



CENDI

**Interim Narrative Report
From 1 January 2015 – to 30 June 2015**

Submitted to Secours Catholique/Caritas France

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We thank for the supports from



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Project profile

Project name	Community Development applied research on regaining livelihood security for indigenous ethnic minorities in Vietnam
Project code	PI 140 315
Project Goal	To have livelihoods pilot demonstration development in the Dao ethnic community in Phin Ngan through MECO-ECOTRA empowerment
Project location(s)	Nine villages in Phin Ngan commune, Bat Xat district, Lao Cai province and MECO-ECOTRA network.
Target group	Dao ethnic minority group
Reporting period	1 January 2015 to 30 June 2015
Project start date	1 January 2015
Project end date	31 December 2015
Project budget	45,587 Euro
Funding source(s)	Secours Catholique/Caritas France
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Reporting to	Secours Catholique/Caritas France

Report based on logical framework (objectives' level)

	Intervention Logic	Indicators	Actual Outputs
Specific objective	To contribute to livelihoods pilot demonstration development in the Dao ethnic community in Phin Ngan through MECO-ECOTRA empowerment. <i>(This is also contributing to the overall MECO-ECOTRA global proposal).</i>		
Expected results	01 indigenous ethnic minority village have obtain the collective rights to management and use over 500 hectares of the community forest and land in accordance with both customary and statutory law	09 minority villages obtain the collective rights to manage and use 245 hectares of the community forest and lands.	337 households (1,815 people) in 09 Dao ethnic village villages in Phin Ngan commune have collective land/forest right certificates granted. The 09 mentioned villages have their customary law based regulations on forest management recognized by local authorities (communal and district levels).
	MECO-ECOTRA is institutionalized and capable to coordinate and facilitate the network activities	10 members of MECO-ECOTRA network further enhanced their capacity. They engage actively in voicing/contributing to raise land right and ethnic right at forums, national workshop.	2 exchange forums organized for members to share and improve capacity. 10 participants (including key-farmers, authorities and policy makers) raise voices in land right and ethnic right forums/national workshop.



Project progress

Activities	Expected Output	Actual Outputs	Remark
<p>Expected Result 1: 01 indigenous ethnic minority village have obtain the collective rights to management and use over 500 hectares of the community forest and land in accordance with both customary and statutory law.</p> <p>Revised Expected Result 1: 9 villages obtain the collective rights to management and use over 245 hectares of the community forest and land in accordance to customary and statutory law.</p>			
<p>Act 1.1.1. Lobby local authorities and functional offices for co-implementation of the pilot.</p>	<p>Land allocation process for 09 villages in Phin Ngan commune, Bat Xat district, Lao Cai province is supported by local authorities through communication and meetings with stakeholders.</p>	<p>After 03 forums (held between community representatives, CENDI/LISO, relevant district departments, and local authorities) all have confirmed that the villagers need confirmation of community land right. All stakeholders agreed and involved in re-assessing community land resources and further co-implementing this program at 09 villages. The intervention focuses on forestland plots and areas where villagers have traditionally and collectively accessed, used and protected.</p> <p>One MoU was signed between stakeholders to define clear tasks and responsibilities as well as legitimacy of the program.</p> <p>With the involvement of representatives from 9 targeted villages, two representatives of community networking, five communal officers, two from district agencies, one from Bat Xat management board of protection forest in a conference, an overall plan was set up and agreed by community representatives, CENDI/ LISO, communal and district authorities.</p>	



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<p>Act 1.1.2. Conduct field studies on current situations of land use planning and forest resources governance and review relevant policies relating to community spirit forest and forest and land rights</p>	<p>09 villages have their location, scope of the plots of community forestland identified.</p> <p>Solutions for obstacles and difficulties of the following land allocation process are identified by representatives of the 9 villages.</p>	<p>The participants identified 20 forestland plots with around 245 ha of land in the 9 communities at this stage.</p> <p>Completed a report on the Bat Xat MBFP plan for re-arrangement of their forestland area (under their authority) and also the community's suggestions on re-allocation/confirmation of community forest/land right titles on the traditional plots and areas.</p>	
<p>Act 1.1.3. Conduct in-depth researches on customary ownership regime, forestland governance and land conflict resolutions</p>	<p>Local authorities recognize values of customary law for community forest management.</p>	<p>Major findings in community customary regime in forestland use were reported and shared with the district and communal technical taskforce for land and forest allocation.</p>	
<p>Act 1.1.4. Conduct community based participatory surveys on current land use planning/plans, natural resources usage; classifying types of forest, land borders; measuring land and forest areas; identifying and solving forestland conflicts / overlap.</p>	<p>Nine communities have local names recognized and reflected on the official profiles and mapping of community land plots.</p> <p>Ten district and communal authorities recognized meanings of local names and traditional right of local people on the areas.</p> <p>Nine community forestland borderlines are clarified.</p>	<p>Three inter-village seminars (for groups of villages), involving representatives from 8 villages were organized.</p> <p>By the end of June field survey and measuring community land areas was conducted in 8 among targeted 9 villages.</p> <p>15 villagers practice to use GPS to measure and draw borderline of each plots of community land.</p> <p>Community representatives suggested and provided 16 additional community forestland plots in comparison to the first survey. This resulted from clarification of the names of each land plots according to the community classification. Besides, some plots are added by the community representatives.</p> <p>A list of 36 community forestland plots (increased from the earlier 20 plots) with the Dao local names were further discussed and included and disseminate among village representatives, communal officers and district land and forest allocation taskforce.</p>	



