

The Rufford Small Grants Foundation

Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford Small Grants Foundation.

We ask all grant recipients to complete a Final Report Form that helps us to gauge the success of our grant giving. The Final Report must be sent in **word format** and not PDF format or any other format. We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and others who may be undertaking similar work. Please be as honest as you can in answering the questions – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Please complete the form in English and be as clear and concise as you can. Please note that the information may be edited for clarity. We will ask for further information if required. If you have any other materials produced by the project, particularly a few relevant photographs please send these to us separately.

Please submit your final report to jane@rufford.org.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Lou Vanny
Project title	Building Adaptive Capacities of Freshwater Fishing Community to Climate Change-induced Changes in Water Level in Mekong River in Stung Treng Ramsar Site, Cambodia
RSG reference	9614-1
Reporting period	18 March 2011 – 18 March 2012
Amount of grant	£5,960
Your email address	louvanny@gmail.com
Date of this report	March 2012

1. Please indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
(i). Organized a local meeting with stakeholders and local community			x	<p>A local meeting was conducted at a small Buddhist pagoda on 14 May 2011 with the active participation of local authorities, a Stung Treng provincial Fisheries Administration officer, Thmey community fisheries committee members and 35 local full-time and part-time fishers and villagers. The main objective of the meeting was to inform local fishers and villagers of a new Rufford-funded integrated small-scale fish culture and vegetable production project and simultaneously to recruit local fishers and other villagers who are interested in it to get involved in this project.</p> <p>First of all, Mr. Lou Vanny introduced to fishers and villagers about a new small-scale fish culture and vegetable production project lasting for one year from April 2011 to April 2012. The specific objective of the project was to make a partial contribution to the improvement of local fishing community by promoting and enhancing the combination of small-scale fish culture in ponds with plastic bags and vegetable production to increase additional household income of the project beneficiaries and to reduce local people's dependence on the utilization of the natural resources from the Mekong River, especially fish and to build their adaptive capacity to declining availability of the natural resources and uncertainty over their economic system.</p> <p>Mrs. Vorn Bunly, Samaki commune chief, said that it was a special opportunity for all local fishers and villagers to focus on small-scale fish culture as an additional livelihood activity we can by using locally available resources rather than single heavy reliance on the collection of natural fish. Small-scale fish culture with vegetable production is relatively new and unprecedented and can obviously be done in our village and will be able to contribute to reducing the pressure on the deteriorating aquatic resources, especially fish. She also encouraged all the participants to think about the alternative livelihood activities such as fish</p>

				<p>culture and vegetable growing because it can ensure food safety and increase household cash income if the fish culture has been properly conducted.</p> <p>Thmey community fisheries committee chief Sem Ven said that <i>“small-scale fish culture is relatively new in this area. Therefore, he expressed his impression that when small-scale fish culture takes shape in this area, it will be good because for the time being local people rely heavily on the collection of the natural fish. Through the project, he thought that local people’s livelihoods will be partially improved”</i>.</p> <p>A representative of local fishers expressed his willingness to culture fish species. They will culture fish if they have culture technique and fish seeds to be provided by any NGOs or the provincial Fisheries Administration. He also added that he wants to see the fish culture occur in his villages because it can contribute to reducing local people’s heavy dependence on the natural fishing from the Mekong. By so doing, it will lead to the improvement of the aquatic resources, thereby improving the livelihoods of local people.</p> <p>From the beginning, only 10 local fishers were selected to be offered fish culture techniques, fish seeds, crop seeds and other raising materials supported by the project. Later on, 5 more poor households were also selected because the commune chief and CF committee asked the project to help five more. In total, 15 families were selected and supported by the project.</p>
(ii) Conducted local field visit to a successful fish farm			x	<p>A field visit was made on 30 May 2011 to a successful fish farm in Stung Treng district to offer all selected project beneficiaries an opportunity to see a real practice and raising techniques to gain more understanding before they would be trained about fish raising techniques by a hired fish expert from Cambodian Rural Development Team (CRDT). Prior to the application of the system, a one-day study tour was organized first by local Thmey Community Fisheries committee with active participations from its leader and members and 15 selected project beneficiaries to successful integrated fish-vegetable farms in Stung Treng province where they were able to see real operations, learn direct experience and gain some ideas on how to raise fish and grow vegetables in a</p>

