



REDUCING EMISSIONS

FROM DEFORESTATION AND FOREST DEGRADATION

A Community Project of Viet Nam Forestry Science and
Technology Association and UNDP/GEF SGP Viet Nam

VNM/SGP/OP5/Y4/STAR/2014/09



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET



GENERAL INFORMATION

PROJECT DURATION:	1/2015 – 12/2016
LOCATION:	Tả Ngải Chồ Commune, Mường Khương District, Lào Cai Province
PROJECT MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION:	Viet Nam Forestry Science and Technology Association (VIFA)
PARTNERS:	Lào Cai Department of Agriculture and & Development (DARD) People's Committee of Mường Khương District (DPC) People's Committee of Tạ Ngải Chồ Commune (CPC) Mường Khương Protection Forest Management Board (PFMB) Transparency International (TI/IT)

PROJECT BUDGET: *USD 83,574, of which:*

UNDP/GEF SGP:	48,000 USD
VIFA:	8,445 USD
TI/IT:	5,000 USD
Local Communities:	4,246 USD
CPC:	3,066 USD
DARD :	14,817 USD



PROJECT CONTEXT

Recognizing the important role of forests in sustainable development, Viet Nam has implemented a number of forest policies and programs, including the current UN-REDD+ Program Phase II under Decision No. 1214/QĐ-TTg dated 23 July 2013 of the Prime Minister and Decision No. 1724/QĐ-BNN-HTQT dated 29 July 2013 of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Lào Cai is one of the provinces selected for the pilot implementation of the REDD+ Program.



Project Kick-off Meeting on 19 March 2015 at Tả Ngải Chồ CPC



The Project Steering Committee meets at the UN House in Kim Ma, Hanoi



Specific objectives of the project

1. Improving the awareness of communities in Tả Ngải Chồ Commune and relevant stakeholder groups of the roles, benefits and obligations of all the parties, particularly of the local communities, in the formulation and implementation of the Forest Protection and Development Plan (FPDP);
2. Formulating and implementing an FPDP that will contribute to minimizing forest deforestation and degradation at Tả Ngải Chồ Commune;
3. Developing, operating and transferring a model for the Community Livelihood Development Fund (CLDF) that will contribute to the sustainable and effective implementation of the FPDP;
4. Developing and testing Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) for project activities;
5. Drawing lessons from the project for sharing and replicating the pilot models.

MAIN ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES

3.1. TRAINING TO RAISE AWARENESS OF COMMUNITIES



- The project has organized training courses to raise awareness of the communities and stakeholders of policies and laws of the State, the role and benefits of forests, the content of forest protection and development tasks, and advanced techniques in planting and breeding to develop family livelihoods.

3.2. DEVELOP & IMPLEMENT THE FOREST PROTECTION & DEVELOPMENT PLAN (FPDP)



- The Forest Protection and Development Plan (FPDP) of Tả Ngải Chồ Commune was established by a bottom-up approach, starting with community meetings in 12 villages to discuss and create community consensus, which was then consolidated into a common plan for the whole commune. All stakeholders consulted on the draft plan before it was approved by District People's Committee.

3.3. DEVELOPING LIVELIHOOD MODELS

- Tasks leading up to livelihood development models included
 - » Assessment of specific natural and socio-economic conditions of the commune;
 - » Identification of the needs of the community and selection of suitable livelihood development models;
 - » Raising awareness and providing technical training to develop the models;
 - » Monitoring and evaluation;
 - » Summing up, drawing experience, and transferring and replicating models.



- The livelihood development models were built by assessing the specific conditions of each village and the needs of the community as selected by the people, the project support needs and technical trainings for the villagers to implement. The selected models included: anise planting, new maize variety planting, Mường Khương pig raising and native chicken raising.



Maize Planting Model in Village Sừ Ma Tùng A

3.4. DEVELOPING THE COMMUNITY LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT FUND (CLDF)

- The Community Livelihood Development Fund (CLDF) was built from propaganda to raise awareness of people and stakeholders about the project's support through lending rather than grants; to guide the formulation of regulations on the management and use of the fund and the mechanism for operating the Fund; to mobilize capital for the fund and organize the operation of the fund; and to draw experience and transfer the fund to the community for direct management by the village.



