was an important criteria to maximize results and impacts in each country, while developing action plans, including new partnerships and expanding project activities to new locations.

- CBNA reports are finalized in each country, with assessment of in-country status of REDD+ initiatives, capacity building needs at the grassroots level and identification of appropriate training and capacity building materials and tools
- Based on the CBNA, the annual action plan for each project country is finalized and currently under implementation. The action plans list project activities at national, provincial, district, and community level, number of target groups at each level, locations for implementing the project activities, training tools and methods, timeline, budget estimates, timelines, and roles of partner organizations.
- In Indonesia, the CBNA report is used as a base document by National Council of Climate Change, Government of Indonesia for developing National Strategy of Education, Campaign and Capacity Building of Climate Change, to respond to Article 6 of UNFCCC. Indonesia is currently one of the five pilot projects of UN CC Learn Program, under which the National Strategy is being developed.
- Financial and technical reporting schedules and monitoring plans are also clearly explained while finalizing the partnership contracts in each country.

Development of REDD+ capacity building material in English and national languages

REDD+ core manual for training facilitators

- The REDD+ core manuals, first developed and tested in Nepali language for national and community level facilitators in the first year of Phase II, were finalized in English during the last year for the other three project countries to enable them to adapt it to their context as well as for wider dissemination.
- The Lao PDR, the country team has contextualized the English version manuals into Lao language, which will be published soon.

- In Vietnam, the country team is currently in the process of drafting Vietnamese versions of the REDD+ manual by contextualizing the English version, besides making use of already available materials.
- In Indonesia, in partnership with CFET, the Grassroots Project team has reviewed CFET's conventional training programs to mainstream REDD+ and climate change training and capacity building activities. Based on this, CFET and RECOFTC have jointly developed REDD+ training modules and resource material in Bahasa Indonesia language and a strategy to mainstream REDD+ training material into CFET's training programs.
- The English version of the REDD+ manuals are available on the website at: www.recoftc.org/site/resources/REDD-ToT-Manual-for-National-and-subnational-level-Facilitators.php.

Training Manual on Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) in REDD+

The Grassroots Project enhanced its work on FPIC in REDD+, initiated in the first year of the project.

- In early 2012, the project supported the development of a training manual on “*Putting Free, Prior and Informed Consent into Practice in REDD+ Initiatives*”. A total of 500 copies of the manual are printed for distribution, besides uploading the manual on: www.recoftc.org/site/resources/Putting-Free-Prior-and-Informed-Consent-into-Practice-in-REDD-Initiatives.php.
- The FPIC in REDD+ guidebook was translated into Nepali language and 500 printed copies were distributed widely. The guidebook is also available on: www.recoftc.org/site/uploads/wysiwyg/docs/FPIC%20Redd%20Book%20Final_Nepali.pdf.
- The Vietnamese and Lao versions of the FPIC in REDD+ guidebook and training manual are currently under development.

Other training materials and tools

The Grassroots Project has also developed other outreach and awareness raising materials such as posters, flyers, booklets, and used tools such as street plays, songs, puppet shows, radio programs etc. for awareness raising among the grassroots stakeholders. Following is the list of material developed during the last year.

- A booklet on “*Climate Change, Forests and You*”, consisting of a set of nine basic questions and answers is published for the benefit of the community level facilitators to help them explain links between forests and climate change in a simple language during grassroots training programs. The handbook is developed in four country languages and in English, with 500 copies printed in each language and distributed widely. The booklet is available on: www.recoftc.org/site/resources/Climate-Change-Forests-and-You.php.
- A set of five different posters on REDD+ and climate change in Nepali language were updated and 10,000 copies printed and distributed widely among the grassroots stakeholders.

- The set of five posters, developed in Nepali language was adapted to the Lao context and 1000 copies were printed and distributed during awareness raising programs among grassroots stakeholders.
- In Nepal, a total of 5000 calendars with key messages about REDD+ and climate change in Nepali language were printed and distributed widely during grassroots awareness raising events.
- In Nepal, an eight page information flyer on REDD+ and climate change published in the first year of the project was updated with more information following a consortium approach with eight other organizations. The 48 page updated document "*Climate Change, REDD+ and Our Role*" in Nepali, is prepared for the benefit of the grassroots level facilitators. Having printed 4000 copies, the document is already receiving a positive response and being used by local facilitators. It is also available on: www.recoftc.org/site/resources/Climate-change-and-our-role.php.
- In Indonesia, traditional awareness raising tools such as female recital *kubros* and Javanese puppet show, locally known as *Wayang*, are currently in use by the partner organizations to reach a large number of grassroots stakeholders, including religious leaders, teachers, and students.

