



SOCIAL FORESTRY IN ASEAN:

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**SUSTAINING  
COLLABORATIVE  
AND INNOVATIVE  
PEOPLE-CENTERED  
ACTIONS**

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A CSO FORUM REPORT





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**Sustaining Collaborative and  
Innovative People-Centered Actions**

A CSO Forum Report

Civil Society Organizations Forum on  
Social Forestry in ASEAN (CSO Forum)

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Social Forestry in ASEAN:

# **Sustaining Collaborative and Innovative People-Centered Actions**

A CSO Forum Report



**CSO FORUM  
ON SOCIAL  
FORESTRY  
IN ASEAN**

This report contains an overview of the social forestry and climate change action from the civil society perspective in Southeast Asia.

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photo by Leonard Reyes, NTFP-EP Asia



# INTRODUCTION



photo by Gordon Thomas, PACOS Trust

## THE CONTEXT

Forests provide rural economies with a variety of support in terms of economic growth, employment, food security, including climate change mitigation and adaptation. The World Bank estimates that more than 1.6 billion people (Forest Peoples Programme, 2012) across the globe depend on forests for their livelihoods on varying degrees. From the overall estimates, researches and statistics suggest that indigenous peoples living in and around the forest account to a range of 200 million (Forest Peoples Programme, 2011) to 370 million. Working and living closely within the forest, they are the key holders, purveyors and practitioners of traditional knowledge on different aspects about forests; and they are the harvesters and protectors of resources such as food, medicinal plants, and other NTFPs that can be found in the forest. (NTFP-EP, 2018) Yet, they represent a significant proportion of the most vulnerable and threatened populations in the world and in ASEAN.

With the proper support, platform and recognition for local communities and indigenous peoples living in and are dependent on forests, their contribution towards the protection and sustainable management of forests can be harnessed fully.

There are rich experiences, innovations and lessons learned by CSOs, indigenous peoples and local communities that work together on sustainable forest management, promotion of traditional ecological knowledge, sustainable non-timber forest enterprises and safeguarding community, biodiversity and carbon in REDD+ implementation, including climate change

At the global level, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which highlight goals agreed by countries, emphasized the important contribution and role of CSOs, indigenous peoples and local communities in achieving its targets until 2030 towards ending poverty, protecting the planet and ensuring prosperity for all. While all the SDGs are important, the CSO Forum on Social Forestry in ASEAN's collective work converges around ending poverty (SDG1), zero-hunger (SDG2), climate action (SDG13), life on land (SDG15), and partnerships for goals (SDG17).

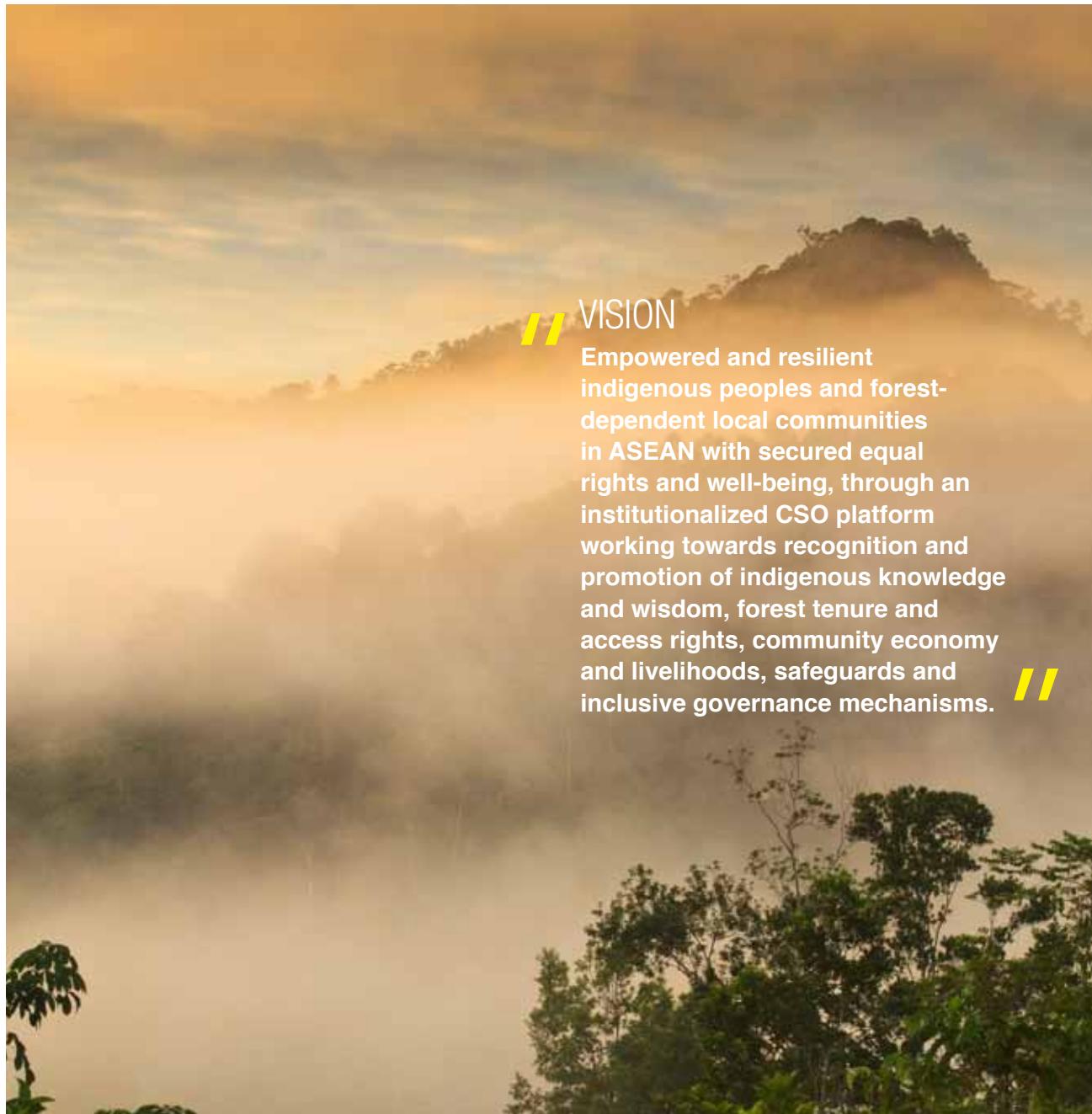
The role of forests, local communities and indigenous peoples is also prominent in the Paris Agreement and which called for, among others, the transition from Intended NDCs to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). NDCs shall spell out national committed strategies and actions to reduce emissions to mitigate climate change, through among others social forestry program actions. At the recently concluded 23rd Conference of Parties of the UNFCCC in Bonn the establishment of a Facilitative Working Group for the operationalization of the Local Communities' and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP) was considered. Three main functions of the platform was established: knowledge space; building indigenous capacity for engagement; and facilitation of engagement of local and indigenous communities in climate change policies and actions.

ASEAN's Cooperation on Forestry has also spelled out a Plan of Action (PoA) on Social Forestry aiming to see that forest resources are sustainably managed to meet the needs of present and future generations and to contribute positively to sustainable development. The PoA includes action programs on sustainable forest management, trade facilitation and increasing competitiveness, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and capacity building. Through the ASEAN-Swiss Partnership on Social Forestry and Climate Change (ASFCC), the CSO Forum has been given a vital opportunity to engage and contribute meaningfully to this plan of action. At the same time, the CSO Forum engagement and participation in national and global SF and CC processes as well as with the ASEAN Working Group on Social Forestry (AWG-SF) and other stakeholders, may offer a critical voice to ensure that social forestry in ASEAN is truly community-centered and "provides for the engagement, empowerment, benefit and access to forest resources for their participation in sustainable forest management"

## ABOUT THE CSO FORUM

Since its establishment in 2012, the Civil Society Organizations Forum on Social Forestry (CSO Forum) in ASEAN has served as a platform for local communities, indigenous people's organizations, and civil society organizations to communicate key messages to the ASEAN member states through the ASEAN Working Group on Social Forestry (AWG-SF). The Forum was also considered as a regular event prior to the

AWG-SF Conference and Annual Meetings. The platform has contributed to a more people-centered forestry in ASEAN particularly sharing policy lessons and field experiences on the themes of Community Economy and Livelihoods, Forest Tenure and Access Rights, Governance Mechanisms, and Safeguards. The Forum has been annually participated in by up to 50 organizations from 8 countries in Southeast Asia.



### VISION

**Empowered and resilient indigenous peoples and forest-dependent local communities in ASEAN with secured equal rights and well-being, through an institutionalized CSO platform working towards recognition and promotion of indigenous knowledge and wisdom, forest tenure and access rights, community economy and livelihoods, safeguards and inclusive governance mechanisms.**

## TIMELINE

**2011**



10 organizations  
in 8 countries



### ASFN CSO Brown Bag

Bandar Seri Begawan,  
Brunei Darussalam

- NTFP-EP engaged in NGO Open Space during the ASFN Conference

**2012**



30 delegates  
from 8 countries



### 1st CSO Forum

Siem Reap, Cambodia

- Shared key thematic concerns on ASEAN engagement on consolidating recommendations calls presented

**2013**



40 organizations  
in 8 countries



### 2nd CSO Forum

Siem Reap, Cambodia

- Developed country roadmaps and plans and identified capacity gaps and support needed

**2014**



40 organizations  
in 8 countries



### 3rd CSO Forum

Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia

Co-organizers:  
JOAS Malaysia, PACOS Trust & NTFP-EP Malaysia

- Released the ASFN CSO Forum Working Papers & significant calls were adopted by the ASFN

**2015**



80 delegates from  
60 organizations  
in 8 countries



### 4th CSO Forum

Inle Lake, Myanmar

Co-organizer:  
Promotion of Indigenous and Nature Together (POINT)

- Ensued thematic action plans for collaborative action and support

**2016**



40 delegates from  
28 organizations  
in 8 countries



### 5th CSO Forum

Palawan, Philippines

- Affirmed the CSO Forum on Social Forestry in ASEAN vision with corresponding strategic plans;
- Raised recommendations based on four thematic areas to ASFN

**2017**



60 delegates from  
40 organizations  
in 8 countries



### 6th CSO Forum

Chiang Mai, Thailand

Co-organizers:  
Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), Indigenous Peoples' Foundation for Education and the Environment (IPF), Inter Mountain Peoples Education and Culture in Thailand Association (IMPECT) & the Indigenous Women's Network of Thailand (IWNT)

- Built capacity on relevant experience on social forestry implementation and communication
- Shared country updates underscoring national and sub-national developments.
- Elevated key recommendations to the AWG-SF

## GOALS & TARGETS

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The CSO Forum's collaborative multi-sectoral engagements have continuously been advocating and successfully pushing for recommendations at the regional level. Majority of these calls were adopted by the AWGSF in its annual conference and meeting, and subsequently elevated to the ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry (ASOF).

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### Community Economy & Livelihoods

*Sustainable community forest-based livelihoods in ASEAN secured and self-reliant community forest enterprises effectively engaging and equitably benefitting from trade through mainstreaming in ASEAN economic policies & programs.*

#### Targets

1. Improved policy and policy support on securing and promoting community forestry livelihoods
  2. Enhanced value chain management, partnership, incentive and support services for community forestry enterprise
  3. Improved knowledge and capacities on community forestry livelihoods and enterprises of Community Forestry groups
  4. Sustained consumer campaign on green and fair community products
  5. Enhanced knowledge in AEC including impacts and opportunities
  6. Protected IPR of local communities depending on chosen IPR strategy of community (not necessarily WIPO framework)
  7. Monitored indicators for the AWG-SF adopted strategies especially for community economy and livelihood
- 



### Forest Tenure & Access Rights

*Government establishing and enforcing laws and regulations that ensure and protect indigenous peoples and local communities' access and tenure rights to their community-managed forest and customary lands.*

#### Targets

1. Established a lobby platform in ASEAN/AWG-SF on sustained dialogue on rights and access of indigenous and forest-based communities mechanism on tenure and forest access to promote awareness raising and advocacy and strategy development
  2. Established a knowledge sharing / learning
  3. Contributed to securing community land titles and community forest agreements
-



## Governance Mechanisms

*Realization of self-mobilization of indigenous peoples and local communities and their organizations towards participatory and effective forest governance.*

### Targets

1. Established official regular mechanisms for stakeholder and civil society engagement at the country and ASEAN level
  2. Supported local and provincial and national working groups with resources and capacity building programs
  3. Monitored the achievement of national CF targets by reporting for each country
  4. Established and expanded clearer definition of SF in protected areas/ customary forest/ land
- 



## Safeguards

*Recognition of customary forests and the adoption and implementation of FPIC in line with the UNDRIP as a minimum standard as well as development of safeguard policies, measures, and mechanisms on social forestry.*

### Targets

1. Established an ASEAN FPIC Guidelines for IPs and other forest dependent communities ensuring full and effective participation in decision making processes
  2. Ensured and monitored safeguard implementation by the ASEAN Multi-stakeholder body to oversee / monitor safeguards implementation (e.g. private sector investments in forestry and agro-industries)
  3. Established a Regional Forest Related Grievance Mechanism
-

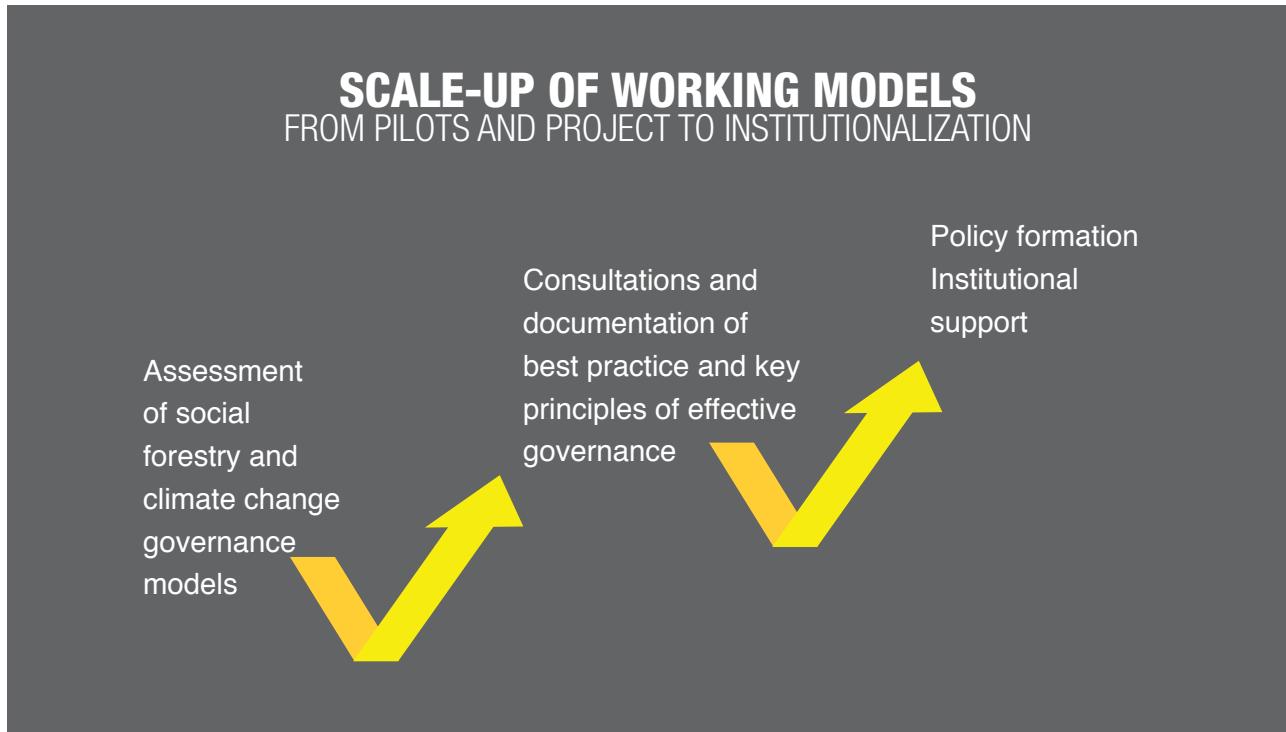
## ENGAGEMENT MODEL

Under the auspices of the ASEAN-Swiss Partnership on Social Forestry and Climate Change (ASFCC), the CSO Forum committed to engage with the AWG-SF towards the common objectives of: (1) Developing and integrating social forestry approaches into the climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies of ASEAN and its Member States and (2) Ensuring that socio-economic benefits are derived from the meaningful inclusion of the communities, women and vulnerable groups in social forestry and climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.

This approach is summarized in Figure 1 below.

Regular mechanisms for stakeholder and civil society engagement with the AWG-SF have been set up as precedent to the achievement of its goals. These mechanisms have been initially proposed as:

- Working in CSO Forum Thematic and Country Teams ,
- CSO Forum participating in and supporting AWG-SF annual activities,
- Contributions to National AWG-SF teams or through social forestry multistakeholder bodies with policy support and project roles,
- Using an evidence-based approach to policy development supported by research, project practice and field activities; and
- Capacity-building and learning activities on SF related and thematic activities.