3.5. PILOT A GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM (GRM)

- The project has, in collaboration with Transparency International (TI/TT) and related organizations such as Lào Cai Legal Assistance Center, Lào Cai Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), People's Inspectorate, People's Council of Mường Khương District and Tả Ngải Chồ Commune, designed and piloted a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) for the development and implementation of the FPDP, including the development of livelihood models, in order to help local people participate directly in monitoring the implementation of activities at the commune and in providing feedback to the stakeholder organisations.



MAJOR RESULTS

4.1. AWARENESS RAISING



The project has organized 14 training courses with 374 participants, contributing significantly to awareness among the community and stakeholders about the role and benefits of the forest and State policies and laws on forestry.



The project has developed a TV film report and a series of articles in the local Lào Cai newspaper, as well as articles in the Journal Forest & Environment, on the VIFA website, in the UN-REDD Newsletter, and at COP 21.



The project produced a wide range of materials with rich content and briefings of FPDPs in 12 villages and a summary of the communal Forest Protection and Development Fund to be broadcast on commune loudspeaker and disseminated in commune and village meetings. At the model sites, signs and billboards introduce the models for wide dissemination among the people.

REDD+ targets. The main contents of the plan are being implemented with priority activities contributing to the protection of the existing forests of the commune. All 12 villages have forest protection groups and community awareness of forest protection has improved, with active and responsible participation of local people and stakeholders. If the FPDP is continuously well implemented, there will be prospects of high efficiency and practicality.

- The FPDP of Tả Ngải Chồ Commune was approved by the Mường Khương DPC in Decision 394/QĐ-UB on 30 September 2015 as a basis for mobilizing resources for the implementation of activities to prevent deforestation and forest degradation of communities in Tả Ngải Chồ Commune. The Tả Ngải Chồ CPC has issued decisions to set up FPDP Development and Implementation Teams in 12 villages and a Communal FPDP Development and Implementation Committee; to strengthen 12 forest protection groups for 12 villages; and to purchase equipment for forest protection.



Activities on Implementation of the FPDP

4.2. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT THE FPDP

- The FPDP of Tả Ngải Chồ Commune was developed by communities in 12 villages of the commune, with the participation of the Tả Ngải Chồ CPC, Mường Khương DPC and Mường Khương PFMB to create consensus from the authority to community.
- The FPDP is developed on the basis of the natural potentials and socio-economic status of the commune, reflecting the needs of the people and consistent with the development orientation of the locality, ensuring the principle of integrating

- Implementing the FPDP for the two years 2015–2016, Tả Ngải Chồ Commune has well protected the existing 1,071 hectares of forests, including 577.4 hectares of natural forests; newly planted 20 hectares of anise forest a, 20 hectares of concentrated forests and 25 hectares of scattered *Aleurites montana*. The commune has also enriched the forest by planting medicinal plants (e.g., purple hyacinth) under the forest canopy (3.6 hectares) and 25 hectares of fruit trees. The commune has allocated 270.28 hectares of forest and forest land to households and contracted with 12 villages to protect 541.5 hectares of protection forest, and has implemented livelihood development models, including maize planting, Mường Khương pig raising and native chicken raising, as well as performing forest patrol, forest protection, and forest fire prevention.

4.3. DEVELOPING LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT MODELS

Within the framework of the FPDP of Tả Ngải Chồ Commune, the project has piloted four livelihood models:



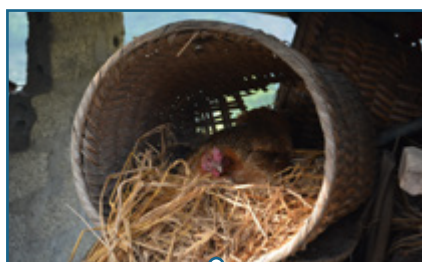
ANISE-PLANTING MODEL

30 households in three villages: Tả Lủ, Sín Chải A and Sín Chải B successfully planted 20 hectares of plant growth, with a survival rate well over 90 per cent. Communities are in need of additional planting.