				successful manner to ensure their sustainable livelihoods.
(iii) Built capacities to locally elected management committee members to enable them to carry out public awareness campaigns on the protection and conservation of the aquatic resources and alternatives and strengthen integrated farming system			x	<p>All Thmey community committee members as well as 15 selected people as the project beneficiaries were invited to participate in a 5-day training course on techniques on small-scale fish culture integrated with vegetable crop provided by an expert with many years of experience in this system who was hired by the project. By so doing, all committee members have gained more knowledge and this technique to make it easier for them to facilitate the implementation process with local project beneficiaries when they had any problem. Furthermore, CF committee had a network with the expert. So, it was easy to contact him.</p> <p>Furthermore, Thmey committee members have launched public campaigns by holding small meetings twice a month with a group of 10-20 people and fishers in each three villages of Hangkho Suon, Thmey and Kampan villages whose livelihoods depend heavily on the collection of aquatic resources from the river, especially fish. The total number of people getting our awareness was about 170. The main objective of the gatherings was to more actively engage them in the protection and management of the aquatic resources and report other illegal fishing activities harmful to all aquatic animals. The committee also educated them that fishers' participation in protection, management, use of legal fishing gear, prevention of illegal activities and reporting other harmful activities lead to the improvement if the aquatic resources are to be sustained. Apart from these, the committee encouraged people to reduce their dependence on the collection of natural fish by thinking about alternative livelihood activities such as small-scale culture integrated with vegetable production. If anyone was interested in this system, they can go to learn it from local people being supported by the Rufford Small Grant in Thmey village. This system can offer additional household income. Furthermore, it was easy to maintain it because it was close to our homes and we can also do other activities.</p>
(iv) Trained and displayed practical				Moreover, following the field visit, the same selected vulnerable people were provided with a training course on fish raising techniques with

<p>alternative livelihoods activities “Integrated farming system of fish and vegetables</p>				<p>actual fish culture in pond combined with vegetable growing being displayed to those vulnerable people who are keenly interested in applying the system with the Thmey community fisheries members who have experiences and techniques in raising fish responsible for managing, educating, monitoring and following up the process and with additional technical supports from an experienced and expertise fish officer, especially Fisheries Administration Officer and CRDT because this kind of fish culture usually requires more technical knowledge and experience.</p> <p>Small ponds are a good place to try out fish farming or raising small quantities of fish. Growing fish is a new experience for many people in this area and there is much to be learned regarding the needs of the fish species chosen for production, water quality, feeds, harvest, and marketing requirements. Some of these techniques have been learned from training courses and practical experience from a well-trained expert.</p> <p>Even though the vulnerable people have a limited financial resource, they have been provided by the project such as fish seeds, crop seeds and plastic bags to run their small-scale integrated farming of fish and vegetables with techniques gained from the project to deal with the gradual decreases in natural fish catches from the Mekong on which their livelihoods entirely depend as a source of food and cash household income. By so doing, we found that some of them have reduced their fishing trips to the river and furthermore, their household spending has been lower than before because they could collect some vegetables for home consumption and sales for more household income.</p>
<p>(v) Produced project signboards and brochures showing fish culture with integrated with vegetable crops</p>			<p>x</p>	<p>Two project signboards were produced and erected along the road in front of separate Rufford-funded farms easily visible to the public. The signboard contains the name of project, name of donor, duration and location of the Furthermore, 200 brochures on technique on fish culture with vegetable production have been produced and distributed to all people who participated in our public campaign to get their impression in it and hopefully they will get involved in this technique to ensure their sustainable</p>

				household and food security even though the fish catches from the nature are not stable.
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2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant)

Local fisheries community committee had to conduct a wide range of public awareness campaigns on the importance of local people's active participation in the protection and conservation of aquatic resources at the grassroots level to communities and sustainable and wise use of the aquatic resources and use of fishing gear not harmful to fish population and other aquatic animals. However, such an important activity has been postponed for nearly three months due to heavy floods in Stung Treng province.