**Figure 1** Scale-up of working models from pilots and project to institutionalization

# PROGRESS REPORT

The CSO Forum has come far as a regional platform for knowledge sharing. Back in 2011, it started with we started with 10 organizations in a brown bag discussion with ASEAN Member State Representatives in Brunei. Today the CSO Forum has over 60 organizations hailing from 8 countries from ASEAN collaborating with key stakeholders towards common goals. The CSO Forum has succeeded in bringing together diverse organisations driven by the common goal of mainstreaming people-centered actions in thematic areas of social forestry and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Over the years, the CSO Forum made significant progress in 8 countries in Southeast Asia, with particular focus on four key thematic areas.

This report provides a detailed overview of the CSO Forum's achievements in each of the thematic areas at the regional and national levels.

## THEMATIC REPORTS

The past seven years have been a period of important accomplishments for the CSO Forum. Monitoring of progress for each thematic area has been guided by the following questions:

1. *What have been the achievements in the past 5-7 years against the CSO Forum targets?*
2. *What has been the role and contribution of AWG-SF in these achievements?*
3. *What has been the impact in communities?*
4. *What do you think would be the major challenges confronting social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*
5. *What are key opportunities for now until 2025?*



# Community Economy & Livelihoods

The Goal of the CSO Forum for Community Economy and Livelihood (CEL) is that “Sustainable community forest based livelihoods in ASEAN are secured and that self reliant CFEs are effectively engaging and equitably benefitting from trade through mainstreaming in ASEAN economic policies and programs”

photo by Earl Diaz, NTFP-EP Asia



01

*What have been the achievements in the past 5-7 years against the CSO Forum targets?*

## Targets

1. Improved policy and policy support on securing and promoting community forestry livelihoods

## Updates

- By engaging the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (ACCMSME), the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Agricultural Cooperatives (ASWGAC) and other NTFP-EP and partners, the CSO Forum has obtained greater capacity engage more with the ASEAN bodies and the ASEAN secretariat in addition to the AWG-SF, gaining more in roads with the ASEAN economic division especially.
- Members of the CSO forum have been able to negotiate for supportive livelihood policies such as delayed transport permit costs for community forest honey enterprises in Cambodia. In Indonesia, similarly, planned taxes on forest honey harvests were also waived.
- The National Commission on Culture and Arts (NCCA) in the Philippines is promoting Schools of Living Tradition and has a 5 year program from capacity building to marketing to

make local products, including NTFPs sold from indigenous artisans truly respected and economically viable. Indonesian, Malaysian and Laos partners are interested to learn about these policies and programs.

2. Enhanced value chain management, partnership, incentive and support services for community forestry enterprise
  - NTFP-EP has continued with its training wing EXCEED which has been able to reach out to 100 participants from eight countries 51% CSOs, 39.8% communities and 9.18% ASEAN government officials. Thus capacity has been built in the fields of community livelihood appraisal, and product scanning, strategic marketing and retailing, upscaling, starting a community based NTFP business and women entrepreneurship. An incubation study (2017), reflected in the recent IIED publication, as well as an assessment of EXCEED (2018) were done and will be the basis for future strategies.
  - Value Chain studies on Nutmeg and Sago are being done in Indonesia.
3. Improved knowledge and capacities on community forestry livelihoods and enterprises of Community Forestry groups
  - Inputs and capacity building on alternative certification systems such as the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) and Fair Trade have been delivered during a recent training in Myanmar.
  - Support has been provided to civil society partners in Laos for native beekeeping training and exchange with Vietnamese experts. In May 2018, 140 participants, largely community members from more than 14 provinces in Laos received more knowledge and skills during the first National Laos forest honey workshop held in Xiengkhouang province. Capacity building upgrade is also being designed with the University of Laos to be included in their curriculum on beekeeping.
4. Sustained consumer campaign on green and fair community products
  - The Panen Raya Nusantara (PARARA) local products festival and marketplace featuring also CFE products, took place in 2015 and 2017 engaging an increasing number of private sector, local and national government stakeholders and at least 3,000-5,000 consumers at each event. The events have been able to mobilize 26 NGOs in supporting over 100 community enterprise groups.
  - A regional marketing platform for crafts: Meet the Makers (MTM) Singapore was organized in 2017 in cooperation with digital handmade crafts business Coopita. This involved close to 30 artisans from 8 Asian countries. Products from some partners are now already featured at the Green Collective shop in a newly renovated mall in Singapore. Meet The Makers Singapore also brought more synergy with the National Commission for Culture and Arts (NCCA) Philippines

- who also sponsored ASEAN artisans to Philippine events.
- The Forest Harvest Collective Mark (FBCM), a community forest trademark, was developed and is being tested as a means to further differentiate local, NTFP based community products.
5. Enhanced knowledge in AEC including impacts and opportunities
- AEC policy briefs have been translated to 6 languages (English, Filipino, Bahasa, Khmer, Lao, and Vietnamese) and disseminated across ASEAN countries, shared on radio shows, various multi-stakeholder sessions etc.
6. Protected IPR of local communities depending on chosen IPR strategy of community (not necessarily WIPO framework)
- Community Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) webinars have been conducted.
  - Inputs to IPR options for the Dayak Benuaq leaf fiber based cloth “tenun doyo” have been provided in East Kalimantan.
- 

02

*What has been the role and contribution of AWG-SF in these achievements?*

- AWG-SF has facilitated participation of ASEAN Member States in EXCEED trainings (and funded their participation in the first training).
  - AWG-SF secretariat has facilitated in the engagement with ACCMSMEs.
  - AWG-SF participated in Community Forestry Enterprises festival/PARARA.
- 

03

*What has been the impact in communities?*

- There seems to be more appreciation in creative economy products like crafts. This may partially be due to the emergent and stronger creative economy movements in national institutions.
- More opportunities for national/regional work on marketing CFE products (e.g. PARARA, Coopita, etc.)
- Further recognition has been gained from ACCMSMEs of the importance of CFEs as part of their agenda and thus the interest to promote a joint proposal.
- Increased pride, confidence and inspiration for new CFEs.

**04**

*What do you think would be the major challenges confronting social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- Continued dominance of private sector in forestry landscape without the just and swift process of recognition of customary forest
- Corporate take over of plantation companies over community land and unfair contracts reducing farmers and IPs to be laborers in their own lands
- Slow and bureaucratic process of existing social forestry regimes
- Lack or minimal funds to implement SF
- Lack of political will of some local officials to implement SF
- Lack of capacity of CFEs to run forest based enterprises
- Lack of consistent and sustained support and connectivity for NTFP value chains

**05**

*What are key opportunities for now until 2025?*

- The alignment of SDGs with SF
- SF programs are emerging and evolving in most ASEAN countries with stronger support from national governments.
- SF stakeholders are learning through programs like AWG-SF and NTFP-EP
- Bridge partnership and collaboration between ASEAN bodies, eg. ACCMSME and the AWG-SF.
- Realize intersectoral collaboration towards the strengthening of CFE voice and tap opportunities including possible long-term markets.
- Mainstreaming community forestry enterprises in ASEAN's regional plans, economic policies and programs



photo by Wahyu Widhi, Landscape Indonesia



## Forest Tenure & Access Rights

Tenure refers to a bundle of rights that includes: access, use or withdrawal, management, exclusion and alienation (FAO 2006; RRI 2014 from Yasmi et. al., 2017). Several studies have already affirmed that having a secured tenure reduces risk and attracts sustainable forest management investments (RRI, various publications).

In terms of forest tenure and access rights, the CSO Forum envisions to see governments in ASEAN region establishing and enforcing laws and regulations that ensure and protect indigenous peoples and local communities' access and tenure rights to their community-managed forest and customary lands.

As early as 2014, several priority issues affecting indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities in forest tenure and access rights have been identified (CSO Forum, 2014) that needs to be addressed in order to achieve the above-mentioned vision:

- Insufficient protection of livelihoods:
- Rapid development in indigenous peoples' and forest dependent communities'
- Territories
- Challenges to implementation of laws and policies
- Establishment and expansion of national parks and conservation areas in territories of indigenous peoples and forest dependent communities without their FPIC
- Absence or weak recognition of tenure of indigenous peoples and local communities conserved areas and territories and their associated traditional knowledge, making forest dependent communities more vulnerable to conflicts due to public and private development projects.



*What have been the  
achievements in the past  
5-7 years against the CSO  
Forum targets?*

| Targets  | Updates   |
|--|---|
| 1. Established a lobby platform in ASEAN/ AWG-SF on sustained dialogue on rights and access of indigenous and forest-based communities                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the regional level, the CSO Forum</li> <li>Regularly brought the tenure and access rights theme to AWG-SF annual activities</li> </ul>  |
| 2. Established a knowledge sharing / learning mechanism on tenure and forest access to promote awareness raising and advocacy and strategy development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of an Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICCA) Regional Learning Network across 5 countries to exchange information, tools and strategies on supporting territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities'</li> <li>In Vietnam, FORLAND has and continue to solicit feedback from communities, CSOs and the scientific community to provide a mandated and evidence-based response on the revised law</li> <li>In Laos, Initial advocacy efforts yield the inclusion of communal/collective land titling within the draft revision of the land law. In terms of forest governance, the government is interested in the FLEGT--VPA process.</li> <li>In Thailand, there are initiatives and gains on policies such as forestry law and the Constitution (2017 Constitution, Article 258) that focuses on equitable land allocation</li> <li>Malaysia: Advocating social forestry and traditional knowledge and practice on resource use and management as a means to further secure tenure and access rights. The establishment of Sabah Social Forestry Network (Sasof) that recognize 'tagal hutan' or traditional knowledge and practice on forest within its TOR. Additionally, • there are on-going plans to pursue joint implementation and continued lobby on the 10-year Strategic Plan of Action (SPA) on SF</li> </ul> |

- 3. Contributed to securing community land titles and community forest agreements
  - In Indonesia, social forestry is now part of the Nationally Determine Contribution (NDC) of the country. The Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF) has released new regulation number 83 in 2016 to streamline the process for community forestry application. This regulation is a giant leap to accelerate the expansion of Social Forestry in Indonesia, which has targeted 12.7 million hectares. Government responded to revision of regulations and policies in SF in provincial level. Nine indigenous communities in Indonesia received customary titles to manage their customary forests, responding to judicial review 45 (Primadona, 2017). The registration with the Customary Land Registration Board has resulted to 665 customary land submissions to the board covering 7.4 million hectares. Another 200 communities are being assisted to register their customary land with the Board – mapping and related data collection.
  - In the Philippines, the CSO Forum has been supporting the advocacy for the passage of the ICCA Bill which will give ICCAs the same stature as a Protected Area but governed and managed by IPLCs.
  - In Malaysia, tenure and access rights have been clearly defined as key strategic areas of concern within the jointly developed 10-year Strategic Plan of Action on Social Forestry by the NRE
  - In Laos, there have been revisions in the land law to include customary land rights. The Land Information Working Group is preparing a response in relation to Decree 84 for the Secretariat of the Land law Revising Committee

02

## *What has been the role and contribution of AWG-SF in these achievements?*

- The AWG-SF provides a strategic window and link for the CSO Forum to connect with AWG-SF focal points and leaders to discuss and deliver the key messages that it has developed and recommendations, particularly of critical policy inputs on SF/ CF to an even higher regional body in ASEAN (ASOF, AMAF)
- AWG-SF was also instrumental in linking its social forestry partners e.g. CSOs, Indigenous Peoples and local communities to important regional bodies (e.g. Adhoc steering committee on climate change and food security), and strategic partners, such as the ASFCC
- Through its Secretariat and AWG-SF focal points, they are effective partners in mobilizing and leveraging resources (technical, financial) to implement tenure related programs and activities at the regional and national levels

**OB***What has been the impact in communities?***1. Formulating/ amending/ implementing policies**

- There is an improvement in social forest programs in the concession areas for forest management unit holders (Malaysia) and several initiatives to develop community-based forest management models, such as village forestry (Lao PDR) officially adopted for community forestry. However, village forests only exist as a landuse category and very few community forest lands are covered by official land-use titles. Village forestry is considered a process rather than a predetermined output and consists of a range of approaches to people-oriented forest management with different levels of participation.
- Several countries such as Myanmar, Indonesia, and the Philippines has continuously implement policies that facilitates social forestry, granting of tenurial instruments for example, Community Based Forest Management Agreements for CBFM peoples organizations in the Philippines, community forestry certificates in Myanmar, and Hutan Kemasyarakatan (community-based forestry) and Hutan Desa (village forestry), as well as Hutan Tanaman Rakyat (community-based plantations).

**2. Recognizing community rights or access to forest resources**

- Last 2017, the recognition of the rights of Ethnic Minority (EM) over their customary forests have been successfully lobbied by CIRUM and LandNet in cooperation with LISO. Several provisions on the law include legal recognition of EM as forest owners, legal rights to receive forest protection payments (e.g. Payment for Ecosystem Services), and legal recognition of customary law in forest land allocation and forest management to name a few. The SF/CF target for countries such as Indonesia and Cambodia have increased, which affirms trust in indigenous and local communities as vital stewards of ASEAN forests.
- In Sabah's domestic Forest Reserve (FR), the rights of the communities have been recognized to access and sustainable uses the area.

### **3. Strengthening community capacity and resilience to climate change**

- In Indonesia, the INDC also includes tenure security as one of the foundations for a climate-resilient society and plans to build social resilience through capacity development of the community to participate in local planning processes to ensure access to key natural resources.
- In Lao PDR- implementing REDD-plus pilot activities since 2009. In 2010, Lao PDR became a pilot country under the FIP. In 2015, targeted support under the UN-REDD Programme was approved for forestry sector planning and capacity building of national and provincial government authorities on issues of forest land and resource governance, and participatory forest management
- In Malaysia, the implementation of EU- REDD pilot activity has been occurring since 2014. Three government agencies collaborating on this program with specific themes in each plot sites (watershed enrichment, ecological linkages and wildlife corridor). Participation of indigenous people and local community has increased after the establishment of community development unit under the Sabah Forestry Department (SFD).
- In Myanmar, the National Land Use Policy (2016) was drafted in the aim to promote sustainable land management; protect the environment and natural resources; address the impacts of climate change and natural disasters; and improve food security, as well as improve tenure security; recognize and protect customary land tenure rights; and promote participatory decision-making.

### **4. Expanding/increasing social forestry areas**

- In Indonesia, the positive benefits of social forestry are not realized if they remain only as targets.
- In Myanmar, there are plans by 2020 to pass a Land Law that recognizes customary land-use systems, develop procedures to allow registration of communal customary tenure and recognize customary and communal land tenure in relevant laws, dispute resolution mechanisms and land-use planning processes.
- In Sabah, Malaysia, tagal system has been recognised by several government agencies especially on traditional practices, stewardship of their resources and community enterprises (ecotourism).

04

*What do you think would be the major challenges confronting social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- Slow pace in terms of SF/CF implementation against national AMS targets, creating confusion over community forest rule and regulation
- Lack of sub-national and national database on CF/SF, for instance, in Lao PDR's village forestry
- Several shifts in policy and administration tends to also shift focus
- Official recognition of tenure security for SF/CF are weak and unclear in some areas – One of the conclusions of the early findings on the state of the land in Mekong report (Ingalls et. al., 2018) for instance underscores the increase in the inequality in land distribution, with a reduction of small-holders land holdings size on one side, and with a large proportion of agricultural land given in concessions, resulting in a boom in commodity/ export crops. Community rights differs per state (Malaysia).
- Challenges include being able to sustain social forestry without external support.
- Mobilizing and generating internal resources to sustain tenure and access rights programs

05

*What are key opportunities for now until 2025?*

- Creating and enforcing laws and regulations that ensure and protect indigenous peoples and local communities' access and tenure rights to their community-managed forest and customary lands
- Recognizing and putting in place policies that establish and support co-management, indigenous peoples and local communities conserved areas and territories; and other proven management and governance arrangements in forested landscapes
- Supporting the establishment of co-management areas, indigenous peoples and local communities' conserved areas and territories, and other proven management and governance arrangements in forested landscapes;
- Sustaining and strengthening a dialogue/ platform in ASEAN/AWG-SF on rights and access of indigenous peoples and local communities;
- Ensuring customary tenure rights and access rights to forest and farmland including shifting cultivation areas, are secured, including those who are within protected and conservation areas
- Ensuring processes for securing communal land titles are faster, streamlined and more efficient
- Strictly monitor development instruments to ensure that they all respect existing laws in newly identified social forestry areas, customary tenure and practices
- Providing financial and technical support to indigenous peoples, local communities, and forest and farm producers through operationalizing the ASEAN Social Forestry Trust Fund.
- Expanding opportunities for CSOs, indigenous peoples, and local communities to participate in decision making



## Governance Mechanisms

“Forest governance” is defined as how decisions are made about forests and the resources found therein, who shapes these decisions, and the process going about making these decisions. (2009. WRI). It is about the combination of actors, the rules and the practice of decision-making about forests and not just the operational or management aspect of it. The CSO Forum has decided to focus on the mechanisms or the process that enable governance over community forests.

Our goal was to see that local and indigenous communities are able to mobilize themselves and their support organizations towards their full and effective participation and representation in forest governance. The CSO Forum deems that participatory, inclusive and effective forest governance mechanisms at all levels (local, national and regional) are crucial to the success of social/community forestry.