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		The district and communal officers saw meaningful implication of the local Dao ethnic names attaching to each suggested community land plots. Participants found it easy to use local names for identifying each plot of land rather than using the formal numerical coding of the plots. They supported the idea of using local Dao names during the land and forest allocation process and write them on the formal mapping profile.	
Act 1.1.5. Conduct forestland use planning based on customary law, local knowledge and landscape settings	Nine communities obtain their forestland plan on the basis of their traditional landscape design and local knowledge intergrated.	The list of community forestland plots with local names and maps drawn by village representatives were once again checked and corrected. Nine community members voted by hand up to demonstrate their agreement and support the land and forest allocation process. Villagers introduced and voted members of the team for advisory and reconciliation for land and forest allocation process.	On-going process.
Act 1.1.6. Re-clarify and re-map the forestland resources for different users	Nine villages have clear demarcation of community forests while land disputes are solved.	Demarcation and areas of the plots of community land in the 8 target villages were identified and measured. Local names of the community plots are recorded and identified by local communities and authorities. This creates a foundation for further accuracy of customary-based land allocation profiles and mapping in the next steps. This also indicates the very first effort in gaining/definining recognition of local identities in the official mapping. Conflicts and land overlapping were identified by communities, and they are on process to discuss and find solutions with support from district officers and advice from LISO staff.	On-going process.
Act 1.1.7. Implement forestland (re)allocation / (re)distribute to 09 communities	Nine villages obtain land titles on 245 hectares of the community forestland	On going process.	On-going process.
Act 1.1.8. Facilitate setting up customary law based regulations on	Nine community regulations on forest protection are approved by	Local (verbal) regulations on community forestland management, including allowed activities, banned actions and treatment	



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forestland management and use	local authorities	against violations were recorded. The collected information can become inputs for facilitating village elders and community leaders to draft written community regulation, so as to get inputs and approval from villagers, communal and district authorities in the next steps.	On-going process.
Act 1.1.9. Organize training workshops for development of approaches, steps and detailed action plans on community based forestland allocation and conflict resolutions	Lesson learnt, methodology and recommendations from the workshop and land allocation process are identified.	Three internal discussions were held for 18 turns of participants and one presentation was shared among LISO staff. The participants reviewed recent activities and identified the methodology applied for the coming activities.	On-going process.
Act 1.1.10. Organize training-workshops on roles of the traditional governance and formal policies in FLA and natural resources management and usage.	One training workshop on traditional governance and forestland management policies for 20 participants is organized	For this purpose, a seminar was conducted involving district and communal officers, village representatives.	On-going process.
Act 1.1.11. Conduct and publish case-study papers i.e. policy briefs for dissemination and lobby relevant government policies / laws on community spirit forest and land	A policy paper on community spirit forest and land is published and disseminated to relevant policy makers and local authorities		We are gathering and will be using data and findings from this for later publication or case study paper.
Act 1.1.12. Conduct and publish book/documentary films regarding (re)allocation of forest and land to local communities	One documentary film on community forestland allocation is produced		We are gathering photos and short films too for later publish and or printing for further awareness raising.
Expected Result 2: MECO-ECOTRA is institutionalized and capable to coordinate and facilitate the network activities			
Act 1.2.1. Organize local meetings, dialogues and study exchange among local actors on forestland rights and management		(in combination with global proposal) Organize 03 exchanging visits and small forums for 6 turns of people to Huong Son district, Ha Tinh province and to Nan San commune, Simacai district, Lao Cai province.	On-going process.