New developments in REDD+

The Grassroots Project has responded to the new developments and discourses in REDD+ at international level, particularly with regards to social and environmental safeguards. The project has developed relevant training materials and delivered training and capacity building programs in the project countries. Followings are the key achievements.

Gender mainstreaming in the grassroots project

During the last year the Grassroots Project put substantial efforts into strengthening the integration of gender responsive training and capacity building activities in the project countries. With support from RECOFTC's Gender Officer, the project has taken the following key steps:

- During a mid-year coordination workshop, organized in March 2012, the Grassroots Project team organized a training and sensitization session on gender integration for the project team members, and also used the opportunity to kick start the planning for gender integration in the project country plans.
- The Grassroots Project team shared the experiences from gender mainstreaming activities from Nepal within RECOFTC as part of a gender sensitization workshop for RECOFTC staff from all units.
- To streamline and systematize the gender integration in REDD+ training and capacity building activities, the project has developed a gender strategy paper including a guiding framework clearly outlining the objective, and approaches for gender responsive training and capacity building activities in the project countries.
- In addition to the gender sensitive programs implemented in partnership with FECOFUN, the project has built partnership with HIMAWANTI, a grassroots women organization, dedicated to work for the empowerment of women stakeholders in the natural resource management sector in Nepal. HIMAWANTI has organized gender

sensitive training and capacity building programs at the grassroots level and is now engaged in documenting success stories from the field.

- In view of the success of the question-answer booklet on forest and climate change, the Grassroots Project is now in the process of developing a similar booklet to help local level facilitators organize gender responsive trainings for REDD+ in the project countries.
- A one day regional training on social safeguards of REDD+, including gender integration in REDD+ training programs is planned during upcoming regional reflection workshop in September 2012.

FPIC in REDD+

- As discussed in the section earlier on the Training Manual on Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) in REDD+, under Development of REDD+ capacity building material in English and national languages through the Grassroots Project, RECOFTC has taken a lead in developing relevant materials and delivering training programs on FPIC in REDD+.
- RECOFTC has also created a dedicated webpage (<http://www.recoftc.org/site/resources/FPIC-in-REDD-/>) for uploading and sharing relevant materials and latest developments on FPIC in REDD+.
- A number of requests have been sent to RECOFTC recently to organize FPIC in REDD+ training programs. In Indonesia, RECOFTC is set to organize a series of training programs for National REDD+ Taskforce members on FPIC in REDD+.

Conflict in REDD+ case study

- Building on a case study framework developed in the first year of the project, a detailed case study on conflict in REDD+ was conducted in the ICIMOD project site in Nepal. The project is funded by Norad to ICIMOD on developing a REDD+ payment mechanism.

Post UNFCCC COP Synthesis

- For the last three years, RECOFTC, in partnership with FAO, has been bringing out post UNFCCC COP synthesis reports based on the reviews of the outcomes of the conference by leading regional experts in the Asia-Pacific context. The series has been singled out by an independent FAO review as an outstanding publication. The Grassroots Project partly supported a similar regional expert workshop on the Durban COP outcomes in February 2012, and translated the English version of the synthesis publication into Nepali and Lao languages for the benefit of in-country stakeholders.

Output 2

Grassroots forest stakeholders' awareness of REDD+ is raised through training programs (REDD+ relevance, and implications for livelihoods and rural development, local people's roles and potential benefits)

The Project follows a cascade approach for training and capacity building of the grassroots stakeholders in the four project countries. This approach includes Training of Trainers (ToT) programs at different levels - national, sub-national and community level. The objective of

such an approach is to create a mass of in-country trainers, capable of taking forward the REDD+ capacity building agenda, and thus sustain the initiatives beyond the project period. Through this approach the Project also encourages participants to document the concerns and issues of the grassroots stakeholders and convey them to the policy makers as appropriate, and thus contribute to the REDD+ readiness process in the project countries.

Following is the summary of various activities organized at national, sub-national and community level in the Project countries.