MAIZE-PLANTING MODEL

10 households in village Sừ Ma Tùng A planted 2 hectares with 42 kilograms of seed, and harvested over 11 tons of maize. After harvest, each household contributed 500,000 VND to continue to expand the model to the next households.



CHICKEN-RAISING MODEL

20 households in Thành Chư Pển village raised 1000 chickens in the first phase. At the end of the first phase, each household contributed 200,000 VND to breed for the second phase. An egg incubator with a capacity of 3000 eggs per batch was delivered to the village to actively supply chickens to the community and has stable operation.



MUONG KHUONG PIG-RAISING MODEL

in Bàn Phố village with 10 households in the first phase, each household was supported with 1 pig; after the first year, 26 piglets were produced and transferred to other households for the second phase. However, due to limited care, a relatively high percentage of piglets died (16 of 26).

Livelihood development models and the Community Livelihood Development Fund have achieved their project objectives. The models and the fund have been handed over to villagers under the supervision of local authorities. These are important results contributing to successful implementation of the project.

The livelihood development models were designed in a clear and practical manner and implemented with the participation of local people and related organisations, with high consensus. While the content of the models was not entirely new, but the direction of applying advanced techniques to production was innovative. The models incorporated detailed implementation regulations and proper organization of production with appropriate varieties and scales. The initial results, though still limited, have shown that a novel approach can help improve community responsibility and ensure sustainability (rotation of benefits). Successful models and replication in the commune will provide considerable income, contributing to the improvement of people's livelihoods and reducing pressure on forest resources.

4.4. DEVELOPING THE COMMUNITY LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT FUND (CLDF)

- In order to create a sustainable financial mechanism that contributes to FPDP implementation, the project has piloted the Community Livelihood Development Fund (CLDF). The regulation on management and use of the CLDF was developed by the residents of 12 villages with the support of the project and approved by the CPC in Decision No. 48E/QĐ-UB dated 19 September 2015. The CPC issued Decision No. 48D/QĐ-UB establishing CLDF management boards in 12 villages, each with three members, of which the head is the chairperson of the village women's union and the other two members are elected by villagers.

Although the CLDF scale is still small, people have used it for right purposes and it has been very effective. This is the beginning of new thinking about new ways of doing business for the people here.

- VIFA has cooperated with donors and DARD to mobilize various sources of funds to set up the initial CLDF of 394,200,000 VND , including: 150,000,000 VND provided by the project, 87,200,000 VND for building the livelihood development models and 157,000,000 VND for forest protection in 2015 from Mường Khương PFMB. Funds were loaned by CLDF management boards to 49 households for livelihood development including Mường Khương pig raising and local chicken raising.

The CLDF has been established, operated and transferred to the villages. Although the scale is still small, people have used it for right purposes and it has been very effective. This is the beginning of new thinking about new ways of doing business for the people here.

The development of the models and the CLDF have helped raise awareness in a project area where 100 per cent of the population are H'Mong people. The project has helped them better understand the role and benefits of forests, identify problems that need to be addressed, and create unity around an enhanced sense of responsibility among the households participating in the project—thus facilitating the implementation of other projects later.

4.5. PILOT GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM (GRM)

- A citizen-based Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) has been established to help local people participate directly in monitoring and tracking the implementation of commune activities and providing feedback to stakeholders on the process of development and implementation of the FPDP, including the building of livelihood development models.
- The project supports channels of communication that people can use to express their opinions and ideas with responsible individuals and organizations. A widely disseminated list of parties responsible for each type of work includes phone numbers for direct communication. However, direct individual feedback has so far been limited, with the habits and traditions of the local people favoring communication at village meetings, conferences, seminars and trainings.