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		<p>The participants saw urgent need to confirm community land right. Coming back their community, those participants presented their understanding and ideas in several informal discussions in the community. They urge villagers to cooperate and contribute their land, where they used to cultivate to return to share with others and make them subject to community forestland, on which community land right certificates can be confirmed then.</p> <p>Seeds of Sa nhan (<i>Amomum villosum</i> var. <i>xanthioides</i> (Wall.) Hu & Chen) were transferred from Phin Ngan commune to farmers group in Simacai district, Lao Cai province and also farmers group in Son Kim commune , Ha Tinh province.</p>	
<p>Act 1.2.2. Organize a national workshop on community spirit forest and land rights in relations to cultural bio-diversity in watershed indigenous areas (shared with the global proposal)</p>		<p>(in combine with global program)</p> <p>Support participants from Bat Xat district, Lao Cai province and central authority officials to attend the National workshop on community spirital forest land rights in Kon Tum in 28 August 2015</p>	

Additional narrative information

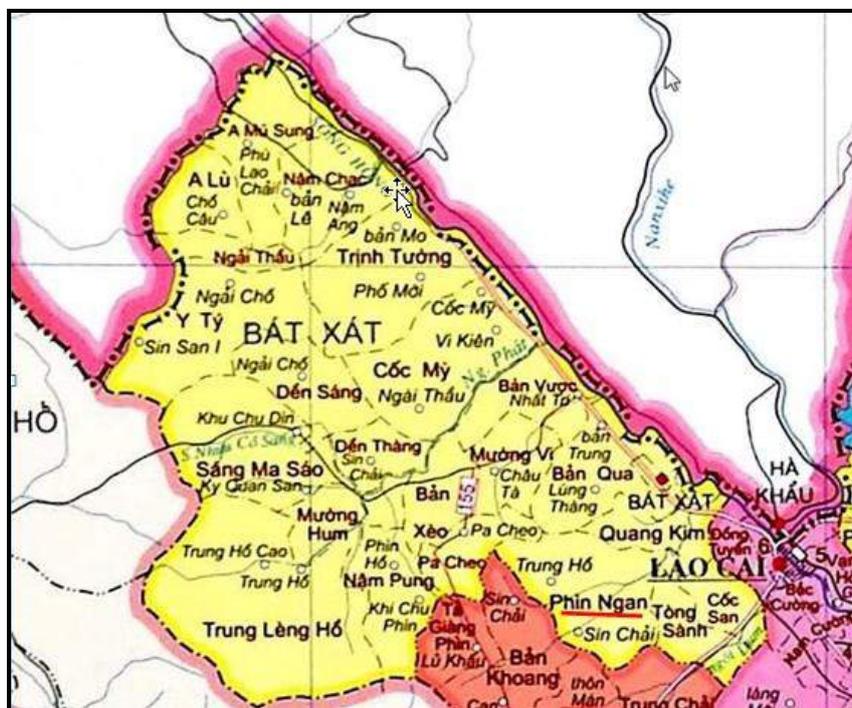
I-Overview of project implementation

This is the first six-monthly report of the one year project proposed by Community Entrepreneur Development Institute (CENDI). CENDI in cooperation with its LISO (Livelihood Sovereignty Alliance composed of representatives from Social Policy Ecology Research Institute (SPERI), Cultural Identity and Resources Use Management (CIRUM) and Consultancy on Development Institute (CODE)) had successfully launched project activities right after signing the contract.

By end of June 2015, all legal procedure for the project was approved and supported by local authorities, which created good environment for CENDI to work direct with the communities. The nine targeted villages in Phin Ngan commune, which consist of 337 households and 1,815 people have participated in and benefited from project activities. The villages and other stakeholders have organized meetings and discussions to clarify many issues including recognition of local names of each plot of community forestland and suggested local authorities for supporting the confirmation/granting of their land right. A technical taskforce for land and forest allocation was set up at district and communal levels, and a board for land and forest allocation advice and reconciliation was set up in each village. Field surveys and measurements of the expected community forestland plots have been completed in 8 amongst 9 villages.

II- Introduction of the target commune

Phin Ngan is a highland commune in Bat Xat district, Lao Cai province, northern Vietnam. According to 2013 statistics, Phin Ngan commune consists of 14 villages with 502 households and 2,679 people. There are two main ethnic groups in the commune: the Red Dao and the Phu La, of which the Red Dao counts for 98%. The commune has a natural area of 6,620 ha, of which forestry land is 3,895 ha (or 58.84%), non-agricultural land is 231 ha (or 3.49%) and non-used land is 2,494 ha (or 37.67%). The communal report on socio-economic and security situation in 2014 releases the commune's poverty figure of 24.49%.