We aimed to see that the following key issues in forest governance be addressed:

- State laws have not prioritized or given due attention to social forestry – setting low targets or they have high targets but are slow in meeting them. The political will does not match the goals set.
- Communities are often unable to develop their own plans due to complex technical and financial requirements in social/ community forestry. There is lack of support and programs for strengthening community organizations and CF processes.
- Representation of forest user groups and of women are lacking in sub-national or national structures to govern over forests and have oversight over the national social forestry programs. There is less support in building or strengthening local leadership and structures.
- There is lack of information or poor disclosure of issuance of licenses, permits, concessions and plans that may potentially conflict or threaten the status of community forestry.

01

*What have been the  
achievements in the past  
5-7 years against the CSO  
Forum targets?*

Targets

1. Established official regular mechanisms for stakeholder and civil society engagement at the country and ASEAN level

Updates

- Majority of ASEAN countries have established official – national and sub-national SF multistakeholder working groups (Cambodia, Myanmar, Malaysia, Philippines), or specific sub-committees / task groups on related programs such as REDD+ (Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia), reforestation/ regreening program (Philippines, Vietnam), FLEGT-VPA (Vietnam, Laos, Malaysia), NTFPs (Philippines, Lao PDR, Indonesia), and consultative or technical working groups that provide for representation of local and indigenous communities. Women representation however, is still lacking in these groups.
  - The ASEAN Working Group on Social Forestry (AWG-SF) upgraded from the ASEAN Social Forestry Network (ASFN), with a committed Plan of Action (POA) until 2020. Annual reporting towards the POA are undertaken and includes civil society contribution and examples of collaboration.
- 
- Capacity-building support is available for social forestry and REDD-plus programs through external support and through general appropriation budgets (Cambodia, Philippines). The AWG-SF Strategic Response Fund (ASRF) has been channeled for a number of learning initiatives including on strengthening governance and stakeholder engagement to accelerate social forestry (Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia). However, resources remain limited to be able to achieve fully the target for granting areas under social forestry. Social forestry programs still rely heavily on international and development funds to meet its targets.

3. Monitored the achievement of national CF targets by reporting for each country
  - As of 2016, social forestry progress has reached at least 50% of the total target of around 20M hectares in ASEAN, not including the increased commitment of Indonesia of another 10.2M hectares by 2019. The accomplishment of 50% now down to 30% with the increased target of Indonesia, has been slow and the resources required are considerable with several steps and requirements to meet. However, a few countries have taken remarkable leaps, for example in Indonesia, following a landmark Constitutional Court decision in 2014 to relinquish control of customary forests, President Joko Widodo announced yet again in 2016, the recognition of nine additional village forests (hutan desa) covering a total of 80,228 hectares. In 2014, the President first formally handed over nine customary forest (hutan adat) certificates covering a total land area of 13,100 and an additional nine customary forests (hutan adat) covering 3,341 hectares again in December 2016. At that time, Indonesia stepped up its target of social forestry to 2019 to up to 12.7M hectares from 2.5 M hectares
  - On the other hand, also in late 2016, Malaysia's federal court ruling defeated the bid of Dayaks to apply for native customary rights (NCR). This bid weakens the position for customary forest management even in States like Sarawak where NCR have been strongly pushed by indigenous people.
  - Monitoring and accessibility of data of community forestry remains largely difficult – sometimes data is not even available, eg. Laos. Cambodia, on the other hand has maintained its annual reporting of CF statistics and collaborate with NGOs to produce the annual statistics. Thailand has a website where an update of registered CF can be found. A regional situation analysis produced by RECOFTC in coordination with the country CF departments, are available. We hope these continue to be supported and coordinated.

4. Established and expanded clearer definition of SF in protected areas/ customary forest/ land
- There are variations of social forestry definitions across ASEAN but they all agree on the basic tenet of engaging local people in the sustainable management of forest resources. These typically include the rights to utilize timber and non-timber products for domestic consumption or commercial purposes, the rights to participate in decision-making on forest use, and occasionally the rights to lease, inherit, transfer or use the land as collateral (RECOFTC, 2017). In others, it extends to agroforestry activities but does not take a position about rotational farming / shifting cultivation. Where the definition is also commonly silent is of community managed forests definition also being located within designated protected areas, nature reserves, national parks, and inclusive of local and indigenous community conserved areas (ICCAs), however under a different institutional mandate other than forestry. In Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, they maybe under the environment ministry or department rather than forestry. With these added scope of community forests, there are possible overlaps that need clear institutional arrangement. In some countries like Cambodia, comparable guidelines to CF, on process and procedures of establishing community protected areas have been developed, and collaborative management as another model of forest and protected area management of communities and local/state authorities are introduced in a new draft natural resources and environment code.

02

### *What has been the role and contribution of AWG-SF in these achievements?*

- The AWG-SF leaders and focal points serve as champions of social forestry in their country. They have been active in particular in facilitating the set-up of the multi-stakeholder and technical working groups. Setting up the groups facilitates the institutionalization of the CF programs. The focal points manage the CF secretariat functions.
- They facilitate the key actions and the mobilization of resources for these.
- They facilitate the resourcing of activities especially capacity building and organizational development.
- They take coordinative functions in various activities in social forestry programs.

03

## *What has been the impact in communities?*

### **1. Formulating/ amending/ implementing policies**

- Space and attention to community rights also has given a push for improvements in the operational aspects (eg. amendments to the guidelines and procedures for community forestry in Cambodia), making new guidelines on procedures and process for establishing community protected areas (Cambodia), and reviewing the laws (eg. Forestry Law in Vietnam), pushing for policy harmonization (eg. Cambodia's environmental code, Indonesia's integrated performance targets under an Environmental Partnership, Philippines' green bills)

### **2. Recognizing community rights or access to forest resources**

- Areas continue to increase, albeit still slow but improving in terms of complexity of requirements and bureaucracy. The threat of other land uses particular those of higher perceived economic contribution such as larger infrastructure projects or agribusiness keep community forests vulnerable. Where there is project support for CF, communities are better mobilized to reduce illegal activities within the areas, installing boundaries, organizational development activities and general coordination and liaison work, ie conducting various meeting with stakeholders, etc. In Cambodia for example, CSO/NGO dialogue with Government agencies (MoE, MAFF, MRD, MoI and MLUPC) regularly assess trends of social forestry (SF) and livelihoods. Some interventions and commitment are being made by the line-ministries including: cancelling economic land concessions, conserving forest areas by setting a target of over 6 million hectares as protected forest and speeding up communal land titling process...etc.

### **3. Expanding/increasing social forestry areas**

- While there is a slow increase in social forestry areas, there has been an expanded target in some countries like Indonesia. The positive benefits of social forestry are not realized if they remain only as targets.

### **4. Improving forest governance**

- Sub-national committees and capacity building programs through projects to strengthen CF organizations although increased women participation and representation needs more investment. Local communities are involved actively in forest protection, such as forest patrol to prevent illegal logging and forest fires. In Indonesia, they cited good

collaboration of CF organizations with NGOs; they have intensive communication and dialogue with decision makers around improving forest governance and law enforcement. In the Philippines, the interim National Governing Board on Forest Certification was created with the National Federation of CBFM Peoples Organizations as member Discussion on FLEGT is being pushed by the DENR-Forest Management Bureau.Nationwide formulation of Ancestral domain Sustainable development and protection plans (ADSPP) and Forest Land Use plans.

• 04

*What do you think would be the major challenges confronting social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- Challenges include being able to sustain social forestry without external support.
- Mobilizing and generating internal resources to sustain the social forestry programs
- Political agendas
- State-sanctioned direct foreign investments and bilateral agreements (eg. One belt, One Road China investment plan)
- Limited capacity in monitoring company projects ascribed in investment contracts and existing legal framework, and qualifications for conducting and/or reviewing environmental impact assessment (EIAs).
- A number of policy gaps have been found such as: overlapping claims by communities and concessionaires, complex procedures of community forestry (CF) and community protected areas (CPA) registration, lack of a comprehensive land use plan, lack of a framework to resolve forest conflicts, presence of weak policies to enhance community forest-based enterprises and livelihoods.
- Shifts in the form of government and leadership, eg. in the Philippines from democratic to proposed federalism
- Presidential policy through recent public statements: a) Offering ancestral land to agribusiness b) Declaring Mindanao region as Land Reform Area for Oil Palm and Rubber; could be used as an instrument of further land dispossession, if not addressed
- Poor implementation of ancestral domain recognition and titling process.
- Minimal if not lack of support for ADSPP and implementation
- Passage of Bangsamoro Basic Law without full inclusion of IP rights
- Poor implementation of CBFM, REDD-plus and other programs in the country
- Lack of support for green and people - oriented bills

**05**

## *What are key opportunities for now until 2025?*

- Operationalizing the National Multistakeholder Working Groups on Social Forestry and Climate Change and equipping them with tools and appropriate information to contribute forestry components in the NDCs.
- For civil society and indigenous peoples, the Local Community and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP) in the UNFCCC framework
- Strategic mobilization of resources
- Enhancing cooperation or extension of multistakeholder communication to private sector – an area for relationship building
- Enhancing collaborative management models
- ASEAN SF adopted policies on social forestry and enterprise, which can be used to advance social/community forestry agenda
- Various funds and opportunities for multistakeholder partnerships- People's Survival Fund, Green Climate Fund, and others for community forestry and climate change/ ecosystem-based adaptation/ mitigation activities, REDD-plus performance-based implementation.



photo by Leonard Reyes, NTFP-EP Asia



## Safeguards

For indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs), forests have social, cultural, spiritual, economic and medicinal values. Safeguards are measures to protect indigenous peoples and local communities from the possible negative impacts of external intervention. These measures should not be limited to avoiding harm or doing no harm, but should bring benefit to IPLCs. Compliance with safeguard measures have become central elements in forestry and climate change agreements and framework, such as in the implementation of REDD-plus.

Countries to be eligible for results-based for undertaking REDD-plus activities have to provide the most recent summary of information on how the safeguards are being addressed and respected all its REDD+ activities. The safeguards referred to here are the seven safeguards agreed by parties in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP 16 in Cancun. These include transparency, respect for the knowledge and rights of IPLCs, and the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular, IPLCs. Noting that requirement takes into account relevant international obligations, national circumstances and laws. Further recognizing the role IPLCs in responding to Climate Change, the Paris Agreement mandated the establishment of indigenous peoples and local communities' platform for exchange of experience and best practices on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Primordial to the full and effective participation of IPLCs is recognition of their right to say yes or no to any intervention affecting their lands, resources and way of life or using their indigenous knowledge, systems and practices, referred to as their right to free, prior and informed consent under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The right to FPIC is meant to allow for indigenous peoples to reach consensus and make decisions according to their customary/traditional systems of decision-making. The Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has also recognized that indigenous, local and traditional knowledge systems and practices are one major source for adapting to climate change (Assessment Reports 5 and 6).

The CSO Forum works towards the adoption and implementation of FPIC as a minimum safeguard measure of IPLCs in interventions on social forestry and climate change or related thereto. This includes a mechanism of implementation and monitoring safeguard compliance to be guided by a set of regional criteria and indicators. Social and environmental safeguards as well as safeguards on the disclosure of information, dispute settlement and mechanisms related to sanctions upon violation are also sought for at the regional level (Safeguards Working Paper, CSO Forum, 2014). In 2017, the CSO Forum agreed on working towards the one target which is on Establishing ASEAN FPIC Guidelines for indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities ensuring full and effective participation in decision-making processes.

01

## *What have been the achievements in the past 5-7 years against the CSO Forum targets?*

Developments on the recognition of the rights of IPLCs to FPIC at the national level has been slow. However, there is progress in participation of IPLCs in the context of REDD-plus readiness driven by projects such as UN-REDD or court mandated in the case of Indonesia with the government compliance with the Constitutional court decision recognizing customary lands. In addition, there are significant developments related to right to FPIC and the right to be consulted.

In Myanmar, the Forest Department, working with the REDD-plus Core Unit has developed a social and environmental safeguards for Myanmar's National REDD-plus program, where the program requires the FPIC of IPLCs or any activities affecting their rights to land and resources. FPIC applies to both the design and implementation of the REDD-plus Program. Under this, it is the community's role to define a process for FPIC ensuring that the process accounts for the participation of women and marginalized groups. Furthermore, the safeguards framework has included both formal land titles and customary tenure rights to land and resources as basis for ownership of carbon rights. The National Land Use Policy (2016) recognizes and protects customary land tenure rights and stated that FPIC should be included in the EIA process. Moreover, the National Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the Strategic Framework for National Environment Policy requires public consultation.

In Cambodia: The development of REDD-plus safeguards framework and Safeguard Information System (SIS) included participation and inputs from indigenous peoples and local communities. Cambodia has submitted its FRL to UNFCCC on a volunteer basis in the context of results-based payments for REDD-plus; FPIC is incorporated on current policies on land (PA law), forestry, protected areas, fisheries and in the overall national environment code that is currently being finalized, along with a bundle of laws on natural resources bigger than the existing laws. The draft Environmental Impact Assessment Law includes FPIC and guidelines for public participation.

In Indonesia, the new policy on social Forestry (UU 83 Thn 2016) gives easier access to the community to manage their own resources, the Socialization sections under this policy includes FPIC principle Social Forestry whole at the local level in West Sumatra, there is a SRAP where FPIC is used as the main instrument

In Vietnam, while the legal framework do not have an official recognition nor definition of 'indigenous peoples' due to the country's specific political and economic condition, the term indigenous peoples or Ethnic Minorities appeared in the new National REDD+ action plan towards 2030 (Decision No.419/QD-TTg dated 5th April 2017 by Prime Minister) and an article in this Decision by the Prime Minister emphasized their role and participation in the REDD-plus implementation; The country has just signed the FLEGT/VPA and the requirement of timber

legality, and also have an indicator relating to IPs and local community rights have to be complied. The Payment for Forest Ecosystem Services (PFES) Monitoring and Evaluation System has an indicator for enhancing transparency, democracy and equity in PFES implementation and Benefit Sharing.

In the Philippines, a revised Guidelines on FPIC (2012) and guidelines on documentation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices and Customary laws and were issued by National Commission of Indigenous People (NCIP), the government focal agency on IPs, following a review and assessment of the 2006 FPIC Guidelines. Renewal of the CBFM agreements has also required FPIC of IPs if such social forestry areas are also within ancestral domain areas. Moreover, international donors have required certification of FPIC compliance issued by NCIP for their projects; The proposed REDD-plus safeguards framework and guidelines and SIS included FPIC and development of this framework includes participation and inputs from indigenous peoples and local communities

In Laos, indigenous people are not recognized by government and local communities and possess very limited right to advocate for their rights. FPIC was initially piloted through the GIZ project on Climate Protection through Avoided Deforestation (CliPAD). The FPIC process has been endorsed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and guided by the REDD-plus Task Force. Safeguard policies such as FPIC and benefit sharing are still for consideration by the government in the land and forestry laws revision process.

In Thailand, the Article 70, of the 2017 Constitution promotes the right of ethnic groups to exercise their culture, customary way of life, as long as it will not harm with peace, moral, national security and health.

However, the previous Thai Constitution (1996 and 2006) mentioned community rights but this is not included in the latest constitution. This variance between ethnic rights and traditional community rights can have negative implications for IPLCs.

At the regional level, the work towards developing an ASEAN FPIC Guidelines kicked off in 2017 by a levelling-off workshop with CSO representatives. The process included stocktaking on national Enabling Policies and Experiences on consultation process for Indigenous Peoples, FPIC Implementation, and coming up common approach and key elements for FPIC principle at the ASEAN level as a safeguard for forestry and climate change related activities. A representative from the NCIP, Philippines provided a government's perspective on implementing FPIC at the national level and shared challenges and constraints encountered in implementing FPIC process. Recommendations in developing the regional guideline should identify clearly who should be consulted, the sufficient time for the communities to decide, and the appropriate venue for the consultation. On the technical aspect, the guidelines should consider including provision on FPIC process, grievance mechanism, and project implementation monitoring. There is an expression of strong need to capacitate both communities and government agencies on FPIC.

**02**

## *What has been the role and contribution of AWG-SF in these achievements?*

The AWG-SF has provided a responsive platform on this target. In June 2013, AWG-SF has recommended that at the operational level, FPIC should be set as a minimum standard requirement for implementation of social forestry and REDD-plus. This recommendation was subsequently adopted by the ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry (ASOF) 2013 Strategy on Social Forestry in Climate Change & Biodiversity Conservation and endorsed the recognition and the enforcement of indigenous peoples' territories and customary forests and that communities should not be separated.

In 2015, the AWG-SF encouraged ASEAN Member States to establish grievance mechanisms at multiple levels to address local peoples' concerns and conflicts related to land and forest and establish mechanism and develop operational guidelines for implementing social and environmental safeguards for social forestry. It was also in this context that the recommendation to AMS to develop FPIC guidelines for forestry, including SF/CF, building on the lessons from REDD-plus (ASFN Recommendations, 2015) were made. The AWG-SF has reiterated the importance of a grievance mechanism in the context of forest land restoration programs, recommending accessible and effective community grievance mechanisms to be put in place in ASEAN members states, ensure that any forest landscape restoration and management initiatives, plans and programs secure FPIC of indigenous peoples under UNDRIP.