The results of the project are institutionalized

1. Decision No. 48A/QĐ-UBND dated 19/9/2015 of Tả Ngải Chồ CPC on the establishment of M&E Team for development and implementation of FPDP
2. Decision No. 48B/QĐ-UBND dated 19/9/2015 of Tả Ngải Chồ CPC on the establishment of the FPDP implementation Teams in 12 villages
3. Decision No. 48C/QĐ-UBND dated 19/9/2015 of Tả Ngải Chồ CPC on the establishment of Communal FPDP implementation Board
4. Decision 394/QĐ-UB dated 30/9/2015 of People's Committee of Mường Khương district on approval of FPDP of Tả Ngải Chồ Commune
5. Decision No. 48D/QĐ-UBND dated 19/9/2015 of Tả Ngải Chồ CPC on the establishment of Community Livelihood Development Fund Management Board for 12 Villages
6. Decision No. 48E/QĐ-UBND dated 19/9/2015 of Tả Ngải Chồ CPC on the Promulgating the Regulation on management and use of the Community Livelihood Development Fund



IMPACT OF THE PROJECT



5.2. SOCIAL IMPACTS

- Communication and awareness raising throughout the two years of project implementation has had positive impacts on many different actors: people have gained knowledge about their roles, rights and obligations in the development and implementation of the FPDP. While participation of women in training courses is limited due perhaps to hesitation, habit or tradition while women are in reality key implementers of the livelihoods models.



- The project has significantly contributed to raising the awareness of the community & stakeholders of the role and benefits of forest and State policy and law on forestry. During the two years of project implementation, no violations of the Law on Forest Protection and Development occurred in the commune, whereas before the project the commune had an average of two violations per year.



5.1. ECONOMIC IMPACTS

- The FPDP is developed close to the needs of the people, with the potential of the market to bring income from products such as anise, purple cardamom and tangerine. While the anise planting model needs additional time to show results, 60 households have already benefited directly from the project, contributing to the improvement of family life.
- The livelihood development fund has given 49 households a second loan to raise pigs and chickens, an average of 3,000,000 VND per household, providing access to capital to extend their production.

“60 households have already benefited directly from the project”

5.3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

- The FPDP has been well implemented, with some targets exceeding plan goals, including anise planting area, reforestation and forest protection. There were no forest fires in the commune during program implementation. People actively participate in livelihood development models to stabilize their lives, reduce pressure on forest resources, and gradually improve the environment for future generations



SUSTAINABILITY

- **The FPDP was developed and implemented** with the direct participation of the local people; all results are theirs, so they contribute voluntarily, with a high degree of enthusiasm and responsibility—an important factor in ensuring the sustainability of the project.
- **The livelihood development models** are maintained and expanded by village communities. After the project's completion, a second crop of maize was planted; pig raising increased from 10 pigs in 10 households increased to 137 pigs in 50 households; chicken raising has gradually stabilized (using local chickens and an incubator in the village works well). The need to expand planting of anise and medicinal plants are being discussed with the related organisations for support and implementation.
- **Community livelihood development funds** have been transferred to the villages for direct management, with rotating leadership following project completion.
- **The CLDF has mobilized the contributions of many parties**, creating a sense of coherence, sustainability and increased responsibility for all. In the long term, the fund will mobilize funds from the budget for forest protection and development, as well as annual payments for environmental services and other sources to maintain and develop the fund on a sustainable basis.



Village Leaders Sign a Commitment to Maintain and Expand Project Results

LESSONS LEARNED

01

The participation, discussion and consensus of the community in developing and implementing the FPDP is a good practice. People found their opinions respected, the plan was built with their efforts and knowledge, they were directly involved in the implementation, and they were the beneficiaries of the resulting achievements. It is therefore motivating to get people involved and, when they are aware of their involvement, they will engage in all activities voluntarily in a spirit of high responsibility and self-discipline and as they make progress for themselves and their communities.

The involvement, from the beginning, of the relevant departments of communes, districts and provinces, as well as the community as a whole, provided the conditions for all parties to understand the work and ensured their willingness to participate. It made it possible to integrate specific tasks and activities from different programs and projects into the FPDP and ensured the openness and transparency necessary for all stakeholders to monitor and follow up on the implementation process. This was a significant factor in determining the feasibility and effectiveness of the plan.



02

The community livelihood development models were discussed and selected by the communities themselves, which was a key factor in making the models succeed. This approach promoted the participation of households with high responsibility and facilitated the spread and replication of models across the commune.