National level training and capacity building programs

During the last year a total of 7 national level training and capacity building events were organized together in all the four project countries. Through such training and capacity building activities, the project reached to a total of 656 national and sub-national level beneficiaries, with an average 30% participation from women participants, as summarized in the following table.

Country	Type of activity	No. of events	No. of participants (Female)	Composition of Participants
Indonesia	Training of Trainers	1	16 (3)	Trainers from regional centers of CFET from Samarinda, Rumpin, Makasar, and Bogor and members of NGO partner organizations, YAKOBI, Nemdoh Nemkay, Berau REDD Working Group and Prakarsa Borneo
Lao PDR	Training of Trainers	1	21 (5)	Trainers from NAFES and other key stakeholders, including WWF, DoF
	Training for media persons on REDD+	1	17 (1)	Representative of print and electronic media
Nepal	Training of Trainers on FPIC in REDD+	1	28 (8)	Most of the participants from previous years' ToT programs
	Sharing key outcome from the Durban COP	1	37 (10)	Academicians, government officials and NGO representatives
	Concept of FPIC in REDD+	1	85 (32)	National Executive Committee members of FECOFUN
	National level awareness on women's role in forestry	1	452 (293)	On the occasion of International Women's Day

Sub-national training and capacity building programs

At sub-national level, a total of 70 different types of training and capacity building events were organized together in three project counties – Lao PDR, Nepal, and Vietnam. The type of events included ToT, training cum action plan development events, and sub-national level

issues based discussions. Through such events, the project benefited a total of nearly 1200 stakeholders, as summarized in the following table.

Country	Type of activity	No. of events	No. of participants (Female)	Locations
Lao PDR	Training and facilitation workshops at province and district level	3	50 (10)	Two provincial and one district level event for the participants from Huaphanh, Luangprabang, Xiengkhuang Phou Luey, Xayabouly provinces
Nepal	District level refresher trainings (2 days) on FPIC & gender in REDD+	16	292 (105)	For the participants from 16 project districts by FECOFUN
	ToT for district level participants on FPIC and gender in REDD+	1	23 (23)	In two project districts, Sarlahi and Makwanpur by HIMAWANTI
	Issue based discussions	31	775 (310)	For the participants from 18 project districts
	Refresher training for district level journalists	1	27 (5)	For the participants from 18 project districts
Vietnam	Training cum action plan development	4	47 (15)	Participants from the partner organizations
	Provincial level refresher ToT	1	22 (6)	In Ca Mau province

Community level training and awareness raising programs

Community level training and awareness raising programs were conducted in Lao PDR, Nepal and Vietnam, whereas in Indonesia, the Project has just started such activities. During awareness raising events, a number of different tools were used, including knowledge sharing events, street plays, puppet shows, games etc. Through such events, the project was able to reach nearly 12000 grassroots stakeholders. On an average 30% of these included women stakeholders. Following is the summary of type and number of activities and number of beneficiaries:

Country	Type of activity	No. of events	No. of participants	Locations
Lao PDR	Training program on REDD+	2	115	6 villages from Houphan province and 1 village from Lunagprabang province
	Awareness raising program for school teachers, students,	10	3420 students, 167 teachers and	10 schools covering 45 villages of Viengthong district in Houaphan province

	and parents		68 villagers	
Nepal	Awareness raising events at CFUG level	218	>10,000	For the participants from 18 project districts
	Knowledge sharing events through community to community exchange	55	1500	For the participants from 18 project districts
Vietnam	awareness raising event	1	150	for the participants of Ngoc Hien district in Ca Mau province

Output 3

Synthesis of feedback and information received from the capacity building delivery and other internal and external processes to improve and refine capacity building tools/materials/resources

In order to keep improving the project delivery, a number of initiatives were taken during the last year. These included, refining the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, conducting evaluations on the usefulness and application of training programs in Lao PDR and Nepal, organizing reflection and coordination workshops and a Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the project's progress and achievements. Following is a summary of the key achievements on the above listed activities under this output:

Evaluations of training programs

The Grassroots Project conducted an independent evaluation of its training activities in Nepal and Lao PDR in the second half of 2011. The aim of such an evaluation was to assess knowledge retention among the participants at different levels, and how they have made use of such knowledge, including behavioral change. Following are the key findings of the evaluation:

- In Nepal, 85% of the respondents from national and sub-national training programs responded positively when asked about the use of REDD+ training knowledge. They reported using their knowledge quite frequently in their work areas at different levels, by participating and contributing in discussions on REDD+ and climate change, serving as resource person in REDD+ and climate change training programs and, mobilizing grassroots stakeholders through campaigns, workshops, and writing in public media (See Box 1).
- At community forestry users' level, despite varying degrees of understanding and capacity to grasp new information, the evaluation reported an overall positive feedback from the respondents with some examples of how the knowledge is being applied (See Box 2).