In the aspect of Governance, tenure and institutional reforms , it has encouraged ASEAN member states to continue to develop national guidelines on FPIC with the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and Develop and implement national policies that take into account the UN Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure (VGGT) and REDD+ Cancun safeguards. (AWG-SF Recommendations, 2017)

**03***What has been the impact in communities?***1. Formulating/ amending/ implementing policies**

There are very few enabling laws and policies for the consultation and participation of indigenous peoples in decision making at the national and subnational level ( Philippines) but the many countries ( Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam) are in the process of amending key land, forest and biodiversity legislation, and as this are also REDD+ countries, consultation and participation of indigenous peoples, and to the full extent- FPIC as safeguards are being incorporate. Participation of grassroots democracy in numerous existing policies such as regulation, major laws on biodiversity, forest, and land.

**2. Recognizing community rights or access to forest resources**

Safeguards measures in Laos PDR are important since there are a lot of mega infrastructure projects being applied and planned but little has been discussed or presented about its FPIC on the ground. In the Philippines, local communities who are holders of Community Based Forest Management Agreements within ancestral domains of IPs are required by the DENR to seek the FPIC of the indigenous peoples.

IPs rights to ancestral domains are subject to existing vested rights. Prior to the effectivity of IPRA, or before a CADT was issued, there are instances when DENR had issued various permits, leases and agreements, such as community forest management agreement. It is a good policy development FPIC is now part of the requirements of DENR for renewal of CBFM agreement. But the DENR and CBFM POs are grappling with the process. There are issues on high transaction costs on the process, bureaucratic procedures and inconsistent interpretation. Furthermore, CBFM PO are wary of the possibility of the Indigenous community rejecting their renewal. This is a dilemma of majority of the CBFMA holders who are applying to the DENR for renewal for after 25 years.

04

*What do you think would be the major challenges confronting social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

A national policy on the recognition of the full and effective participation of IPLCS thru FPIC is the best guarantee. However, there is no formal recognition of indigenous peoples, and their rights in the national legal and policy framework (Malaysia, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam) to provide basis for policy work on developing FPIC at the national level. The lack of legal recognition of IPLCs, and as a marginalized group, very limited mobility and resources to advocate for change in policy. There is limited information disclosure related to safeguards measures.

At the community level, there is low awareness on community rights in the national and international laws and policies.

Addressing barriers for communities and CSOs to engage in policy development, support implementation of new policies and monitor its impact on the ground. There were many policies concerned with the promotion of sustainable community-based forest

livelihoods. But the major challenges are also promoted investment policies like land concession for industry trees, plantation, and others which pose as threats to protecting traditional of local communities in Lao PDR. We expect to see the concrete enforcement of laws and just access for local communities regarding to land rights.

In Sabah, Malaysia, the expanding/increasing social forestry areas through the process of degazetting of forest reserve for communal title poses risks to community instead of fully benefiting from it due to political intervention. Political priorities are also an issue in the Philippines with the on-going revision of the 1987 Constitution to make way for the shift in from unitary to federal government. A new constitution threatens to diminish existing rights of IPLCs guaranteed under the current 1987 Constitution, where the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act is anchored with.

05

## What are key opportunities for now until 2025?

In Thailand the Article 70, of the 2017 Constitution promotes the right of ethnic groups to exercise their culture, customary way of life, as long as it will not harm with peace, moral, national security and health.

The engagement of AMS in REDD-plus., preparations of the forestry target for the National Determined Contribution has under the Paris agreement on LULUCF sector has driven progress in the work of Safeguards including participation of IPLCs and FPIC in REDD-plus. The REDD-plus market, global strategy sustainable development, the Green Climate Fund for REDD-plus, and performance-based implementation provide incentives for countries to engage in REDD-plus.

Mainstreaming the recognition of the rights of IPLCs particularly to FPIC in investments impacting on their land and resources and their indigenous knowledge, systems and practices. The CSO Forum participates in the development of ASEAN Guidelines for Responsible Investment in the Food, Agriculture and Forestry. The voluntary guidelines being developed under ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) is to promote investment in food, agriculture, and forestry in the region that contributes to regional economic development, food and nutrition security, food safety and equitable benefits, as well as the sustainable use of natural resources. So far, the draft guidelines recognized the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities through their right to free, prior and informed consent on any investments in their customary lands and forests among others.

The envisioned ASEAN FPIC Guidelines will be in the nature of a regional voluntary guidelines that captures a common approach in understanding and application of full and effective participation of IPLCs thru the FPIC as a principle and as a process. They, however, will not replace existing legal and policy frameworks in countries that are far more advanced (Philippines). However, sustained progress (Myanmar, Cambodia, and Indonesia) can hopefully provide directions to clarify policies on IPLCs in other countries (Vietnam and Thailand); or through open spaces for discussion (Malaysia and Laos).



photo by Earl Diaz, NTFP-EP Asia

## COUNTRY REPORTS

Countries continue promoting social forestry through their various programs, initiatives and projects. A total number of 8 countries have been represented within the CSO Forum: Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. Progress for each country teams have been guided by the following questions:

1. *What are positive changes in social forestry and climate change action in your country in the last 7 years?*
2. *From the Plan of Action on Social Forestry 2016-2020, which of the action programs have you been involved in? how have you been involved? What has been the impact?*
3. *From the recommendations of the ASEAN Working Group on Social Forestry (AWG-SF) adopted in the conference for the past 3 years, which of these have been implemented in your country?*
  - *Sustainable Community forest-based livelihoods in ASEAN*
  - *Assurance and protection of indigenous peoples and local communities' access and tenure rights to their community managed forest and customary lands*
  - *Self-mobilization of indigenous peoples and local communities and their organizations towards participatory and effective forest governance*
  - *Recognition of safeguard policies, measures and mechanisms on social forestry such as FPIC, Benefit Sharing, Community Dispute Resolution*
4. *What could be major challenges confronting social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*
5. *What could be key opportunities for social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025.*



photo by Earl Diaz, NTFP-EP Asia



## Cambodia

01

*What are positive changes  
in social forestry and climate  
change action in your country  
in the last 7 years?*

1. Formulating/ amending/ implementing policies
  - Numerous laws and policies have either been newly drafted or amended in the last 7 years. These include:
    - Natural Resource and Environmental Code (latest draft, version 11th)
    - National REDD Strategy
    - REDD-plus Reference Emission Level submitted to UNFCC
    - The Agriculture Land law
    - National Strategy on Production Forest (drafted)
    - National Strategy on Agroforestry (drafted)
    - The amendments of three laws (Forestry, Fishery and Protected area)
    - Climate Change Action Plan
    - National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
    - Zoning Guidelines on Protected Areas
    - National guideline of public participation on EIA (being finalized)
    - Regional guideline of public participation on EIA (being finalized)
    - Environmental Impact Assessment Law (being finalized)
    - Community Protected Area guideline
    - Establishment of Social and Environmental Fund (sub-degree)
    - Biodiversity Corridors (sub-degree)
2. Expanding/increasing social forestry areas
  - Two important variances signal the increase of community right to forest resources: the government's effort in addressing the opacity of the economic land concession (ELC) and the increase in community forest land areas. On one hand, the contract duration of ELCs was reduced from 99 years to 70 or 50 years. At the same time, 23 ELCs with 90,682 ha (out of 267 ELCs covering 1,523,783. 65 ha) have been cancelled . On the other hand, as of 2018, 610 community forestry (CF) have been established covering the forest land of 506,600.68 ha . Meanwhile, 153 community Protected Areas (CPA) covering 255,076 ha of forest land have been established.



4. Strengthening community resilience to climate change and disaster
  - Two outcomes have been observed. First of all, role of community forestry has been highlighted in the climate change mitigation and adaptation approaches. Secondly, communities have been empowered to negotiate with the local authority to include the climate change adaptation and mitigation into the commune investment plan. IEC materials are, without any doubt, important tools for knowledge transfer.
5. Improving forest governance
  - Institutional rearrangement, having seen the increased roles of the ministry of environment particularly in forest conservation and protection, could be treated as a positive move, given the historical forest commercialization made possible by MaFF. Quite a number of state forested land have been converted to protected areas. The space opened to CSO and local authorities in a type of collaborative management is another example of the improvement of the forest governance in Cambodia. Enabling platforms have been established such as National/Provincial Community Forestry Coordinating Committee, REDD-plus Consultation Group, Environmental Code Technical Working Groups and so on for civil society organizations and other non-governmental actors to participate in policy and strategy formations process.
6. Protecting traditional and sustainable community-based forest livelihoods
  - This is arguably reflected through the provision of communal land titling and the government's enabling policies in establishing the eco-tourism and NTFP enterprises. There have been at least 21 honey groups, 5 Resin groups, 8 bamboo groups and 34 community-based ecotourism (CBET) sites established nationwide.

**02**

*From the Plan of Action on Social Forestry 2016-2020, which of the action programs have you been involved in? how have you been involved? What has been the impact?*

- In terms of mobilization of finance and other resources for enhancing sustainable forest management, Cambodia has set up a regional policy conference on REDD-plus community carbon pool program with a total of 42 participants from Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia and Philippines, including regional, national and sub-national partners in government as well as IP leaders. A key output of the conference was the country action plans drafted by the project implementers and government and community partners for the community carbon pools program. The priority actions of each country plan will further enhance the capacity of forest dependent local and IPs, CSOs, and local governments to participate in REDD-plus policy development.
- A part of contribution to enhancement of forest management involving community living within and surrounding forests. NGOs and CSOs submitted key recommendations to the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) during

the National Forum on National Resources Conservation/ Protection to request financial support to local communities at least UDS 1,000 per year for each community that the Prime minister had approved. Through the amount of funding support, some communities are able to reduce illegal activities within the areas throughout expending number of patrolling day, building community boundary, set-up various meeting with stakeholders, etc.

- Instead of integration of climate change in the forest sector, a series of sub-national dialogues on the function of community forestry over mitigation/adaptation strategies have been organized with community member, local authorities, CSO partners and forestry administration cantonment. The participants were able to define the definition of climate change adaption and mitigation including strategy approaches. Key findings of these workshops will be incorporated into policy development particularly National Forest Programme (NFP).

03

*From the recommendations of the ASEAN Working Group on Social Forestry (AWG-SF) adopted in the conference for the past 3 years, which of these have been implemented in your country?*

1. Sustainable Community forest-based livelihoods in ASEAN
  - The 1st National Community-based Enterprise Forum was set up in order to contribute to the sustainable management of Cambodia's forests while at the same time improving their socio-economic capacities through CBNE participation and development. The forum specifically discussed key development and resources of the NTFPs in Cambodia. The challenges currently faced is the development of recommendations and strategic actions toward better management of the natural resources and the improvement of the NTFP sector to contribute to natural biodiversity system and economic development of Cambodia.
2. Assurance and protection of indigenous peoples and local communities' access and tenure rights to their community managed forest and customary lands
  - CSO/NGO dialogue with Government agencies (MoE, MAFF, MRD, MoI and MLUPC) regularly conducted over the trends of SF and livelihoods. Some intervention and commitment are being made by line-ministries including: cancelling ELC project, conservation of over 6 million hectares forest areas, and the efficiency of communal land titling process, among others.

4. Recognition of safeguard policies, measures and mechanisms on social forestry such as FPIC, Benefit Sharing, Community Dispute Resolution
  - At least, over 158 cases of land disputes were successfully solved in 2016 by the government, while the website of the Ministry of Land Management Urban Planning and Construction recorded 3,335 cases as completely solved by the end of 2015. In 2016, more than 1,000,000 (one million) land titles were handed over to Cambodian people, while in 2015 there were 3.5 million land titles handed over. In total, 4.5 million land titles have been offered to people by the end of 2016.
  - National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) and Safeguard Information System (SIS) are being processed in order to backstop the National REDD-plus strategy. These both mechanisms were initiative by government agencies, FA and MoE, with associated with CSOs. Recently, Cambodia has submitted its FRL to UNFCCC on a volunteer basis in the context of results-based payments for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD-plus). The FRL is a benchmark to assess a country's progress in reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. It is based on historical emission levels and takes into account the national circumstances of the country.



photo by NTFP-EP Cambodia

**04**

*What could be major challenges confronting social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- Although RGC has made such good achievements, there remain a number of challenges requiring solutions. These include the capacity in monitoring company project implementations ascribed in investment contracts and existing legal framework, the on-time and qualified environmental impact assessment
- A number of policy gaps have been found such as: overlapping claims by communities and concessionaires, complex procedures of community forestry (CF) and community protected areas (CPA) registration, lack of a comprehensive land use plan, lack of a framework to resolve forest conflicts, presence of weak policies to enhance community forest-based enterprises etc.
- No national guideline for NTFPs management plan to ensure sustainable harvesting of NTFPs types as well as unclear procedure for Community-based Enterprise (CBE) formalizing (registration, export fee, marketing, certification, product quality .etc.)
- Implementation of forestry and related natural resource management law is still limited. This is complicated by the recent environmental governance reform at the national level which leaves a great amount of uncertainty for law enforcement officers on the ground.
- New business trend, new infrastructure connected among Asia country
- While large scale illegal loggings have decreased due to the government nationwide ban on logging, small scale illegal logging cases are on the increase. A more effective mechanism to address these small-scale loggings, which when aggregated is more destructive than large scale loggings, is needed. If this (small scale illegal logging) continues, the timber and non-timber forest products will decrease, and so as the opportunities to develop and implement meaningful social forestry development initiatives.
- One belt, One Road (China) investment plan

**05**

*What could be key opportunities for social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- The REDD market and global strategy sustainable development
- Private sector partnership for NTFPs product development, sales and distribution
- There is a strong need to develop more public private partnership for non-timber forest products and opportunities that are not completely dependent on forest products such as eco-tourism and sustainable production forestry. CSR is a relatively new concept in Cambodia. The majority of businesses and stakeholders are still not fully aware of the strategic importance of CSR, as a tool to increase the competitiveness at the company as well as at the industry level.
- Development of the collaborative management model under the Cambodian Natural Resources and Environmental Code offers an interesting opportunity for more participation from local communities and civil society to assert more influence. Civil society organizations should seek support/ collaboration with research

institutes/ universities to help provide technical, scientific information to add more credibility to their initiatives or projects.

- There is a stronger need to strategically mobilize human, technical and financial resources amongst civil society organizations including the indigenous people to take full advantage of the recent reform initiatives by the government and development partners. This can ensure that civil society is working together to truly represent local communities and indigenous people.



## Indonesia

01

*What are positive changes  
in social forestry and climate  
change action in your country  
in the last 7 years?*

- Social forestry is part of national government's five year plan (2015-2019). It targets 12.7 million ha of forest area designated and managed by local community. The two years left of the government plan, the target of 12.5 million ha is still far away from what has been expected. Up to recently, the total realization of social forestry in early April 2018 was only 1,500,669 ha. There are some proposal that still in process by April 2018 covering 623 thousand ha and 1.3 million ha of customary forest. It seems difficult to achieve the whole target of 12.7 million ha by 2019. As a result the target has been low into 4.5 million ha by 2019.
- The designation of Hutan adat has been relatively slow. It is accounted that 24,378 ha have been recognized by the presidential decree and targeted 2.2 million ha by 2019. Well said that 2019 will be political year for Indonesia for general election. The national government plans should be implemented by 2019.
- After the Ministry of Environment and forestry (MoEF) issued Regulation No. 83/ 2017 for Social forestry acceleration, there has been an increase in speed for legal documents. The social forestry Indicative maps enable community to identify the opportunity to apply for social forestry. On the other hand, at provincial level, the MoEF established Social forestry Working Groups (POKJA PPS) as extension hand of MoEF for social forestry matter.
- Program support for social forestry management plans have also been in place: support to eco-tourism, agroforestry, social entrepreneurship such as honey, coffee, cocoa and so on. WARSI also promotes the integration of village development plan into the social forestry through the village funds.

02

*From the Plan of Action on Social Forestry 2016-2020, which of the action programs have you been involved in? how have you been involved? What has been the impact?*

WARSI, NTFP-EP Indonesia and other NGOs works intensively on Strategic Thrust 1: Enhancing sustainable forest management, which entails:

- Promoting enhancement of Forest Management involving Community living within and surrounding the Forest for the Sustainability of the Forest and Prosperity of the People. Warsi perceive that recognition of community tenure right is giving real impact on securing community livelihood and forest protection. The positive impact will achieve be achieved when the local community equipped by capacity building and transfer of knowledge and means of support to manage their natural resources.
- Adopting the sustainable management practices for NTFP, such as dragon's blood, rattan and bamboo, forest honey, rubber, variety of fruits and so on. We are quite success developing community enterprises on rattan and meet the buyer from Java. We also facilitate women



group to make handy craft from bamboo and Pandanus. Most of NTFP products are consumed daily basis for food and medicine.

- Embracing local community to involve actively on forest protection, such as forest patrol to prevent illegal logging and forest fire. Having collaboration with other NGOs, NTFP-EP Indonesia, WALHI, and WARSI conduct intensively communication and dialogue with decision maker improving forest governance and law enforcement in Indonesia.
- Mobilizing finance and other resources for enhancing sustainable forest management and development of Forest-based products from Dana Desa (Village funds) by integrating social forestry into village forest development plan.