Location of [Phin Ngan](#) commune in Bat Xat district

By the end of 2014 (after SPERI's support for community land for the four villages of Sai Duan, Sung Bang, Sung Hoang and Van Ho) there are four main forestland users in the commune: (i) the Bat Xat district Management Board for Protected forests who manage 1,842ha (or 51.46%); (ii) households: 104ha (2.9%); (iii) village communities: 213 ha (5.95%); and (iv) communal People's Committee manage 1,420.4ha (or 39.68%). The communal authority is managing a large percentage of land in an uncertain manner because there is no land right certificate granted yet. Meanwhile, local people face shortage of land, especially forestland for their integrated crops and collection of vegetables and herbs. On the other hand, without confirmation of community forestland right, it is difficult for local people to practice and promote their traditional belief and customs relating to worshipping in sacred forests and protection of forest.



Sa nhân (*Amomum villosum* var. *xanthioides* (Wall.) Hu & Chen) was integrated under the forest canopy, and becomes one of the income sources in Phin Ngan commune.

In 2014, with cooperation from CIRUM, SPERI have completed support for land and forest allocation for the four villages in Phin Ngan commune, i.e. Sùng Hoảng, Sải Duần, Ván Hồ, and Sùng Bang. Approximately 213 ha were allocated to these four communities.

In this year, CENDI continues and replicates the previous experiences and expand activities to nine other villages in Phin Ngan commune. The nine villages are Sùng Vành, Sùng Vui, Láo Vàng, Tủi Mần, Trung Liềng, Lò Suối Tủng, Khú Trù, Trung Hồ, and Láo Sáng. CENDI and LISO alliance follow community-based and customary-based land and forest allocation approach, which encourages community participation together with stakeholders in the process.

III - Changes, that affect project implementation

Due to the process of rearrangement of forest location and exchanging land areas conducted by the Bat Xat district Management Board for Protection Forest (MBPF), there was not any plot of forestland which is as large as 500 hectares available for a community, as it was expected in the initial proposal. The MBPF is trying to complete demarcation and re-mapping on the basis of returning the current cultivating field near residential areas to the local people and taking land covering with forest under the Management Board's control.



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According to this changing plan, the land area available for communities would be reduced. Beside, this arrangement also made community forestland fragmented and scattered in each village. That is why CENDI, community representatives, and local authorities had to adjust and came up with a new agreement to involve 9 villages (instead of the proposed one village). Therefore, according to this adjustment, number of benefited communities and plots of community forestland increased while the allocated land area had to be reduced to around 245 hectares because there is no more forestland plots and areas left for communities in the area. More communities and beneficiaries means the requirement for more energy and efforts from both the technical taskforce and CENDI and the LISO alliance for traveling and working with people in the remote and scattered villages.

Annexes

Annex 1: Pictures of project activities and the target communities



The first survey on community forestland, March 2015



Community forest in Tủ Mần village, taken in March 2015



Discussion at the Phin Ngan communal office, March 2015



Villager present community forestland plots on their drawn map, 11 May 2015



Drawing map of community forestland, 12 May 2015



Presenting results of the study on local customary forestland use and mapping, 15 May 2015



A village meeting with visiting Caritas members, 21 May 2015



Study customary regulations on community forestland management, 6 June 2015



Practical training on using GPS for villagers, 6 June 2015



Villagers and technical taskforce joined field survey, 8 June 2015

**Annex 2: Statistics of the target villages**

Village	Ethnic group	Households	People	Poverty (%)
1. Láo Vàng	Red Dao	48	245	8.3
2. Khú Trù	Red Dao	34	185	38.2
3. Trung Liềng	Red Dao	42	217	19.1
4. Tủi Mẩn	Red Dao	21	108	28.6
5. Lò Suối Tủng	Red Dao	57	308	32.1
6. Láo Sáng	Red Dao	28	153	14.3
7. Trung Hồ	Red Dao	45	264	28.9
8. Sùng Vui	Red Dao	24	117	25.0
9. Sùng Vành	Red Dao	38	218	28.9
Total		337	1,815	30.6

(Source: Phan Dinh Nha. (2015). Báo cáo kết quả khảo sát và thống nhất chủ trương giao đất giao rừng cho cộng đồng ở xã Phìn Ngan, huyện Bát Xát – tỉnh Lào Cai (Report on results of survey and lobby for land and forest allocation for communities in Phin Ngan commune, Bat Xat district, Lao Cai province). Hanoi, Vietnam: CENDI/ LISO archive).