Box 1: Application of knowledge at national level

As a journalist, before attending the REDD+ training, my focus was to cover mostly the political news, but now I am also interested to report on forestry issues - Kamal Panthi, reporter of national daily Kantipur, Bardiya District, Nepal

RECOFTC's grassroots capacity building for REDD+ training has been instrumental for me to establish myself as a resource person in the field of climate change and REDD+ in the country. After attending the national level ToT, I have conducted several climate change and REDD+ related trainings in different parts of the country - **Bhola Khatiwoda, Chairperson of Community Forestry Supporters' Network (COFSUN), Nepal**

Box 2: Application of knowledge at grassroots level

"From the training program we realized the potential benefits from REDD+. Therefore, we planted the barren land of Bhaglapur, Kopuwa VDC of Dang. Some portion of the land was previously encroached, which is now removed by CFUG, and planted with trees to maintain it as forest land" - **Kallu Tharu, chairperson of Bageshwori Community Forestry Users Group, Kapilvastu District, Nepal**

"It was encouraging to note the active participation and contribution of women in the discussions during REDD+ training. Earlier most of the women used to remain silent spectators in the group meeting, but during the training program, we found them active and sharing their experiences of local level changes, such as disappearance of some grass species, sightings of new species of birds and appearance of invasive species of plants, etc." - **Ms. Durga Pandey, District FECOFUN member and community level facilitator, Nepal**

- In Lao PDR, the independent evaluation mission found that nearly 80% of the respondents were engaged in making use of REDD+ training knowledge through different opportunities, such as sharing it with their peers, supporting training programs, contributing in forest management planning processes at local level, developing relevant proposals, and attending different workshops and seminars on climate change and REDD+ (See Box 3).
- In view of 64% of the respondents indicating their engagement in different REDD+ related activities at sub national level (district and below), the evaluation mission in Lao PDR concluded that the targeting approach, tools and techniques used to transport knowledge through the Grassroots Project are effective and in line with the Project's overall objectives.

Box 3: Appreciation of the training provided by the grassroots project

"No one knew about REDD+ before the Grassroots training program, but now we try to seize opportunities to strengthen the knowledge and skills of our staff on this subject" - **Mr. Oun Sarnsaly, Water Resources and Environment Agency (WREA), Government of Lao PDR**

Mid Term Review (MTR) of the Grassroots Project

An independent Mid Term Review (MTR) of the Grassroots Project was conducted between February 8 and April 30, 2012, after completion of one and a half years of the Project's phase II. The main objective of the MTR was to assess progress and general outcomes halfway through the project. The review also focused on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impacts of the project and made important observations and recommendations to improve the delivery during the remainder of the current project

period. The final MTR report has already been shared with and approved by Norad. Following are the key observations from the MTR report:

- The review mission reported that the Grassroots Project is fostering REDD+ awareness on multiple levels and is doing that effectively through the cascading approach of training and capacity building despite its limited human resources.
- The MTR reported an overall good progress of the project, with some delays in Vietnam and Indonesia.
- All activities and interventions in the Project are made in collaboration with local partners, which builds their capacity at the same time as having a positive influence towards ownership and project sustainability.
- The mix of collaborative partners enabled mainstreaming of REDD+ throughout different organization types and cultures. Further strengthening of knowledge can be identified through the joint development of capacity building materials and trainings, such as in Nepal and Indonesia.
- The ToT programs in all countries have reached multiple stakeholders, including NGO and CSO staff, government officials, academic institutions, universities, project implementers etc. on the national level and produced several trained resource persons.
- In Nepal, it is reported that capacity-building events had many positive effects on awareness building about climate change and REDD+. The MTR reported that –“*local level stakeholders have appreciated the knowledge conveyed to them, and local communities provided with training have been reported to pay greater attention to sustainable forest management and conservation, realizing the multiple benefits of forests.*”
- The MTR report concluded that the “*grassroots project is making important and unique contributions to raising awareness and building capacity on climate change and REDD+ on the local level in the respective countries*”.