Furthermore, two project beneficiaries have encountered a problem about the fish death. About 15% of fish population in the ponds died of improper care and water seepage from the pond. However, this problem has been solved by the fish expert who encouraged affected project beneficiaries to care about the water seepage, irregular food provision and wild animal intrusion such as frogs. In order to prevent frogs from entering into the ponds, all project beneficiaries have set nets around the ponds.

3. Briefly describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

Outcome1:

Local villagers have learned and received practical techniques on integrated system of fish culture with vegetable production.

Outcome2:

Additional household income has been generated through the sales of locally grown vegetables and cultured fish supported by the project and significant reduction in purchasing of them from the markets.

Outcome3:

Local social capital such as trust, cooperation reciprocity and solidarity among local people has been enhanced. The project has gained strong support from Stung Treng Provincial Fisheries Administration Office and local authorities because it not only contributes to enhancing local people's additional household income, but also to reduction in dependence by local people on the collection of the natural fish.

4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project (if relevant).

During the local meeting with relevant stakeholders and local community about Rufford-funded pilot project, 35 out of 42 local people who participated in it expressed their interest in culture of fish at family scale. However, out of 35, 15 marginalised and poor households have been selected to get them involved in small-scale fish culture integrated with crop production funded by Rufford Small Grant through provision of techniques and culture and growing inputs such as fish seeds, plastic bags, crop seeds and other necessary items.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

The local community would like to put forward one more project proposal for further financial support for the next step. The project proposal is under discussion and development.

6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?

The report on the result of the project can be posted on the Rufford small grant website where the public can be accessible. Furthermore, the report will also be shared to other stakeholders such as Stung Treng provincial fisheries administration office and provincial Worldfish Center. Comments from all readers are welcome and highly appreciated.

7. Timescale: Over what period was the RSG used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?

The RSG was run over the period of 12 months as planned and proposed. But some activities have been added and needed which originally did not state in the work plan.

8. Budget: Please provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures should be in £ sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Project staff				
- Mr. Lou Vanny	1,200£	1,200£	0	
- Mr. Sem Ven	360£ (£30/mo x 12mo)	Total=360£	0	Monthly salary was paid to all community fisheries committee members in Khmer banknote. Therefore, the actual amount of money was slightly different from month to another based on local exchange rate to Khmer banknote. Based on local exchange rate, the agreement was made on the condition that each community fishery committee member will receive a fixed monthly incentive in Khmer banknote as their salary over the lifetime of the project.
- Mr. Sorn Kakada	360£ (£30/mo x 12mo)	Total=360£	0	

- Ms. Ma Bo	360€ (£30/mo x 12mo)	Total=360€	0	
- Mr. Khem Bunthoeum	360€ (£30/mo x 12mo)	Total=360€	0	
- Mr. Yen Mara	360€ (£30/mo x 12mo)	Total=360€	0	
- Mr. Suong Chantha	360€ (£30/mo x 12mo)	Total=360€	0	
Stakeholder consultation	250€	210€	+40€	
Practical field visit to a successful fish farm (Required, but not proposed in budget plan: actual spending)	230€	230€	0	This amount of money was not proposed in the budget plan. The purpose of this visit was to have selected villagers understand and see the achievement of the fish farm to mainstream their knowledge and know-how.
Hired an expert to teach all project beneficiaries about the techniques on Fish and vegetable production (Required, but not proposed in budget plan: actual spending)	251.57€	251.57€	0	The project rented an expert from Cambodian Rural Development Team (CRDT) to provide a 5-day training course to all project beneficiaries on techniques about the integrated fish-crop system. The fee for his services was 500USD (314.46€ based on local exchange rate 1€ =1.59USD).
Fish seeds (Required, but not proposed in budget plan: actual spending)	280€	280€	0	Fish seeds have been bought and distributed to all selected project beneficiaries.
Vegetable crop seeds (Required, but now proposed in budget plan: actual spending)	70€	70€	0	Vegetable crop seeds have been bought and distributed to all selected project beneficiaries.
Plastic bags (Required, but not proposed in budget plan: actual spending)	377.35€	377.35€	0	Plastic bags have been bought and distributed to all selected project beneficiaries.
Putting signboards on the site	88.05€	88.05€	0	Two project signboards have been produced and

(Required, but not proposed in budget plan: actual spending)				erected along the road where it is easy to see.
Brochure production	450€	180€	+270€	200 brochures in Khmer language have been produced and distributed to all people in the project site.
Public campaigns	800€	510€	+290€	Public awareness campaigns have been launched by Thmey community fisheries committee to educate local people about the importance of natural resources to their livelihoods and ask for their participation in the protection and management of those resources.
Field monitoring, evaluation and reporting	430€	350€	+80€	Field monitoring and evaluation have been conducted to assess the results of the project. And project report writing.
Total	5,960€	5906.97€	+53.03€	Local community would like to request to the director of RSGF that the balance of +53.03€ be allowed to use for their administrative work such as stationery, costs for participation in some meetings with other stakeholders.