NTFP-EP Indonesia and WARSI are does not work much on Strategic Thrust no 2 but engage actively on Strategic Thrust 3: Enhancing the forestry sector resilience and role in climate change

- WARSI has piloted a community for PES project on how community conducts initiative on adaptation and mitigation on climate change
- NTFP-EP Indonesia also conducted research on disaster risk reduction and adaptation climate change. We also promote dialogue with Climate change directorate general on how to intensify the social forestry initiative under national REDD-plus framework.

WARSI works closely with Strategic Thrust 4: Institutional strengthening and human resources development

- Support in terms of capacity building and knowledge transfer have been provided to facilitate the community empowerment on managing their forest, improving their livelihood and enhancing their resilience on climate change.



photo by Natasya Muliandari, NTFP-EP Indonesia

03

*From the recommendations of the ASEAN Working Group on Social Forestry (AWG-SF) adopted in the conference for the past 3 years, which of these have been implemented in your country?*

1. Sustainable Community forest-based livelihoods in ASEAN
  - Under coordination of NTFP-EP Indonesia, in middle of October 2017, 26 of Indonesia CSOs and NGOs presented the second PARARA festival in Jakarta. The PARARA is a vehicle to promote, to engage, to collaborate and to expand community products as well as social forestry products to wider stakeholders.
2. Assurance and protection of indigenous peoples and local communities' access and tenure rights to their community managed forest and customary lands
  - Through the Indonesia working group of ICCA (WGII), NTFP-EP Indonesia and member of WGII already documented some ICCAs area in Indonesia and disseminate to wider public as well as Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF). Under WGII, we also already assess national park governance in North Kalimantan province and plans to be hosting a national seminar in this year with MoEF.



photo by Jusupta Tarigan, NTFP-EP Indonesia

**04**

*What do you think would be the major challenges confronting social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

The intention for the welfare of Indonesian people through social forestry has some challenges. The lack of community from access to infrastructure is one of the obstacles to the verification of community groups, and is often the result of delaying the socialization of the program. In addition, oftentimes different priorities and political agendas, particularly at the district and provincial level, have inhibited the process to obtain social forestry permit. Getting a social forestry permit is not the end itself. The future challenge in social forestry is once the access permits are obtained how to implement the goal of social forestry where the forests are sustainable and the people can live a prosperous life that is derived through the business work plan. Research shows that the ability of communities to get benefits from natural resources is also determined by a range of other factors, such as access to information, market, even networks. Therefore, more holistic support is needed for the communities once they obtain their permits, to be able fulfilling the benefit of social forestry initiative. Another challenge is that nowadays social forestry is so massive that there is a possibility that a party may utilize social forestry for land claims while social forestry is a forest management permit for the community. Other challenge is how to prepare these social forestry management institutions to manage independently their forest without relying on many parties such as NGOs or the government. From the policy side of the future challenge is how the government prepares implementative regulations related to technical and financial supports.

**05**

*What could be key opportunities for social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- Enabling policy, technical and financial support for local community to manage forest area will lead to the protection of remaining forest in Indonesia and sustainable forest management
- Achieving the NDC target under the Paris agreement on LULUCF sector
- Community resilience of climate change



## Lao PDR

01

*What are positive changes in social forestry and climate change action in your country in the last 7 years?*

1. Formulating/ amending/ implementing policies
  - A significant number of policies are currently revised and improved to fit models in social forestry and climate change action in Lao PDR. As an example, regulations on lands and forestry are finally on the table for the consideration of the national assembly after years of revision. Some of recommendations from development partners were also taken into account in the drafting of the revised land policies.
2. Expanding/increasing social forestry areas
  - Revisions for currently overlapping laws and regulations regarding land and forest have been happening for about 7 years already.
  - The government of Lao PDR has set a very high expectation to achieve 70% of forest cover by the year 2020. Despite this, there is not much expansion of social forestry areas.
3. Recognizing community rights and/or access to land and forest resources
  - Almost 80% of the country's population are living in mountainous areas and are highly dependent on non-timber forest products
  - A law recognizing the communities' rights on access to land and natural resources that reconciles the tensions between customary law and practice and centralized control of forest and natural resources is yet to be made.

4. Strengthening community resilience to climate change and disaster
  - There were many projects which supported strengthening community's resilience to climate change and disaster like ADB, UNDP, Oxfarm and others as well as Lao local non-profit associations (NPAs)
  - GCA and its partners were implementing good land and forest governance in 15 communities in Northern provinces of Lao PDR. The project is focused on promoting the legal right of ethnic groups to access the natural resources and the sustainable use of natural resources; as well as seeking gender balance in community development, multi-stake holder engagement regarding to the right on land titles, and NTFPs price negotiations and marketing. Ethnic group to access the natural resources and sustainable use of natural resources as well as gender Balance on communities' development and multi-stake holder engagement regarding to the right on land title and NTFPs price negotiated,
5. Improving forest governance
  - Government of Lao PDR was focusing on REDD-plus and FLEGT-VPA to ensure good forest governance.
  - REDD-plus in Lao PDR aims to achieve its purpose by working across multiple sectors and involving multilevel actors in reducing deforestation and forest degradation in tropical countries.
  - By contrast the European Union (EU) action plan on forest law enforcement governance and trade (FLEGT) and its voluntary partnership agreement (VPA) focuses on forestry and functions at bilateral state level. The FLEGT-VPA action plan specifically aims to tackle illegal logging and improving forest governance in country exporting timbers to EU. Since illegal logging is one of the driver of forest degradation, the government of Lao PDR has issued a PM decree to monitor and control timber export.
6. Protecting traditional and sustainable community-based forest livelihoods
  - There are policies in place to promote sustainable community-based forest livelihoods.
  - However, the promotion of investment policies like land concessions for industry, plantations, among others threaten the protection of local communities.
7. Other aspects relevant to your country context
  - There is an expectation to see the concrete laws enforcement and justice access for local communities regarding to land rights.

**02**

*From the Plan of Action on Social Forestry 2016-2020, which of the action programs have you been involved in? how have you been involved? What has been the impact?*

- The growing civil society in Lao has expressed interest and proactively tapped opportunities to be involved
- This openness could best work in collaboration with its national government.

**03**

*From the recommendations of the ASEAN Working Group on Social Forestry (AWG-SF) adopted in the conference for the past 3 years, which of these have been implemented in your country?*

1. Sustainable Community forest-based livelihoods in ASEAN
  - Support has been provided to Green Community Development Association (GCDA) and other Laos partners in Bee training in Xiengkhuang
  - New developments on support for honey/beekeeping groups and network
4. Recognition of safeguard policies, measures and mechanisms on social forestry such as FPIC, Benefit Sharing, Community Dispute Resolution,
  - Many of these are currently on the table for consideration, most especially benefit sharing since the land and forestry laws are in the process of revision

**04**

*What do you think would be the major challenges confronting social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- The civil society in Lao PDR believes there is much they could contribute to the robust commitment to achieve 70% forest cover in the country.
- This entails a healthy level of openness and trust among various stakeholders.
- There is much potential in employing a participatory multi-stakeholder approach given the strongly centralized control on forest and lands in the country.

**05**

*What could be key opportunities for social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- There is a growing platform for CSOs to share and raise their concerned voices towards driving policy changes and practice.
- However, CSOs are yet to participate genuinely in decision-making processes.
- Given the large portion of the country's population who depend on non-timber forest products, the promotion of the community-based forest enterprise could prove to be beneficial both for communities and the government.



## Malaysia

01

*What are positive changes  
in social forestry and climate  
change action in your country  
in the last 7 years?*

1. Formulating/ amending/ implementing policies
  - Currently the Sabah Social forestry roadmap is in the reviewing stage by the Sabah state attorney general. This roadmap are compilation of several meetings that has been held by the Sabah Forest Department (SFD). During the workshop, definition, activities and goals of social forestry especially in Sabah context has been discussed by several stakeholder (government, academia, forest management units [FMUs], NGOs, CSOs, and communities). The roadmap also will be consolidate with other region to form a National Social Forestry framework/policies
  - FMU holders from 2015 until now are starting to improve the implementation of Social Forestry program in their concession. In last three years of PACOS Trust , several FMUs (AFI, Bornion and Sapulut) and SFD have invited them to consult and provide advice to them on working with communities.
2. Expanding/increasing social forestry areas
  - For Sabah, most of the communities that have been affected by the gazettlement of production forest reserves and total protection forest and several communities have different experiences according to the classes of the forest. Although SFD and FMUs holder have initiated the Social Forestry program, there is still room for improvement: by setting-up community enterprises, identification and demarcation of their territories, joint collaboration, etc.

- One greater issue in Sabah is the communal titling initiated by the land and survey department. Initially this title is to be used for the territories of the community to secure their land (it does not belong to individual but as community, thus it cannot be sold to outsider). But government has amended as production land. Several areas of the forest reserve have to be degazetted into state land. Although this seemingly resonate the demands of many Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs), this initiative could potentially lead to land grabbing by other large companies and cronies. Not only can the IPLC potentially lose their resources through conversion into palm oil or rubber, but also their land, territories and consequently of their identities and knowledge.
3. Recognizing community rights and/or access to land and forest resources
- There is much complexity around the discussion of community rights in the Malaysian context. In Sarawak, the federal constitution does not recognize the Dayak communities' territories. In Sabah, the Tagal system has been recognized by several government agencies especially on traditional practices, stewardship of their resources and community enterprises (ecotourism). Although the tagal system needs to be improved to be geared towards environmental protection.
4. Strengthening community resilience to climate change and disaster
- PACOS Trust has been working with communities on awareness and strengthening climate change adaptation and mitigation through traditional knowledge. Communities shared their traditional knowledge by documenting their practices especially on dealing with natural disaster.
  - SFD also currently working on CC under the EU-REDD funds. Three government agencies have been collaborating on this program with specific themes in each plot sites: watershed enrichment, ecological linkages and wildlife corridor. The active participation of indigenous people and local community has increased after the establishment of community development unit under SFD.
  - The SASOF establishment in 2015 also highlighted climate change adaptation and mitigation in its vision and goals
5. Improving forest governance
- In Sabah, the Tagal is the main system in resource and customary stewardship that has long been in practice throughout the IPLCs of Sabah. Through the establishment of SASOF, there is a bigger aim to also improve the forest governance especially through forest tagal.

- PACOS Trust also has documented forest-dependent communities on their forest stewardship. Five communities have been recorded as a model in stewarding their natural resources in accordance to their traditional practices. There is an opportunity for the communities to jointly collaborate with the SFD in term of Social forestry in the future

6. Protecting traditional and sustainable community-based forest livelihoods

- PACOS Trust, under the natural resource management program has assisted the community in the documentation of their practices on forest governance and stewardship of their natural resources.

02

*From the Plan of Action on Social Forestry 2016-2020, which of the action programs have you been involved in? how have you been involved? What has been the impact?*

- Currently several CSOs, NGOs, Academia and SFD have collaborated to form SASOF. However, several aspects need to be covered to achieve the ASEAN Plan of Action in Social Forestry



photo by Gordon Thomas, PACOS Trust

**03**

*From the recommendations of the ASEAN Working Group on Social Forestry (AWG-SF) adopted in the conference for the past 3 years, which of these have been implemented in your country?*

1. Sustainable Community forest-based livelihoods in ASEAN
  - Several communities under the social forestry program by SFD still have room for improvement. Currently, a number of communities have been taught to plant cash crops such as rubber and coffee. PACOS Trust has advised to the SFD to develop the community practices such as handicraft and other NTFPs that can potentially lead to community enterprising.
2. Assurance and protection of indigenous peoples and local communities' access and tenure rights to their community managed forest and customary lands
  - Partially achieved, depending on type of forest reserve the community live in. For instance, in domestic forest rights, the rights of the communities have been recognized to access and sustainable uses the area, where as in Class 1 (Totally Protected Area), Class 2 (Production Forest), community rights on accessing to the area is very limited.
  - Some communities also need assistance to the SFD in terms of protecting their remaining forest against development aggression. The good example is in Sg. Eloi, Pitas (northern of Sabah), the Tombonuo community from generation protect, sustainable use and restore their mangrove forests. But because their forests are considered state land, the area has been converted into a large scale shrimp farm to accommodate no hunger and poverty eradication programs despite the absence of direct benefits to the community. The community desperately asked to temporarily restrain the project, PACOS Trust recommends for SFD to look onto the case.

3. Self-mobilization of indigenous peoples and local communities and their organizations towards participatory and effective forest governance.
  - Still unachieved, although PACOS Trust have started initial discussion with SFD on jointly collaborative management on forest governance
4. Recognition of safeguard policies, measures and mechanisms on social forestry such as FPIC, Benefit Sharing, Community Dispute Resolution
  - Not yet fully implemented although has just started from 2017.

04

*What do you think would be the major challenges confronting social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- There are tangible concerns on political intervention during the development stage of social forestry in the country. This is rooted in previous experiences in the degazetttement of communal titles that do not provide direct benefits to the communities and instead pose serious threats.

05

*What could be key opportunities for social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- There is an opportunity for social forestry development on newly identified forest areas.
- There is also much potential in the use of tagal or other customary practices in forest stewardship and governance



## Myanmar

01

*What are positive changes  
in social forestry and climate  
change action in your country  
in the last 7 years?*

1. Formulating/ amending/ implementing policies
  - There is a new amended version of the Forest Law (1992) last 2014 but this is not approved by the Parliament. (Ministry of Natural Resource and Environmental Conservation (MONREC) <http://www.fdmoeCAF.gov.mm/eng/>)
  - Forest Policy (1995) and Current Review (2016) (Ministry of Natural Resource and Environmental Conservation (MONREC), Forest Department <http://www.fdmoeCAF.gov.mm/eng/documents>)
  - 30 Years Forestry Master Plan (2001-2030)
  - National Land Use Policy was formulated in 2016 (Ministry of Natural Resource and Environmental Conservation (MONREC), Forest Department <http://www.fdmoeCAF.gov.mm/eng/documents>). Further, the National Land Law is still being draft
  - Social and Environment Safeguards for REDD+
  - Myanmar New Community Forest Instruction (2016) (Ministry of Natural Resource and Environmental Conservation (MONREC), Forest Department <http://www.fdmoeCAF.gov.mm/eng/documents>)
  - Protection of wildlife and protected areas law amended (2018) <https://www.mlis.gov.mm/lSc.do?>
2. Expanding/increasing social forestry areas
  - According to 30-Year Master Plan, by 2030, social forestry areas should already be at 2.47 million acres.
  - In 2017-2018, the government approved and gave CF certificate covering a total of 176,140 acres.
  - Proposed areas for year 2018-2019 is 96,072 acres.
  - Currently, CF areas awarded is around 521,864 acres

3. Recognizing community rights and/or access to land and forest resources
  - A key area in relation to transparency and law enforcement for IP rights is the National Land Use Policy (NLUP) that include the need to come up with relevant laws and measures for the recognition of customary land tenure.
  - The recognition of customary land tenure is highlighted in chapter 8 of the National land use policy
    - For 2018, under the newly amended protection of biodiversity and protected areas Chapter (4) article 8, (g) identified and recognized “Community Conserved Areas” as a kind of protected areas
    - Article 13 (g), mentioned that recognizing Community Forest in Buffer zone of Protected areas.
  - The law harmonization process, which is part of the NLUP, has been on hold for the last year, but may be restarted with the formation of the National Land Use Council in January 2018, which is supposed to oversee the development of the National Land Law.
  - Although laws are supposed to be harmonized with the NLUP and Land Law, most major land and forest laws have had amendments submitted to the Parliament in late 2017 without close coordination with each other or the NLUP. It is necessary to follow this process to see if policy changes will translate to effective implementation on the ground for the provisions of land rights for indigenous peoples.
  - Under the government legal framework, women can hold individual or joint titles to permanent agricultural land, orchards, fishponds, etc. The 2008 Constitution states that land belongs to the state and grants private property rights to individuals.
  - Forests belong to the government under the administrative authority of the Forest Department, and groups of people can receive Community Forestry (CF) Certificates that grant renewable 30-year leases for domestic and commercial use of the forest according to a management plan. Most CSOs that facilitate CF keep track of and encourage women’s participation, with success varying by CSO, region, and other local and cultural factors. Expansion of the permanent forest estate without recognizing customary tenure and providing for local needs could criminalize the work women do for their and their family’s survival, including collecting fuel wood, medicinal plants, and other forest products. Tenure insecurity over rotational agriculture land and forests may also disproportionately impact women who may be more dependent on community land.