Reflection and review workshops

- A regional reflection workshop was organized in September 2011 with partner organizations, regional and country project teams, REDD+ working group members of the national governments of the focal countries and other key stakeholders. A total of 42 participants, including nine women, attended the two-day workshop, providing an opportunity to share and learn from each other.
- The national government representatives from the four project countries provided an overview of the latest developments on REDD+ in their respective countries for the benefits of all the participants during the reflection workshop.
- A one day field visit to the site of the Norad funded ICIMODs REDD+ payment mechanism project was found useful by the participants, helping them to understand a potential payment mechanisms at the local level.
- A report briefing key outcomes from the workshop was submitted to Norad in November 2011.

- A national level reflection workshop was organized in Nepal in October 2011. However, due to delays in project activities in the other three countries, this will be organized next year.
- A mid-year coordination workshop was also organized successfully with the project team and partner organizations in March 2012. Besides reviewing mid-way progress of the project and strengthening partnerships, the coordination workshop also used the opportunity to sensitize the project teams and the partner organizations, on mainstreaming gender in REDD+ training and capacity building activities and enhancing communication and outreach of the project's achievements and lessons learned within the focal countries and at the regional level.

Feedback on REDD+ training materials

The project team at national and regional levels regularly monitored the number of downloads from the project website and responses and requests for the project materials developed under the Grassroots Project. Following is a summary table, providing number of downloads for each of the project documents.

Name of publication/training material	Language	TOTAL
REDD+ ToT Manual for National level facilitators	Eng	216
REDD+ ToT Manual for National level facilitators	Nepali	16
REDD+ ToT Manual for Community-level facilitators	Eng	139
REDD+ ToT Manual for Community-level Facilitators	Nepali	7
Climate Change, Forests, and You	Eng	536
Climate Change, Forests, and You	Bahasa Indonesia	21
Climate Change, Forests, and You	Lao	39
Climate Change, Forests, and You	Nepali	13
Climate Change, Forests, and You	Vietnamese	12
Climate change and Our Role	Nepali	9
Putting Free, Prior, and Informed Consent into Practice in REDD+ Initiatives (Training Manual)	Eng	647
Free, Prior, and Informed Consent in REDD+ (Guidebook)	Eng	780
REDD+ Grassroots Annual Report 2011	Eng	25
Grassroots Capacity Building for REDD+: Briefs	Eng	134

Overall there has been positive feedback regarding the developed publications from the stakeholders from the project countries and beyond the region. Following are few specific feedbacks on some of the training materials.

- The REDD+ facilitators' manuals have received positive feedback, not only from the project country stakeholders, but also from other stakeholders from different parts of the world. In Box 4 below, an extract from an email communication from Zambia, is presented as an example.

Box 4: Extract from an email communication from UN-REDD Zambia

When preparing the training, our team came across your website and the REDD+ ToT Manual for Community level facilitators in Nepal. Very useful manual! Would it be possible to engage you somehow to our training? - **Katri Kallio-Koski, Programme Analyst (UNDP, Energy & Environment), Zambia**

- *Climate Change, Forests and You* booklet has been one of the most downloaded documents from our website in recent months, recording a total of 177 downloads in March 2012 and 196 in May 2012. Other organizations such as Forest Carbon Asia and UN-REDD also carried the document on their websites (See Box 5 below).

Box 5: Go-REDD+ online newsletter (Issue 5) of UN-REDD: Conveying REDD+ at the local level:

Providing answers to each question is a laudable effort, especially because the guidance has been produced in five languages, i.e. besides English, Bahasa Indonesia, Lao, Nepali and Vietnamese and that RECOFTC has “taken steps in the right direction”.

