

Completion of the Climate Change and Ethnic Minorities Project

By Arafa Khatib

ADDA's project coordinator in Vietnam

The CEMI project Climate Change and Ethnic Minorities has focused on improving the ability of ethnic minorities to influence local politics in relation to consequences of climate change in northern Vietnam. It is located in the provinces Dien Bien, Lai Chau and Son La, an area affected by widespread erosion due to climate change and inappropriate cultivation methods used in the mountainous and hilly terrain.

We have focused on capacity building, and with the use of field schools, we have trained peasant groups in climate change issues, practical training in climate-friendly farming methods, as well as organized dialogue meetings including local authorities to promote their influence. The climate-adapted farming methods introduced to the farmers through the project included System of Rice Intensification - SRI Method. Using this method, farmers have learned to reduce their consumption of pesticides, fertilizers and water consumption.



Training farmers in the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) The SRI method, which helps the farmers to reduce their consumption of pesticides, fertilizers and water consumption.

The project has also had a regional and an international focus on representing ethnic minorities, first in national media campaigns and since in international workshops and conferences.

An overall purpose has been to encourage farmers to access information on local, national and international climate policies. Furthermore, they have strengthened their influence on local climate policies and planning of natural resource management in relation to climate change, food security and poverty reduction.

The project has achieved very good results. The local communities today have a better knowledge of - and better access to information about climate change. In some areas the farmers have succeeded in influencing the planning of natural resource management in adapting to climate change.

Satisfaction among the municipal authorities

Another important result is, that the local authorities in some municipalities have already incorporated the project model, including the farmer field school training and dialogue meetings, etc. in their forward-looking socioeconomic development plans. This documents that local authorities in the municipalities have been very pleased with the various activities of the project. And they have been inspired and have hosted various courses for the employees in many places to introduce them to the different solutions for climate adaptation in agriculture.

Mekong Resource Forum and the final workshop

PanNature is part of the Mekong Resource Forum network, which also includes partners from Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia. As a crucial activity to strengthen advocacy, PanNature has been the leader of a conference "Mekong Resource Forum III - Development Impacts and Resilience in Agriculture and Forestry". The conference was held in Hoa Binh province having about 150 participants. Former Project Manager, Marianne Jensby participated on behalf of ADDA, Denmark. She spoke about climate-smart agriculture and presented practical experiences from the CEMI project. The ADDA Vietnam office also participated. At the conference, participants exchanged experiences of good practices in agriculture and forestry for small farmers in promoting the resistance and adaptation of cultivation methods to climate change.



The conference opened the opportunity to discuss alternative development strategies to ensure farmers equal access to natural resources, improve livelihood and quality of life, and ensure sustainability. The program included a field excursion, in which the participants visited ADDA's ecological project in order to see in practice, how to work with climate-friendly farming methods.

The projects provides concrete results

The CEMI project was highly pleased at the final workshop in Lai Chau province, by the representatives of the project's stakeholders from all three provinces. A very important result is the exchange of knowledge and experience that has taken place between the different levels of public administration during the

project. Both at municipality and district level there has been a lot of hands-on in relation to different activities, dialogue meetings, etc. Subsequently, they have shared their experiences with the managing authorities at the provincial level. The various administrative levels have done lobbying in identifying opportunities to support locals in the remote mountain regions.

Local residents, local authorities, local partners, PanNature and ADDA are very pleased with the results achieved in the CEMI project over the past three years. There is great support and commitment to carry on the ongoing processes in the three provinces. At the request of farmers and local partners in the provinces, ADDA and PanNature will now formulate a new project to further continue the results already achieved.



Maize cultivation on hillside of Lai Chau. In the CEMI project, the training during the field schools included the intercropping - i.e. co-cultivation with alternately rows of maize and soybeans, as well as the use of other methods to prevent soil erosion such as grass zones and fruit trees.