- There is a wide difference among customary systems in the kind of rights land rights held by women. In some ethnic groups, inheritance is patrilineal, and women access land through their relationships to men. In other groups, inheritance is to the eldest or youngest child no matter the gender or shared among children under a variety of different arrangements.
- 4. Strengthening community resilience to climate change and disaster
  - Myanmar is highly vulnerable to climate change as a result of several factors: economic dependency on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, forestry and natural resources; human population and economic activities are concentrated in the coastal zone as well as in low-lying lands and dry zone areas exposed to long-term and rapid-onset climatic impacts such as sea-level rise, flood and drought; exposure to both geological and meteorological hazards (e.g. earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, cyclones and storm surges); high poverty levels which affect the capacity of the country to respond to climate change related impacts; and limited technological capacity and resources to build resilience and adapt to the consequences of climate change related events. The impacts of climate change are not uniform – some communities, groups and individuals are more vulnerable than others, due to a combination of social, economic, political, environmental and physical factors making them more susceptible to shocks and stressors.
  - 
  - The following activities are for implementation:
  - Promote planning and implementation of infrastructure to enhance resilience in urban areas, accordance with the Myanmar Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (2016-2030).
    - Marine and Costal Ecosystem -build resilience and reduce vulnerability of coastal areas to sea level rise, flooding, cyclones, storm surges and other natural disasters.
    - Enhance institutional capacities, financial frameworks, access to technology, information dissemination and innovation to build resilience and strengthen implementation of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in coordination with environmental conservation and sustainable development efforts.
    - Ensuring environmental conservation and climate change adaptation strategies are integrated into DRR approaches, recognising the risk reduction and resilience services provided by healthy ecosystems (e.g. mangrove forests).

- Strengthening resilience at national, regional and local levels, including by implementing the Myanmar Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.
- Myanmar's ecosystems are to be protected and managed in sustainable ways to ensure their natural functions and resilience, and rich biodiversity, are maintained.
- Climate smart approaches to development, including resilience, natural disaster risk management and climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, will be aligned to environmental protection and natural resource management approaches in the pursuit of low-carbon, sustainable development.
- The creation of disaster risk reduction and emergency management strategies and plans is important to protect the future of Myanmar. Community and environmental resilience is a critical feature of all development planning. Decisions around Myanmar's future energy sources and land uses will consider greenhouse gas emissions and implications for climate change mitigation

## 5. Improving forest governance

- The Ministry of Natural Resource and Environmental Conservation (MONREC) has continued the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) process, which is debating the question of what is considered "legal" timber (will logging on customary land without consent be legal?) and improving transparency of timber supply chains. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) added timber to its scope in addition to oil and gas and mining and has collected data throughout 2017 that will be published in 2018. FLEGT and EITI are not specifically linked with REDD-plus, but are both included in the Nationally Determined Commitment (NDC) to the UNFCCC, and there are some Myanmar CSOs that are involved in both REDD-plus and these other processes.
- There is improved transparency in REDD-plus readiness process in the country as indigenous peoples' organizations can be part of the TWGs and Programme Executive Board of Myanmar REDD-plus Program. However, no implementation of REDD-plus monitoring on the ground has been part of the national REDD+ process except some technical projects for measuring carbon. In the past years, funding has been provided to some REDD-plus projects or private carbon offsets that are separate from the national process, which could

provide some insight into what obstacles may be found in implementation.

- The current REDD-plus program and the forest law of the country both develop policies and measures to reduce deforestation. However, law enforcement and corruption are still a challenge to implementation on ground in the country. Amendments proposed in 2017 of the Forest Law is being discussed in the Parliament, but the revisions are still ongoing. POINT has engaged in the policy development process and provided inputs on rights of indigenous peoples. If the amendments are adopted, they could potentially lead to the reduction of deforestation, as it is widely recognized that secure tenure for indigenous peoples contributes to protection of forests.
- Myanmar's INDC, (which became a NDC in January 2018) includes a target to increase the land under the permanent forest estate to 30% of the country and protected areas to 10% of the country, all together about 6 million hectares. However, this includes reserved forests that will be logged, and a stronger commitment would have been linked to actual forest cover or deforestation rates, rather than administrative boundaries. The area targets were in the National Forestry Master Plan from 2001-2031, so they are not new commitments specifically for the UNFCCC.
- There has been a long history of conflicts between local communities when forests are gazette as national parks and permanent forest estate, and without resolving this issue expansion into the border areas where forests are managed under customary tenure and have been suffering from armed conflict could cause serious conflicts and could also prompt deforestation by undermining customary systems. The Forest Department has been reviewing forest tenure issues with inputs from civil society groups, and this process is ongoing.
- Increased tenure security for Indigenous people could increase the protection of forests and reduce the forest area that is allocated to businesses. Recognition of community conserved areas just in Tanintharyi Region and Karen State would protect about 1% of the country's total land area.

6. Protecting traditional and sustainable community-based forest livelihoods
  - There is no policy and measure yet to contribute to sustainable livelihoods of the country policy and measure. Most of the time, the activities and work related to sustainable livelihoods are initiated and organized as part of the oversee development assistance program for the country. Government funding on social, health, and educational programs remains a small percentage of the budget, with some pressure to increase the percentage. However, it is likely that both the REDD-plus program and UNDP initiatives on implementing Sustainable Development Goals may influence some policies and measures and provide funding for projects.
7. Other aspects relevant to your country context
  - Baseline: At the moment, the only policy reflecting on improving gender equality is the REDD+ Roadmap for REDD+ Social and Environmental Safeguards. The 2016 National land Use Policy has a chapter dedicated to affirming equal land for men and women, including inheritance rights. The REDD+ program could be used to promote women's rights and full and effective participation in forest issues, since it is supposed to have a gender component.
  - The National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (NSPAW) (2013-2022) includes a section on women and the environment, where it defines its key objective as strengthening women's participation in natural resource management, conservation, and climate change, including increasing participation in relevant departments, agencies, and committees and in the development and implementation of policies. The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is responsible for implementing and monitoring the NSPAW.
  - The National Environmental Policy of Myanmar and the draft Strategic Framework directs the integration of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls into all aspects of environmental protection and management.
  - Implementation of the Farmland Law in areas where

women hold customary tenure rights over land has the potential to restrict their rights. Land use certificates are granted to individuals (joint registration is also possible) over permanent agricultural land and orchards under this law, and Indigenous communities have expressed a preference for having community tenure recognized over customary lands instead. Data from the NGO Namati's 5 -year project where paralegals helped to register around 2000 land use certificates indicate that about 20% of the titles were issued to women. Most applications for joint titles with both a man and woman's name on the form were not successfully processed by the end of the project (2% of the 99 applications submitted). This is the largest public gender-disaggregated data set on land use certificates to date. The impacts for women cannot be generalized on the national level because of the differences in what land rights women hold in different customary tenure systems around the country.

02

*From the Plan of Action on Social Forestry 2016-2020, which of the action programs have you been involved in? how have you been involved? What has been the impact?*

- POINT has been engaged in Community Forest National Working Group led by the forest department. This is the working group discussed about the ongoing CF management and policy improvement every 3 months and 4 times in a year. From this POINT can learn the progress on CF and give advice on the difficulties faced by communities. Together with NTFP-EP, PIONT host EXCEED training in Myanmar this year in 2018. In addition, POINT is giving training on CF which was requested by communities. Lastly, POINT has conducted National level preparatory workshop on CSO forum on 15th June, 2015 together with MERN and CHRO.

OB

*From the recommendations  
of the ASEAN Working Group  
on Social Forestry (AWG-SF)  
adopted in the conference  
for the past 3 years,  
which of these have been  
implemented in your country?*

1. Sustainable Community forest-based livelihoods in ASEAN
  - The Myanmar New Community Forest Instruction (2016) enables the granting of Community Forest certificates to communities and recognizes tenure rights of indigenous peoples. The Community Forest certificates promote sustainable traditional management of forests and natural resources, which can contribute to sustainable livelihoods.
    - Establishing and strengthening Community Forest Enterprises in Southern Shan State
      - Funding Source/ Funding: Forest and Farm Facility/ FAO (USD 60,000)
      - Target Population/ Location: Five townships in Southern Shan State
      - Timeframe: (on going)
    - Community-based Conservation of Wildlife through Strengthening Livelihood of Chin Tribes in Natmataung National Park
      - Funding Source/ Funding: Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute
      - Funding Amount: (USD 24,997)
      - Target Population/ Location: Natmataung National Park, Kanpetlet Township
      - Timeframe: November 2013 (on going)

2. Assurance and protection of indigenous peoples and local communities' access and tenure rights to their community managed forest and customary lands
  - National Land Use Policy chapter (8) mentioned that customary land tenure of ethnic groups has to be recognized in national land law. To be able to apply NLUP (chapter 8), the government need to come up with National Land Law which make sure recognizing customary Land tenure of Indigenous Peoples. To be able to make a new land law based on NLUP, national land use council was formed in 2017. However, the council have not come up with a new land law.
  - A new revised Community forestry instruction was issued in 2016 Called "Community Forestry Instruction-2016. According to the instruction, the community was given the right to do community forestry with 30-year permission and extendable. However, there are some limitations in community forestry in the protection of indigenous land rights and resource rights against more powerful interest. On the one hand, community forestry is implemented under the supervision of forestry department and if the project is not implemented well, the land can be taken back by Forestry department. Indigenous peoples prefer and would like to get customary land right in order that they may be able to protect forest according to customary land tenure and customary forest. On the one hand, indigenous peoples' concern in pursuit of forest management is the recognition of Indigenous Peoples' conserved territories and areas (ICCAs).
3. Self-mobilization of indigenous peoples and local communities and their organizations towards participatory and effective forest governance
  - There are many self-mobilizing of indigenous communities for sustainable forest management and facilitating by the organizations. Trip Net has already facilitated community-driven natural resource management in Tanintharyi region. The organization did participatory action research on local knowledge-based research on their land, forest and biodiversity and come up with participatory land use planning to ensure that the forest resources, water and biodiversity are managed sustainably. Based on the research, they enhanced public ecological knowledge. The communities are doing monitoring forest and river ecosystems, conducting forest rehabilitation and and establishing People's Protected Conservation Areas (People's parks).

- Natural Forest Protection Committee (NFPC) was established comprised of 6 villages in Daw Tha Ma Kyi village tract, Demoso township in Kayah State. A set rules for two types of forest was agreed by the committee and all the members have to respect those rules. The rules have been disseminated among the communities and have been demarcated protected areas. The communities are also planning documentation of customary land use in order to do for the recognition of customary land tenure by the state.
  - Community protected forest: This forest is for the use of community members to cover their needs for all kinds of forest products. Cutting of timber is permitted but requires the permission of the village-level committee.
  - Prohibited forest: This is strictly protected forest where no cutting of wood is permitted. Hunting is also forbidden. Only the collecting of minor forest products like vegetables, herbs or mushrooms is allowed. In some of these forests the collection of honey and orchids is also forbidden. Since bamboo was planted in parts of these forests their owners are allowed to continue harvesting bamboo, but it is not allowed to plant any more bamboo or anything else there.
- In 2014, the Social Development for Remote Aare (SDRA) members took decided to launch another joint initiative for forest conservation. The SDRA comprised of 11 villages, and started awareness raising on Indigenous rights and environmental conservation by the support of POINT (Promotion of Indigenous and Nature Together). In 2016, Chin Human Rights organization (CHRO) started technical support on mapping of village territories and scaling up awareness raising. The SDRA must carry on documentation of their natural resources, biodiversity and customary resource use and management, and based on this a set of rules and regulations will be developed for strengthening customary forest management and disseminate among the member villages of SDRA.
- Some of the initiatives already successful, but some of the initiatives are in the starting phase. if all of such initiative area successful, it would be examples to strengthen customary forest management and local communities for forest conservation in the country.

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4. Recognition of safeguard policies, measures and mechanisms on social forestry such as FPIC, Benefit Sharing, Community Dispute Resolution
- Benefit Sharing – There is no discussion or consultation started in terms of Benefit sharing in REDD+ program. However, according to the technical support of UN-REDD program for Myanmar, it is planned to improve institutional building on financial management among different government agency and along with this there will have dialogue on benefit sharing as part of Technical Working Group meetings in the near future.
  - FPIC - FPIC has been included in different law and policies including the drafted REDD+ Strategy and REDD+ safeguards. However, there is no such implementation happen in Myanmar as they are ongoing discussion and there is no specific focal ministry to implement this and have a mandate on this. For instance, FPIC is elaborated in detailed in the Ethnic rights protection by law section 13 by Ethnic Affair Minister drafted and consulted Ethnic Rights Protection by law and but it has not finalized yet.
  - Community Dispute Resolution - Myanmar is a sensitive country and prone to conflicts as there has been long lost trust among different stakeholders. Community Dispute Resolution is key to safeguards for policy and law implementation in Myanmar. At the moment, different NGOs are working on this at different approach such as My Justice Myanmar has a program to conduct community-based dispute resolution forum to avoid conflicts in ethnic areas and promote peace for the country. As for REDD-plus technical working group, in the future, there will have discussion on this as part of TWG meetings.
-

04

*What do you think would be the major challenges confronting social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- Social forestry need to recognize customary tenure and rights.
- There could be conflict because customary land tenure is not recognized in Myanmar, but indigenous peoples are still practicing shifting cultivation though it is prohibited by forest department.
- There is not enough forest department staff to management all forest areas in Myanmar.
- Forest managemen is centralized.
- Community forestry cannot control illegal logging effectively though it can be managed by community.
- Community also want to recognize their land as ICCAs.
- Benefits sharing must have between community, government and company whenever there is project within their areas, or national park, protected areas.
- Undergo FPIC process before the implementation of projects.
- CSOs should share their experience of laws and policies, besides giving training.
- The forest department should monitor CF and its user groups whether they are implementing according to their management plan, rules and regulation or not.

05

*What could be key opportunities for social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- Forest Users Groups can inheritance CF areas to their generation
- Forest users group can change members and committee, by the agreement of forest department
- If Community areas are forest areas, CF users groups are free from ground-rent
- CF users group can gain technical supplies, financial supplies from NGOs and INGOs
- Access rights many agroforestry systems which are suitable with the local areas
- Extraction of forest products from natural forests according to management plan
- Can do private economic organization freely which are legal
- If others projects would be implemented, CF users group can get compensation of forest products and crops.



photo by POINT



# Philippines

01

*What are positive changes  
in social forestry and climate  
change action in your country  
in the last 7 years?*

1. Formulating/ amending/  
implementing policies

- In 2015, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) came up with Climate Resilient Forestry Masterplan to include relevant provisions on CBFM
- RA 10174 established a Peoples Survival Fund in order to fund climate change adaptation of communities and local government
- Executive Order No. 174, s 2014 institutionalized the National Greenhouse Gas Inventory System
- In November 2017, a DENR Special Order was issued for the Creation of the National Working Group on CBFM
- The proposed ICCA bills is progressing to recognize management by indigenous peoples and to come up with a national registry. Similarly, a people-oriented Alternative Minerals Management Bill is being pushed by CSOs along with other green bills such as Sustainable Forest Management / Forest Resources Bill
- The proposed amendment for Expanded National Protected Areas System recognized traditional management of IPs in areas overlapping with protected areas.
- Policy adopted Mainstreaming AD/CBFM LU plans in Protected Area LU and Zoning policy - (MMPL, Palawan)

2. Expanding/increasing social forestry areas
  - The Executive Orders 26 and 193 resulted not only planting of trees but also formation of additional Peoples' Organization as beneficiaries of the National Greening Program
3. Recognizing community rights and/or access to land and forest resources
  - The local government units (LGUs) at the provincial, municipal and barangay started recognizing Indigenous Peoples' Mandatory Representatives (IPMR) as members of legislative councils. The Department of Interior and Local Government in 2014 included presence of IPMRs as a criteria for seal of good governance in LGUs.
  - Through the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and support from NGOs / CSOs, Ancestral domain claim making facilitation have been in progress
  - The Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) (including CADT/ADSDPP and CBFM) in Mt. Mantalingahan Protected Landscape (MMPL). Recognition of Tenure as a management unit within MMPL
  - Although the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) is not implemented by the ARMM government, the NCIP, based on its mandated stipulated in the IPRA has issued a resolution in 2014, mandating its regional office in Region 12 to conduct the delineation process of the Téduray and Lambangian Ancestral Domain Claim (TLADC)
4. Strengthening community resilience to climate change and disaster
  - REDD-plus demonstration sites in seven (7) areas all over the country
  - The National Climate Change Action Plans 2011-2028 outlines programs and plans for mitigation and adaptation and requires local government unit to come-up with Local Climate Change Action Plans. Similarly, BDRRM or the formulation of Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction Plans
  - Support Adaptation of Indigenous Peoples through capacity building, technical and production inputs in Quezon, Narra and Brookes Point Palawan
    - Diversification of production
    - Agroforestry
  - Demonstration Sites for Ecosystem/environmental Management and Restoration for Riverbank and Slope Forest in Agusan, Cagayan de Oro and Tagoloan

5. Improving forest governance

- The interim National Governing Board on Forest Certification was created with the National CBFM PO Federation as member
- Discussion on FLEGT is being pushed by DENR-Forest Management Bureau (FMB)
- Formulation of Ancestral domain Sustainable development and protection plan (ADSDPP) with Land Use plans nationwide
- The Forest Land use Plan (FLUP) in Southern Palawan is a work in progress

6. Protecting traditional and sustainable community-based forest livelihoods

- The DENR Biodiversity Bureau came up with Biodiversity friendly enterprises
- Ancestral domain sustainable development and protection plans facilitated. This allocated AD into broad land uses such as protection and livelihood zone in Palawan
- Indigenous food plants conservation (forest, farms, center) - Isugod/Aramaywan and Tabon/Pinaglabanan



photo by Beng Camba, NTFP-EP Philippines

02

*From the Plan of Action on Social Forestry 2016-2020, which of the action programs have you been involved in? how have you been involved? What has been the impact?*

1.1.3 Promoting community models of sustainable forest tenure and management, promoting participatory management and monitoring of NTFPs

- The CSO Forum in the Philippines was able to facilitate the formulation of Ancestral domain Sustainable development and protection plan (ADSDPP) with Land Use plans in several areas. There is also an integration of traditional or indigenous food plants conservation and promotion in ancestral domain management.
- This has led to a stronger position over the ancestral domain and its resources which resulted to the demonstration of capacity for collective action to assert their rights over ancestral domain e.g Isugod vs mining, plantation companies, etc.