- USAID funded LEAF (Lowering Emissions in Asia’s Forest) Program in the Asia-Pacific region has used the booklet for their training program in Lao PDR and Vietnam with positive feedback (See the extract of an email communication in Box 6 below):

Box 6: Response from LEAF Program

We really appreciated being able to build upon some of the RECOFTC Grassroots Capacity Building for REDD+ training material and distributing the REDD+ Q&A brochure in the Laos Language. It was highly appreciated by the Laos participants - **Peter Stephen, Forest Management and Climate Change Advisor, LEAF Program.**

- Posters for raising awareness among the grassroots stakeholders have been used by other REDD+ project implementers in the region, including WWF Lao PDR for their Carbon and Biodiversity (CarBi) project, and Community Carbon Pools Programme of Flora and Fauna International (FFI), which is implementing the programme in Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, and Vietnam.
- The FPIC in REDD+ training manual has also received overwhelming response (See Box 7). After uploading the training manual on RECOFTC’s website, it has been one of the most downloaded documents with 539 downloads in May 2012 alone.

Box 7: Response on FPIC training manual

I follow RECOFTC news and I want to congratulate you for the document “A training manual: Putting Free, Prior, and Informed Consent into Practice in REDD+ Initiatives”, it’s really interesting and useful! - **Pilar Valbuena, Área de Cooperación Internacional. Gestión del Conocimiento, Valladolid, España**

Output 4

Project results and findings are communicated widely within and beyond the target countries, contributing to the ongoing REDD+ discourses and readiness processes

Sharing of the project's experiences and lessons learned

The Project teams, both at national and regional levels, have continued to put considerable efforts into sharing the experiences, achievements and lessons learned from the Grassroots Project, within and beyond target countries and contribute to the ongoing REDD+ discourses and readiness process. During the last year the regional team participated in a total of six different events at regional and international levels, as listed below:

- **2nd Regional Community Forestry Forum**, in August 2011 in Bangkok – the regional team presented a paper on lessons learned in REDD+ capacity building. The Project team also put up a photo panel displaying the progress of the Grassroots Project in the countries.
- **Expert Workshop on Maximizing Co-benefits of REDD+: Inputs to REDD+ Safeguards** was held in September 2011, in the Philippines. The Project Coordinator presented a paper on REDD+ safeguards and facilitated a working group session on FPIC in REDD+.
- **Asia-Pacific Forestry Week** in November 2011, in Beijing – Communications Manager of RECOFTC shared experience of REDD+ training programs for barefoot reporters and local radio programs from Nepal organized under the Grassroots Project.
- **UNFCCC COP 17** in November-December 2011 in Durban – The Project Coordinator with other RECOFTC team members attended COP 17 and its various side events and organized a booth on Forest Day displaying and sharing RECOFTC publications, including some of which were developed by the Grassroots Project. Additionally, experiences of the conference were shared through RECOFTC blogs.
- **National Inception Workshop on REDD+** in Malaysia in February 2012 in Kuala Lumpur. The Project Coordinator participated as an expert and shared the work of the Grassroots Project on FPIC in REDD+.
- **Regional Expert Workshop on Durban COP** in Manila Philippines in February 2012. The Project Coordinator participated in the discussion and contributed in the synthesis report.

At national level, country teams have also participated in different events, as listed below:

- **Climate Change and REDD+ Teaching at Tribhuvan University** – The National Coordinator in Nepal contributed as a resource person for a Master Students class.
- **Workshop on sharing lessons on REDD+ in South Asia** - organized by ICIMOD in July 2012 in Kathmandu, Nepal - National coordinator participated in the workshop
- **Regional Workshop on Linking Communities in Southeast Asia to Forestry Related Voluntary Carbon Markets (VCM)** organized by FAO – The National Coordinator from Indonesia served as a resource person to the workshop on FPIC in REDD+.
- **Policy Dialogue on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the Lower Mekong region** – The National Coordinator in Lao PDR attended this two-day event

in Siem Reap, Cambodia, in July 2012, organized by the U.S. Government and the Ministry of Women's Affairs of the Royal Government of Cambodia.

- **Sharing project's progress with National REDD working groups:** National project teams keep updating National REDD working groups in each country about the progress and experiences of the project.

Communication strategy

- The Grassroots Project team has developed a communication strategy in close coordination with the communications unit of RECOFTC for more effective communications within and outside the project.
- The project website comprised of a project landing page and four country pages (<http://www.recoftc.org/site/resources/Grassroots-Capacity-Building-for-REDD-/>) are regularly updated with the progress of the Project.
- The project also uses blogs as an effective medium to communicate project experiences and progress.