9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

Everyone faces threats and impacts of climate change and it also poses an obstacle to communities as they work towards sustainable development. Climate change is really happening and affecting freshwater ecosystem and puts livelihoods of communities at risk. Therefore, community-based adaptation actions are needed now. In order to address this challenge, local communities, local authority and technical line agency (provincial fisheries office) would be most grateful if the grant is provided to further strengthen community-based adaptation strategy that combines traditional knowledge with innovative strategies to build resilience towards the dynamic challenges of climate

change. A number of initiatives have been set in place to help local communities build their capacities to respond to the changing climate.

To ensure its long-term success, two main aspects have been set to continue this work:

1. At the first stage, about 10 more villagers have asked for support from Rufford to run this system, unfortunately, the project was able to support only 15 household for its pilot activity. Therefore, for the second phase of the project 50% of fund will continue strengthening existing project beneficiaries and helping other poor families.
2. Other 50% will go to "**Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) and Participatory Local Innovations (PLI)**". They will be applied in the next phase of Rufford-funded project to find out particular problems affecting local people's livelihoods and threatening their local economic activity and what solutions are needed to ensure their sustainable livelihoods.

The work will help local authority, especially the commune find out the existing problems in their area and bring them to the annual district integration meeting to find partners and other NGOs to settle those problems and build local adaptive capacity.

10. Did you use the RSGF logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the RSGF receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Yes, RSGF logo was used during the stakeholder consultation meetings, the public campaigns to three villages and also was printed on signboards erected on ground on the project site which is visible to the public. Furthermore, RSGF was also used on brochures.

No, the RSGF did not receive any publicity during the course of work.

11. Any other comments?

On behalf of Thmey community fisheries committee and all the project beneficiaries, I would like to express my deep thanks to the RSG for its financial support to support fish-crop integrated system. I am also grateful to Mr. William Murray for introducing the grant and Dr. Wenresti G. Gallardo for his advice and guidance during the project proposal development and implementation.

Moreover, I would like to show my deep appreciation and thanks to a chief of fisheries division at Stung Treng Provincial Cantonment of Fisheries Administration Mr. Srey Vichet for spending his valuable time to offer encouragement and some more key techniques to all the project beneficiaries to ensure the success of the project.

My special thanks also go to Mr. Lay Khim, Cambodia UNDP country director assistant and chief of environment and energy unit for providing some comments on the design of project signboard.

Another point I would like to raise is that being a project manager, I have learned that unforeseen climate-related events can affect the implementation process of the project. As in 2011, floods have occurred in Stung Treng and the rest of the country, delaying the process of public campaign launched by the Thmey community fisheries committee.

Annex 1

**List of Project Beneficiaries
 Thmey Village, Samaki Commune**

No	Name	Sex	Occupation	Organisation
1.	Sorn Oudorn	M	Local villager	Themy village
2.	Vin Van	M	Local villager	Themy village
3.	Poma Bo	M	Local villager	Themy village
4.	Say Sokhoeun	M	Local villager	Themy village
5.	Thorn Sokha	F	Local villager	Themy village
6.	Bun Thorng Dam	F	Local villager	Themy village
7.	Seng Tea	M	Local villager	Themy village
8.	Phat Neay	M	Local villager	Themy village
9.	Sun Siet	M	Local villager	Themy village
10.	Tat Lon	M	Local villager	Themy village
11.	Pha Hom	F	Local villager	Themy village
12.	Man Sokha	M	Local villager	Themy village
13.	Phorn Sokea	F	Local villager	Themy village
14.	Tat Not	M	Local villager	Themy village
15.	Bab Ny	M	Local villager	Themy village