1.1.5 Food/ energy security

- Community based conservation and the promotion of indigenous food plants have been supported through - forest, farms, and community centers
- There have also been conducts of agroforestry training and inputs provision
- As a result, there is a stronger community re-valuing of indigenous food plants and potentials for products and enterprise development that is biodiversity friendly

3.3.2 Support for documentation of best/ innovative practices in employing social forestry for food security

- Provision of support and documentation of Indigenous food plants conservation and promotion (forest, farms, center) in Isugod/Aramaywan and Tabon/Pinaglabanan

Others

- IEC and multistakeholder engagement for Victoria-Anepahan Mountain Range (VAMR) Conservation at landscape level
- LGU supports the proposed joint programme for inter-LGU management of the VAMR landscape
- Sangguniang Bayan (SB) of Narra municipality passed resolution urging Aborlan, Quezon, Puerto Princesa City, and Narra LGUs for collaboration on VAMR Landscape management

**OB**

*From the recommendations  
of the ASEAN Working Group  
on Social Forestry (AWG-SF)  
adopted in the conference  
for the past 3 years,  
which of these have been  
implemented in your country?*

1. Sustainable Community forest-based livelihoods in ASEAN
  - In the proposed national NTFP policy development for rattan, bamboo and almaciga resin, community rights to forest resources is given emphasis on its drafting.
  - In the PAMB meeting of Mt. Mantalingahan, it was agreed that they will provide support to indigenous communities applying for community enterprises especially on Almaciga. The LGUs of Rizal and Brooke's Point committed support to community-based almaciga enterprise.
  - In Quezon Province, the LGU of General Nakar and the Provincial Office of NCIP endorsed the application for gathering of almaciga resin of Agta-Dumagat-Remontado. The IPs are positively hopeful that the permit will be issued by the local DENR soon.
  - Continuous support to forty six (46) Community-Based NTFP Enterprises (CBNEs) and five (5) local marketing centers provided by NTFP-EP and partners.
  - Apart from the established National Forest Honey Network, formation of sustainable hand-woven ecotextile network has been explored in January this year.
  - There is an emerging recognition of traditional forest foods and livelihoods as biodiversity conservation measures during the 1st National Biodiversity Congress on 22-25 May 2017.
2. Assurance and protection of indigenous peoples and local communities' access and tenure rights to their community managed forest and customary lands
  - In Palawan, series of activities related to forest governance were conducted: 1) IP Rights Forum Focusing on FPIC and Kaingin on March 2017; 2) Resource Permitting Dialogue on March 2017.
  - In Quezon Palawan, there is recognition of ancestral domain in Forest Land Use Plan.
  - In General Nakar, Quezon, Rizal Province and in other areas, assistance to Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development Planning (ADSPP), Indigenous Political Structure (IPS) and continuous advocacy for ancestral domain claims is being conducted.

3. Self-mobilization of indigenous peoples and local communities and their organizations towards participatory and effective forest governance.
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**04**

*What do you think would be the major challenges confronting social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- Shift in the form of government - from democratic to federalism
- Presidential statements offering ancestral land to agribusiness, declaring Mindanao as Land Reform Area for oil palm and rubber could be used as an instrument of further land dispossession, if not addressed
- Poor implementation of ancestral domain recognition (Titling Process)
- Minimal if not lack of support for Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development Protection Plan (ADSDPP) and implementation
- Passage of Bangsamoro Basic Law without full inclusion of IP rights
- Poor implementation of CBFM, REDD-plus and other programs in the country
- Lack of support for green and people-oriented bills

**05**

*What could be key opportunities for social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- ASEAN Social Forestry adopted policies (on social forestry, enterprise) - can be used to advance Community Forestry agenda
- People's Survival Fund - while channelled through LGUs, CSOs/POs can partner with LGUs for adaptation (and mitigation) activities
- Operationalization of the National Working group on CBFM with FMB and Climate Change group within DENR
- Green Climate Fund for REDD-plus performance-based implementation
- NDC strategies, programs, plans and activities



## Thailand

01

*What are positive changes  
in social forestry and climate  
change action in your country  
in the last 7 years?*

1. Formulating/ amending/ implementing policies
  - There is an attempt from government in implementing the following legislations:
    - Cabinet resolution 30 June 1998 (Land use survey in forest area to prove the tenure rights )
    - National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO ) number 64/2014 regarding the suppression and cessation of encroachment on and the destruction of forest resources. and NCPO Order No. 66/2014 indicated that the primary targets of these measures would be the capitalists or large-scale encroachers, while impoverished people, landless people and people who dwelled in the forest area before the area was declared to be forest reserve area, must not be affected by the Order. (Requested local authority to make a plan for the communal land management)
  - The implementation of the said conflicting policies has been used as a threatening measure. The policy did not ease or benefit the community such as the condition on weak protection; there have been questions on how survey was conducted. This caused displacement among communities.
  - With much ambiguity, local authorities' interpretations are varied, thus impacting communities
  - The order/policies should have clear guideline and rule, so the local authority in wherever area will implement the same thing.
  - The conduct of the land survey should be done with the local people, independent agencies together with government staff to help ensure equity.

- There was an attempt to organize participatory processes. The cabinet resolution 3rd August 2010 on restoration of Karen people way of life and Cabinet resolution 2 June 2010 on restoration of Chaolay people way of life. Under national parks, there were proposals to the law (submitted to national legislative assembly) which will help the community in the forest to get the permission from the Director General of Royal Forestry Department to access 60% of their forest and use the remaining 40% in their land plot area within 20 years.
- The government took initial steps to amend the law and forestry act, allowing communities to plant previously prohibited trees. However, some focal persons involved in law amendment are from the former authority of National Parks/Forestry.
- The 2017 Thailand constitution Article 258 (stated on land reformation) indicates that the land allocation should be equitable and should include a nationwide land tenure verification. Despite this, there are no organic laws in place.
- The cabinet resolution made last 3rd August 2010 on restoration of Karen people way of life and Cabinet resolution 2 June 2010 on restoration of Chaolay people way of life.
- On the community forestry bill, there is a committee in provincial level but there is no budget for operation and no human resources. There is less participation in the amendment or improvement of the community forest bill. Furthermore, some of the amendments are not relevant or do not necessarily provide benefits to people who need it: posting the draft bill online with a set limit on timeline is difficult for indigenous peoples without access to these information.
- National Land policy committee resolution, a proposal allowing communities to live within protected areas, has not been endorsed by the cabinet.
- Mae Cham model is one of tangible example in the field. However, in areas with less forest cover but could potentially generate income for the people may not provide a long term solution as there is a need to change the law.

2. Expanding/increasing social forestry areas
  - The incoming forest project under the Department of Forestry which allows cutting of trees in the proved land under cabinet resolution 30 June 1998 are located in the project conservation areas. Certain limitations should be implemented based on the decision of the authority in the area.
3. Recognizing community rights and/or access to land and forest resources
  - There was clear mentions of community rights in the 1996 and 2006 mentioned versions of the Thai constitution. However, it disappeared in the latest constitution. Article 70 mentioned ethnic rights but did not refer to traditional community rights.
  - The national legislative assembly removed the wording of traditional community as they could not provide the definition.
4. Strengthening community resilience to climate change and disaster
  - The Office of Natural Resource and Environment Policy and Planning has developed the adaptation plan in national level: a top-down process.
  - There is a Department of disaster prevention and mitigation
5. Improving forest governance
  - Data remains unclear as to whether participation and decision making translate into practice.
  - There is the formation of the nationwide Protected Area Committee (PAC) in 2009
6. Protecting traditional and sustainable community-based forest livelihoods
  - There is a weak implementation of the cabinet resolution on 3rd August 2010 about the restoration of Karen people way of life and 2nd June 2010 about Chaolay (sea gypsy) way of life revitalization.

02

*From the Plan of Action on Social Forestry 2016-2020, which of the action programs have you been involved in? how have you been involved? What has been the impact?*

1.1.2 Promote forest management involving community living within and surrounding the forest while recognising and respecting their rights, especially those pertaining to their lands and resources.

- There is a map and community regulation on natural resources utilization as well as having local ordinance endorsement.

1.1.3 Review customary and statutory tenure arrangements at the national level, including access and use rights, of indigenous people<sup>1</sup>, local communities, forest dwellers and other forest-dependent communities to ensure that they are recognised, respected and protected by effective legislation, including the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) as provided for in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) of 2007.

- Provided training for community volunteers in the western forest area on FPIC and UNDRIP with 20 volunteers



photo by Phnom Thano, Network of Indigenous Peoples in Thailand

**Strategic Thrust 2**  
Enhancing trade facilitation, economic integration, and market access

- There have been numerous community initiatives with strong support from NGOs and the academe
- 3.1.1 Assess the impacts and risks of planned climate change mitigation and adaptation in the forestry sector.
  - Government plan to form the working group on safeguard is in the process
- 3.1.2 Assess the impacts of climate change and risks on forest biological diversity at the genetics, species, habitat and ecosystem levels.
  - Civil society currently does not have access to government data
- 3.1.6 Strengthen capacity and resources in addressing climate change issues in the forestry sector through regional and sub-regional collaboration.
  - Trained villagers in the REDD-plus pilot project area
- 3.2.1 Facilitate and scale up REDD+ activities through the effective implementation of the Warsaw Framework for REDD+ and other decisions on REDD+.
  - There is a REDD-plus readiness working group
- 3.2.2 Support alternatives to deforestation driven by basic needs, such as subsistence farming and the reliance on fuelwood for energy.
  - There is a promotion of alternate agriculture but not shifting cultivation
  - Support for documentation of best/innovative practices in employing social forestry for food security have mostly been conducted by the civil society

**4.1.1 Identify existing training facilities and available training programmes in the region and develop mechanisms for sharing of such training facilities and programmes**

- Indigenous peoples organization conducted trainings on climate change, agroforestry ,UNDRIP, related law and policies at the community level.
- Support from the government is encouraged

**4.1.3 Promote greater awareness and legal literacy among local communities whose livelihoods are dependent on the goods and services provided by forests.**

- Indigenous peoples organization conducted trainings on climate change, agroforestry ,UNDRIP, related law and policies at the community level.
- Support from the government is encouraged

**Strategic Thrust 5  
Strengthening ASEAN's joint approaches on regional and international issues affecting the forestry sector**

- The CSO Forum is not involved directly but is proactive on monitoring
- There are recommendations for open access to data, participation to meetings, etc.



photo by Phnom Thano, Network of Indigenous Peoples in Thailand

**03**

*From the recommendations  
of the ASEAN Working Group  
on Social Forestry (AWG-SF)  
adopted in the conference  
for the past 3 years,  
which of these have been  
implemented in your country?*

1. Sustainable Community forest-based livelihoods in ASEAN
  - 2017: Enable multisectoral partnerships and stakeholder participation, including indigenous peoples, local communities and forest and farm producers, to develop cross-sectorial frameworks for planning, management and implementation of FLR
    - Establish a cross-sectoral mechanism to encourage and facilitate stakeholder participation in FLR programmes
    - Develop a coordination mechanism and use existing tools to explicitly evaluate trade-offs of co-existing objectives for optimizing production on the same land base, e.g. multi-component and multiple demand analysis of bioenergy, food and forest restoration
  - 2015 : Set and monitor Social Forestry targets at national and regional levels (community forest in Thailand area is 4,903838 rai which cover 8,421 community)
    - Strengthen institutions for social forestry through support for national level multi-stakeholder mechanisms, effective linkages and decentralization of authority to local bodies.
    - Develop a Private Sector Engagement Framework in SF/ CF, particularly engaging socially responsible private sector, to enable higher income and improved well-being of small holders.

2. Assurance and protection of indigenous peoples and local communities' access and tenure rights to their community managed forest and customary lands
  - Provide secure tenure to indigenous and other local communities (especially customary forest users, rotational agriculturalists) and access to timber resources.
  - Recognize the diversity of tenure systems and the importance of granting locally determined tenure rights to indigenous people, communities and smallholders using various legal instruments that enable them to manage the land themselves:
  - Prioritize or accelerate granting of Community Forestry Arrangements (CFAs) and other tenure modalities to support SF/CF-based livelihoods and enterprises
  - Develop and implement national policies that take into account the UN Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure (VGGT) and REDD-plus Cancun safeguards.
3. Self-mobilization of indigenous peoples and local communities and their organizations towards participatory and effective forest governance.
  - 2016.1. Recognize the importance of agroforestry, including sustainable shifting cultivation and traditional land use practices, to enhance forest and agro-biodiversity in, and benefits from, multifunctional landscapes:
    - Promote agroforestry as part of SF/CF
    - Encourage the planting of multi-purpose plant species (i.e. food-based trees, medicinal and aromatic plants) in SF/CF
    - Document and publish at national level a priority list of NTFPs / forest resources for protection, enhancement, management, production for livelihood and enterprise
    - Support research and investment on food from forests and on nutrition from organic and diversified production systems
4. Recognition of safeguard policies, measures and mechanisms on social forestry such as FPIC, Benefit Sharing, Community Dispute Resolution
  - Establish mechanism and develop operational guidelines for implementing social and environmental safeguards for social forestry.

**04**

*What do you think would be the major challenges confronting social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- The laws are facilitative of the work of government but are not necessarily driven for and by community rights.
- The definition of social forestry in Thailand is a limitation because it is only applicable in conservation areas but not in protected areas where indigenous communities are mostly located.
- There is no genuine decentralization of power. The solution given by government do not necessarily meet the needs of communities
- The traditional way of life has not been officially recognized yet despite acceptance and endorsement by the academic sector.
- The uncertainty in the political situation and the power of the junta regime.

**05**

*What could be key opportunities for social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- Civil society in the country have become increasingly active
- Article 70 in the Thai constitution mentioned about ethnic group in term of protection of ethnic's culture protection.
- The supreme court judgement in recognized Cabinet resolution 3rd August 2010 as a baseline for the potential land solution
- Social forestry has been recognized at the ASEAN-level, with the hopes of it translating to the national level through its full implementation



## Vietnam

01

*What are positive changes in social forestry and climate change action in your country in the last 7 years?*

1. Formulating/ amending/ implementing policies
  - Continuously, Vietnam is one of the countries in the region to ratify and implement international agreements and protocols on biodiversity conservation, strengthen forest governance to ensure the benefits to local communities. For example, in 2014, the Government of Vietnam participates in the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing; from 2011 to 2017, started a negotiation with the European Union on the Voluntary Partnership Agreement on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade.
  - After more than 12 years of implementation of the Forest Protection and Development Law, the new Forest Law has been developed and adopted by the National Assembly on November 15, 2017 coming into enforcement from January 1, replacing the Forest Protection and Development Law 2004 in response to the new context of integration of the world economy.
  - Accordingly, the Government identified the forestry sector as one of the economic sectors contributing significantly to poverty reduction for local communities and focusing on the allocation of land to households and communities, creating equitable benefit sharing mechanism in forest sector, especially officially recognized community as one of among seven forest owners in Vietnam.
  - In addition, over the past few years, the government has piloted and implemented a policy on forest environmental services, which generates relatively large revenues for forest management (about VND 1700 billion per year) and provides incentives as well as securing benefit sharing for community involved in forest protection with Decree No. 99/2010/NĐ-CP dated 24 September 2010 on Payment for forest environment services (PFES) and Decree 147 / 2016 / ND-CP dated 2 November 2016 amending and supplementing several articles of the Decree No. 99/2010 / ND-CP dated 24 September 2010 on payment for forest environment services. Furthermore, the



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Government of Vietnam has issued and implemented several forest protection and development policies in association with poverty reduction for ethnic minority people and forest dependent communities, such as the Decree No. 75/2015/ND-CP dated 9/9/2015 on mechanisms and policies for forest protection and development linking with fast and sustainable poverty reduction and support for ethnic minority people in the period 2015-2020 and Decision No. 38/2016 / QD-TTg dated 14/9/2016 on the promulgation of a number of policies on forest protection, development and infrastructure support, the assignment of public services to the state agroforestry enterprises.