Assessment of management of internal or external risks to the project

The Project encountered a few internal as well as external risks and challenges during the last year, as described below, along with how they are addressed:

- The Grassroots Project made good progress in Nepal and Lao PDR, but in Vietnam and Indonesia, the progress was a bit slower than expected. In Vietnam, the Project had to recruit a new National Coordinator, because the previous Coordinator resigned. The new National Coordinator was on board only in late October 2011. The recruitment process in the middle of the project resulted in a delay of about 3-4 months in delivering the project activities. Besides, the process of finalizing the action plans for each of the four provinces in Vietnam with the government partner organizations took substantial time, further delaying the implementation. In Indonesia, project activities were also delayed due to poor health of the national coordinator, who was out of office for nearly two months during different stages of the project.
- The floods in Bangkok during October-November 2011 also caused delays in administrative processes of establishing formal partnership contracts with the partner organizations, particularly in Vietnam and Indonesia. Due to such challenges, the implementation of project activities could only be started in the beginning of 2012 in both these countries.
- The partnership with government organizations has its own advantages as well as challenges. While on one hand it adds substantial value to the project, particularly to ensure the sustainability of the intervention, sometimes due to different working styles, priorities and also the cultural context, it causes delays in time-bound activities. This is what was experienced while in Indonesia and provincial units of Vietnam. However, with additional partnerships with three new partner NGOs in Indonesia, and now well established partnerships with DARD and an NGO partner

organization in Vietnam, the Project activities are speeding up in both the countries. The project management therefore is confident that such delays will only have a minimal impact on the overall major deliverables through July 2013.

- Among the external risks, the uncertainty of REDD+ at global level remains the biggest risk, particularly when it comes to dealing with forest-dependent communities and associated livelihoods issues. Considering this, the Grassroots Project is taking a *'no regret'* approach in its training and capacity building activities. The project activities therefore not only focus on capacity building *on* REDD+, but *for* REDD+. That means that information on climate change, its impacts and adaptation measures is also given, in the event that REDD+ is not approved and implemented by international bodies.

Explanation of major deviations from the plan

There have not been any major deviations from the Project plan in general, except some delays in the Project delivery in Vietnam and Indonesia, as explained in the above section. However, with the corrective actions taken, the Project management is confident that such delays will only have a minimal impact on the overall major deliverables through July 2013.

Responding to the recommendations from the MTR on the reassessment of the logical framework of the project in order to strengthen its contents and clarify uncertainties, the Project team has revised the logical framework (Annex 1) by identifying SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound) indicators, making it clearer and more focused. The revision in the logical framework will not change the project objectives and outputs. The revised logical framework has been shared with and approved by Norad. The project activities and deliverables are now designed according to the revised logical framework and monitoring and evaluation of the project deliverables are being planned accordingly. The progress reported in this report is in line with the revised logical framework.

Summary of main lessons learned

A number of key lessons have been learned during the last year:

- Managing expectations from carbon trade continues to remain a challenge in REDD+ in general, and particularly in projects like the Grassroots one, which directly interacts and works with local stakeholders. Linked to this is another challenge about the *"right"* kind of message, how much *"technical"* and how much *"social"* knowledge should be brought to training participants? The *"Climate Change, Forests and You"* booklet with nine basic questions and answers, developed under the Project, is designed to address some of these fundamental challenges.
- With a greater focus on the social and environmental safeguards of REDD+ in the international discourse, there is increasing awareness as well as demand from stakeholders to build their knowledge and skills on basic rights such as FPIC in REDD+ projects. This demand is likely to grow in future, and therefore the efforts made by the Grassroots Project in supporting the development of the training materials on FPIC in REDD+ and organizing training programs are of great importance.

- In view of the complexity of REDD+, with all its technical terms, it is always a challenge to find appropriate terms and contexts to transport the knowledge of REDD+ to the grassroots stakeholders, particularly to forest dependent communities, including women and ethnic minorities. It is therefore important that REDD+ knowledge sharing material and tools are contextualized to the local situation and cultural settings, so that participants are able to relate the context of REDD+ knowledge to their own experiences and surroundings. Developing a glossary of REDD+ and climate change terminologies in Lao and Vietnamese language is one of the initiatives to address this issue that is currently being undertaken through the Grassroots Project.
- Experience during the last year regarding partnerships has suggested that it is always an advantage to work together with government organizations as it improves the prospects of sustainability of the project intervention. However, in order to bring in civil society perspectives, concerns of the grassroots stakeholders, and innovative approaches to training programs, it is equally important to work together with CSO and NGO partner organizations as well.
- Although the project has given due attention to mainstreaming gender sensitive training and capacity building activities in the project countries, it is always important to consider local socio-cultural settings, norms and values while setting targets with respect to the participation of women in training and capacity building programs.