The livelihood development models should incorporate the specific characteristics of the locality: In cultivation, attention should be paid to sloping land cultivation techniques to limit soil erosion, soil wash-out and soil degradation. In livestock, it is necessary to pay attention to the selection of varieties and breeding techniques to meet the real conditions, ability and technical level of the people. Extreme weather conditions and difficulties in accessing technical services such as veterinary and plant protection should be included to ensure the success of the model in reducing pressure on forest resources.

The development of village-based models is appropriate. To ensure sustainability, groups of households or cooperative groups can be established to share experiences and support each other in the production and consumption of products, especially in accessing technical services (e.g., seeds, intensive farming techniques, disease prevention).

03

The Community Livelihood Development Fund (CLDF) is a necessary innovative way of doing business for upland people to develop commercial production from small to large scale on the basis of established economic accounting practices. As they accumulate experience and confidence in their abilities, they can borrow additional resources to develop their livelihood. However, it is necessary to



monitor the operation of the fund and to review and evaluate after the end of a loan cycle to draw experience and improve the management and use of the Fund through mechanisms such as loan amount, loan term, interest rate, etc., to ensure effectiveness and sustainability.

The CLDF needs to have concrete, clear regulations and a simple and transparent lending mechanism. The loan amount should be based on demand and actual conditions of each household to ensure its ability to recover and provide sustainability. Besides the self-management mechanisms of the village, there should be close monitoring and supervision by the commune authorities

Through a change of awareness of villagers and local authorities in the mode of assistance from free supply to recurring loans through revolving funds, people of upland ethnic-minority communities have committed to return the product to the community and continue to support other households. With the commitment of local authorities, sectors and the people, the models will be maintained and developed sustainably; this approach can be applied to other localities with similar conditions.

Participants in the design and implementation of livelihood models and the CLDF, from the PSC to experts, field staff, relevant agencies, and the people, must understand clearly the content, specific activities and approaches as well as the method of organizing the implementation of models and the fund; they must have sufficient capacity, knowledge and experience to be able to handle and work efficiently within the implementation process.



04

Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) are very new in Viet Nam in general, and especially in ethnic minority areas such as Tà Ngải Chồ. To implement them effectively takes a long time, with appropriate content, methods and a roadmap to changing awareness step by step, towards new attitudes and behaviors of people and stakeholders at all levels.

The design, construction and operation of the GRM must take into account specific features of the locality, in terms of natural and socio-economic conditions, especially the ethnicity, traditional culture, customs and habits of living and production of the people. This is also a factor for the local community to participate effectively and to ensure the sustainability of the mechanism.

The close collaboration of stakeholders, especially the active participation of the authorities at all levels and departments from commune to district, and the enthusiasm and self-participation of local people are very important factors to ensure the success of the formulation and operation of the mechanism.

After implementation, the GRM must be regularly monitored and evaluated to draw experience from all participants and continue to be amended, supplemented and finalized. The MFM of local communities can be very effective for forest-protection and development activities in particular, because they are closest to the forest, even in the most remote and difficult areas. The CPS of Tà Ngải Chồ commune and other local stakeholders should continue with this.

05

Communication and training are indispensable activities and must be conducted regularly with simple, specific and practical content; the method should be easy to understand, especially for communities with ethnic-minority populations such as Tà Ngải Chồ, in order to raise the people's levels of awareness and responsibility, and to remind them to fulfill their obligations. When people understand their obligations, responsibilities and rights, they will participate enthusiastically with high responsibility.

Regular and continuous technical training with diversified forms and awareness raising are essential. It is particularly important to improve the capacity and responsibility of village leaders because they have a direct impact on the community. Project results need to be replicated to contribute to raising awareness and capacity building of village communities in the implementation of forest protection and development policies.

06

The close collaboration of related organisations, especially the active participation of Tà Ngải Chồ CPC and other local departments from commune to district and province, was very important to ensure the success of the program. The high sense of responsibility, devotion to the community and good technical capacity of VIFA were key factors contributing to the success of this project to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in anticipation of UN-REDD+.

RESOURCES

For documents, workshop reports, video and photos of the project, visit the project website at <http://baovemoitruong.org.vn/>.

Full reports on Develop and implement the Forest Protection and Development Plan; Livelihood Development Models; Grievance Redness Mechanism are available in Vietnamese

For a film about the project, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ppckCWE2o>.





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