- Directive No. 13-CT/TW dated 12/1/2017 of the Central Party Secretariat on enhancing the leadership of the Party in the management, protection and development of forests is one of political will of Vietnamese government to tackle with forest lost and degradation. Logging ban in natural forest has become important articles in the new Forest Law 2017. This political will promotes strong engagement of community and stakeholder in the afforestation, timber processing and forestry trade. Following that, the Prime Minister has promulgated Decision No. 886 / QD-TTg on June 16, 2017 approving the target program for sustainable forestry development 2016-2020 with the aim of increasing forest cover, forestry production value and ensuring livelihood for local community.
- Over the past few years, the Government has also strengthened the national REDD+ program, which aims to reduce degradation and deforestation and to facilitate the sustainable development of livelihoods and the equitable benefit sharing to the forest dependent communities.
- Regarding the response to climate change, the Government of Vietnam has actively participated in international agreements and issued many policies to implement in the country. Typically, ratification of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change by Resolution No 93 / NQ-CP on October 31, 2016; the National Strategy on CC, National Strategy on CC (2011); National Action Plan on Climate Change 2012-2020 (2012); Green Growth Strategy (2012) and Green Growth Action Plan (2014).
- In addition, the Prime Minister signed Decision No.120/ QD-TTg on 22/1/2015 approving the proposal for forest protection and development to respond to climate change for the period 2015-2020.

2. Expanding/increasing social forestry areas
  - Households and communities have been supported and encouraged to receive forest lands for management and utilization and engagement in the value chains of forest products. According to statistics released by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) revealed that currently, over 10,000 communities have been allocated with a total forest area of approximately 1.2 million hectares. There is a trend in forest land allocation that provincial government prefer to allocate forestland to local communities. There will also be an opportunity for more communities and households to be allocated with forestland which being managed by Commune People's Committee, with total land area of about 3.1 million hectares.
3. Recognizing community rights and/or access to land and forest resources
  - One of the most important points in recognizing community rights to land and forest resources is that the community is recognized as an official forest owners under the new Forest Law 2017.
  - Accessing to forest resources by utilizing forest ecosystem services and sustainable exploitation of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) is identified as a core of the framework of the Government's poverty reduction and forest governance.
4. Strengthening community resilience to climate change and disaster
  - The VN Government have been continuously promoting the implementation of improvement program for infrastructure (roads, power grids, schools and health facilities, culture and education) and capacity building for the communities to be able to reduce vulnerability to CC and natural disasters, particularly those for the communities in the remote areas, such as the implementation of the national target program on building new rural areas in the period 2010-2020 under Decision No. 800 / QD-TTg dated June 6, 2010, Decision No. 1600 / QD-TTg dated 16 August 2016 on the National Target Program for Rural Development, 2016-2020, and the National Target Program for Poverty Reduction for the period 2016-2020 under Decision No. 1722 / QD-TTg dated 2 September 2016.
  - In addition, by approving the target program for sustainable forestry development 2016-2020 by Decision No. 886 / QD-TTg on June 16, 2017, the increasing forest cover, forestry production value and ensuring livelihood for local community will help local community resilience to climate change and disaster.

5. Improving forest governance

- Viet Nam is one of handful governments participating in the negotiation and implementation of international initiatives directly related to the improvement of forest governance, including VPA FLEGT with EU, REDD+ and PES. There were some significant changes in the legal system of the state toward sustainable forest management, providing opportunity to participate in policy development for non-state stakeholders, particularly CSOs and the community.
- As requirements of mentioned initiatives, there are a number of initiatives to strengthen forest governance monitoring in Vietnam being implemented by government agencies as well as NGOs such as: Participatory Forest Governance Assessment - PGA (UN-REDD), Forest Governance monitoring in context of REDD-plus & FLEGT (V4MF – RECOFTC, PanNature, WWF Vietnam), Integrated REDD+, FLEGT & PES (FFI, EU REDD Facility), i-terra deforestation detection system (CIAT, UN REDD, SRD, CSDM), Forest Data Sharing System (FORMIS), VPA Impact Monitoring on households and micro-enterprises (VNGO-FLEGT Network), Forest Land monitoring (FORLAND), and Landscape Governance Assessment (GLA) among others.
- The adoption of the Information Access Law by the National Assembly on April 6, 2016 and the strong participation of media agencies have significantly contributed to improving forest governance in Vietnam in recent years.
- In recent years it is worth to mention the official involvement of NGOs in developing and improving the legal framework and forest governance monitoring, implemented under the 5-year cooperation agreement and the annual cooperation plan by Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations (VUSTA) and the Vietnam Administration of Forestry (VNFOREST).

6. Protecting traditional and sustainable community-based forest livelihoods

- Forestry and poverty reduction policies are defined in one of the principle under the 2017 Forestry law: “The state guarantees dependent forests people and ethnic minority communities to be allocated with forests, and the allocation of land to be enclosed with forest allocation for combined agroforestry and fishery; allowed to cooperate and collaborate in forest protection and development with others forest owners get benefit from forests; and to practice culture and beliefs associated with forests in accordance with the Government regulations”

- The implementation of PFES policy has significantly contributed to the financial viability of the community to invest in sustainable livelihoods development for the forest dependent communities, especially strengthening institution capacity the communities and developing initial benefit sharing mechanism among local communities.

02

*From the Plan of Action on Social Forestry 2016-2020, which of the action programs have you been involved in? how have you been involved? What has been the impact?*

In recent years, CSOs in Vietnam have been effectively engaged in the development of social forestry in Vietnam, especially the following activities:

- Studying and developing forestry policies to ensure harmonization of benefits of different stakeholders in forest sector;
- Piloting collaborative sustainable forest management models and engaging local communities in the adaptation to climate change in agroforestry;
- Developing an assessment framework for integrating climate change response into local socio-economic development plans;
- Promoting linkage of forest products, support market access for NTFPs of local communities;
- Developing voluntary investment guidelines to ensure environmental and social safety;
- Strengthening information sharing and building capacity for communities and related institutions in forest sector;
- Promoting good forest governance and participate in forest governance

monitoring in the context of the implementation of REDD + and FLEGT initiatives;

- Strengthening local and regional networks in the field of forest governance;
- Studying the restoration and preservation of traditional cultural values of ethnic minority people;
- Promoting the development of an equitable benefit sharing mechanism for communities involved in sustainable forest management;
- Mainstreaming gender justice/equality in forestry sector at local level;
- Assessing on opportunity promoting the institutionalization of integration of customary law into the management of natural resources and recognition of the ICCA system.

The above-mentioned activities are carried out through research and piloting of forest management models, multi-stakeholder dialogues and networking of social organizations.

03

*From the recommendations of the ASEAN Working Group on Social Forestry (AWG-SF) adopted in the conference for the past 3 years, which of these have been implemented in your country?*

#### **A. Improving legal framework**

- This program can be considered as one of the great achievements of the Government of Vietnam in the forestry sector in recent years. Continuously, Vietnamese Government have been committed to implementation of international conventions, agreements, protocol and initiatives on biodiversity, forest governance, emission reduction, climate change and access to genetic resources and benefit sharing. In addition, the proactive development and implementation of the PES policy is generating great revenues for forestry investment, and creating big incentives for forest management.
- The process of improving the legal frameworks, the government agencies have provided opportunities for many other stakeholders to contribute to it. They were able to participate in dialogues and consultation workshop with other stakeholders to hear feedback and take input for improving the law and policies.
- The new forest law (2017) was designed with structure of the value chain of the forest products, from sustainable forest management, forest development, forest product harvesting to trade. In addition to logging ban in the natural forest, the policy of plantation for large timber towards to sustainable forest management and financial, credit and insurance policies in the forestry sector are being developed by the state.

#### **B. Recognition of rights forest owner for community and institutionalization of spiritual and watershed protection forests of community**

- As mentioned above, in the new Forest law (2017), the community is recognized as one of seven relatively forest owners. They have equal rights with other forest owners having rights to be allocated with forests for managing and utilizing.
- In addition, the spiritual forest of community is officially institutionalized under the sub-category of landscape protected areas of protected area category and watershed protection forest of the community. This is one of the significant reforms in the development orientation of Vietnam's forestry sector in respecting and integrating traditional values of the people into the legal system of the state.

### C. Committing to join and implement international initiatives on forest governance and greenhouse gas reduction (FLEGT & REDD+)

- After more than six years of negotiations, Vietnam and the European Union announced the conclusion of a voluntary partnership agreement on forest law enforcement, forest governance and trade on November 18, Accordingly, Vietnam is committed to establishing a Timber Legality Assurance System (TLAS) and set up a licensing system for timber and timber products trading in the market. Throughout these processes, the private sector, civil society and the community were encouraged to effectively engage to ensure that the agreement harmonizes the interests of all parties, especially the forest dependent community, households and small and micro enterprises.
- Under the framework of REDD+, the Government of Vietnam approved the national program for reducing greenhouse gas emissions through forest loss and degradation; conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks and sustainable management of forest resources by 2030 (Decision 419 / QD-

TTg dated 5 April, 1977) and facilitating the development of measures for the safeguarding of the environment and society for the National REDD+ Action Program.

- Sáng kiến FCPF 2018 -2015 in the north central coast adopt ACMA (adaptive and collaborative management approach), initiate a district level forest management council to ensure multi stakeholder engagement and benefit sharing for result based performance of REDD+.

### D. The development of the timber industry

- Vietnam's timber processing industry has maintained a stable annual growth rate, reached out around USD 9 billion by 2017. The demand for wood material for wood and furniture production has increased that led to extension of plantation and attracted many actors to engage in plantation and processing of timber and forest products. Along with that, there is a need to strengthen the cooperation of the different actors in the value chain of timber and forest products, particularly the linkage between wood processing enterprises and communities and households fostering forest planting materials.

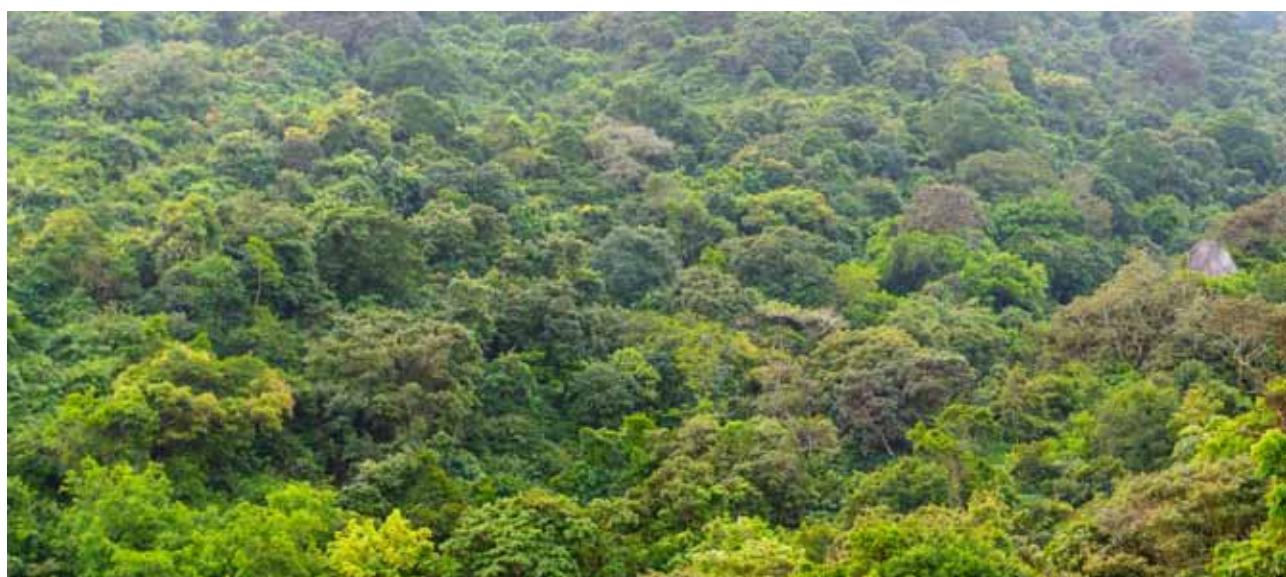


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**04**

*What do you think would be the major challenges confronting social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*

- Lack of focused social/community forestry programs: Vietnam lacks concrete social forestry policy. After more than ten years of community forestry program piloting in Vietnam, despite the fact that the material has been produced, it still cannot produce a separate policy on social forestry. In addition, in terms of institutions, there is a lack of specialized social/community forestry management agency. Community forestry monitoring is now being assigned to the Forest Protection Department. At local, provincial and district levels, there is no specialized monitoring unit in this area.
- Lack of incentive from the government to connect private sector and communities collaboration, investment: The state lacks attractive incentive schemes for businesses investing in forests, such as credit or forestry incentives. Thus, the support to build linkages between people, forest production community and processing enterprises is still limited.
- Household and community tenure rights to natural forests are still limited: Households are only allocated production forests, communities are allocated spiritual and protection forests. Natural forests are mainly allowed to allocate to state owner including management board of special used, protection, state forestry enterprises, armed forces, state organizations to managing, while households and communities are only allowed to be contract-based allocated for protecting forest and get paid from that when Participating in forest protection and management. In addition, forest use rights are not considered as collateral for investment loans for sustainable forestry production.
- Lack of a national forestry extension programs: Production and business activities of households and communities are not the focus of national forestry extension programs. These activities are entirely spontaneous and implemented by the households and communities, ultimately technical support and providing seeding for forest plantation have been left to private plant nurseries without control of government agencies.

05

*What could be key opportunities for social forestry development and implementation from now until 2025?*



- Market demand led to a need for shifting from mono crop to multi-cultivation and combined with forest development: The market requires the production of single-crop culms (such as coffee and rubber, cassava, pepper, cashew) be more sustainable for society and environment, thus offering the opportunity to apply sustainable landscape approaches in land use planning linked to agroforestry (multi-cropping) and forest restoration. This has implications for the design of policies associated with the transformation of agroforestry production model in relation to environmental sustainability, including increased coverage and reduction of carbon emissions, for example. as a major timber plantation policy.
- Increase of production material for communities and households: There is a large area of forest being temporary allocated to and managed by commune authorities (about 3.1 million hectares). This area can become a valuable means for the development of forest when it is allocated to households and communities.
- Potential development for community enterprise: In addition to the rich NTFPs and the recognition and integration of customary law into state law, the implementation of a timber legality assurance could increase the market for timber products. This will provide opportunities and incentive for local community to open business in timber production, as well as with other forest products. In addition, establishing a community enterprise can provide public services for the government in forest management and get payment and/or benefit.

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# THE ROAD TO 2025

In an Overseas Development Institute (ODI) 2015 flagship report to provide a progress update in reaching the SDG targets to 2030, the key SDGs overlapping with the CSO Forum's collective work, fall in a mix bag. Ending extreme poverty, economic growth in LDCs where most of ASEAN fall under and halting deforestation are all under ***Reform*** category, i.e. that by 2030 we would have "reached the target halfway and will need to go the last mile" to achieve the goal. SDG 2 on zero hunger fall under ***Revolution*** category, i.e. that significant change has to be made to make twice as much progress needed to where we currently stand in order to reach the target by 2030. SDG 13 (climate action) and 17 (on partnerships especially on mobilizing domestic revenue towards the SDGs) need a ***Reversal*** – a radical shift as the current trends are "going in the wrong direction" or are "currently off track." Overall, the key issues cited in this systematic ODI assessment are ***equity in growth – within the country and between countries, and inclusivity*** in the process of reaching the targets. "Leaving no one behind" stands as the key message in the SDGs assessment.

Post 2020 with the integrated ASEAN economic community vision - and midway to the 2030 sustainable development agenda, by 2025, the CSO Forum envisages to still being a critical engaged partner to ASEAN leaders on social forestry in as much as we see its potential to make an impact both on forest ecosystems and on peoples lives. The CSO Forum will continue to be making vital contributions to regional and global development and climate change agenda, as far as promoting the vital role of forests and local communities and indigenous peoples are concerned.

There are key opportunities:

- to aligning social forestry to the formative SDGs,
- to keep sharing lessons and practice of local and indigenous knowledge-based sustainable forest management, of resilient community economy and livelihood; and of collective and collaborative actions;
- to recognize and support political leadership that champions social forestry and multistakeholder actions in social forestry, and;
- to sustain partnerships that support capacity building and empowerment of local communities and indigenous peoples, and in safeguarding their rights and future.



photo by Wahyu Widhi, Landscape Indonesia



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The **Civil Society Forum on Social Forestry in ASEAN** is a regional knowledge sharing platform for local communities, indigenous people's organizations, and civil society organizations to communicate key messages to the ASEAN member states through the ASEAN Working Group on Social Forestry (AWG-SF). It is represented by over 60 organizations from 8 countries in Southeast Asia.

The CSO Forum convenor, the **Non-Timber Forest Products - Exchange Programme (NTFP-EP)** is a collaborative network of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations in Asia. It works towards strengthening the capacity of forest-dependent communities to sustainably manage their natural resources.

The **ASEAN Working Group on Social Forestry (AWG-SF)** is a government-initiated network that aims to strengthen social forestry in Southeast Asia through the sharing of information and knowledge. AWG-SF, known previously as the ASEAN Social Forestry Network (ASFN) was established by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Senior Officials on Forestry (ASOF) in August 2005, linking government forestry policy makers directly with civil society organizations, research organizations, academia, private sector, and all who share a vision of promoting social forestry policy and practices in ASEAN.

The **ASEAN-Swiss Partnership on Social Forestry and Climate Change (ASFCC)** is a Partnership Programme of the ASEAN that aims to contribute to the ASEAN Mandate and Policy Framework through support for the ASEAN Social Forestry Network (ASFN) and the ASEAN Multi sectoral Framework on Climate Change towards Food Security (AFCC).