Annex 1: Revised logical framework for the grassroots project

Goal/purpose/outputs	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification/ Method of Collection
<p>Goal Grassroots forest sector stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region actively contribute to REDD+ planning and policy processes and are well positioned to take full advantage of its potential benefits for local socio-economic development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grassroots forest sector stakeholders and/or their representatives are able to use different forums and opportunities (REDD+ related national/provincial planning/policy/decision making committees/institutions) to convey their concerns and issues related to REDD+ to the concerned authorities • Issues and concerns of local communities are reflected in the government's REDD+ strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project monitoring and evaluation results • Reports/minutes of meetings of planning committees/institutions and other relevant platforms • Local government reports on REDD+ activities (if available) • Government REDD+ strategy
<p>Purpose /Outcome Key gaps in knowledge on REDD+ among grassroots stakeholders are identified and addressed through capacity building programs, enabling them to actively participate in the planning and implementation of REDD+ related activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% of the beneficiaries in project area gained updated and explicit knowledge of the REDD+ mechanism • 50% of the trained local government officials in the project area have adequate knowledge of planning and implementation requirements for REDD+ projects at local level • Project facilitators at the grassroots level understand forest-dependent community concerns and issues, and document them to integrate in designing and delivering REDD+ capacity building activities for the grassroots stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project monitoring and evaluation results • Mid-term and final review report • Local level case studies and documentation regarding REDD+ grassroots stakeholder's issues and concerns
<p>Output 1: A training package designed for REDD+ introduction and implementation, targeted at grassroots forest sector stakeholders is developed, and continually revised and adapted to fit country-specific conditions and the evolving structure of REDD+</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grassroots capacity building needs assessed (CBNA) • Country cases collected, most recent development in REDD+ synthesized • A set of REDD+ capacity building materials in both English and national languages • Updated regional level REDD+ ToT manual developed until 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project brochure in English and national languages • CBNA reports • 4 REDD+ manuals in 4 national languages respectively • 1 updated regional level REDD+ ToT manual • Awareness raising materials such as posters and flyers

Goal/purpose/outputs	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification/ Method of Collection
	the end of the project phase	developed in national languages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-term and final review reports • M&E report on the use and benefits of CB material
Output 2: Grassroots forest stakeholders' awareness of REDD+ is raised through training programs (REDD+ relevance and implications for livelihoods and rural development, local people's roles and potential benefits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 10 facilitators in each country trained with the capacity to plan and deliver grassroots level CB program, with at least 20%* being women participants • At least 50 grassroots level government officials have gained knowledge and skills in relation to REDD+ mechanism in each country, with at least 30% being women participants • At least 15 forest user groups or villages in each country have gained the new knowledge of REDD+ mechanism, with at least 30% being women stakeholders * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and capacity building records • Capacity building reports from countries • M&E reports • Mid-term and final review report
Output 3: Feedback and information received from the capacity building delivery and other relevant internal and external processes analyzed, including gathered local perspectives and concerns, used for the continuous improvement and refinement of the capacity building tools/resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M&E system in place and baseline data collected • Regular evaluation of usefulness and application of training programs and conducted (using Kirckpatrick Model) • Regular briefing report and discussion with national and international Climate change working group • Regional and country reflection workshops • Feedback collected on usefulness of trainings materials collected from project beneficiaries and other key stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual progress report • Mid-term & final review report • Reflection workshop reports • M&E reports • Responses of key stakeholders on the usefulness of REDD+ training material

Goal/purpose/outputs	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification/ Method of Collection
<p>Output 4: Project results and findings are communicated widely within and beyond the target countries, contributing to the ongoing REDD+ discourses and readiness processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 5 major workshops attended at national and international level together • Publication of capacity building material in hard copy and digital versions distributed within the project countries and in the Asia-Pacific Region • Publication and dissemination of key lessons learned and achievements from the project through various forums at national, regional, and international levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record of events report • Hard & digital copy of capacity building materials • Publications and presentations at national, regional, and international forums

*Depending upon country contex



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