

PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

ITTO PD 836/17 Rev.2 (F)

**“Enhancing Capacity of Local Communities and Forestry
Administration to Effectively Implement Community
Forestry Programme in Kratie and Monduliri Provinces
of Cambodia”**

Host government: Government of Cambodia

Executing Agency: Forestry Administration



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- Project staff
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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CF	: Community Forestry
CFMC	: Community Forestry Management Committee
CFME	: Community Forestry Management and Enterprise
CFMU	: Community Forestry Management Unit
CFP	: Community Forestry Programme
DFCF	: Department of Forestry and Community Forestry
DLLE	: Department of Legislation and Law Enforcement
EA	: Executing Agency
FAC	: Forestry Administration of Cambodia
FAs	: Forestry Administration at Different levels
ITTO	: International Tropical Timber Organization
LCs	: Local Communities
LEO	: Local Event Organizer
MAFF	: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
NC	: National Consultant
NCFP	: National Community Forestry Programme
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organization
NTFP	: Non-Timber Forest Products
RECOFTC	: Regional Community Forest Training Center
RGC	: Royal Government of Cambodia
SFM	: Sustainable Forest Management
SHF	: Stakeholder Forum
SOP	: Standard Operating Procedures

Executive Summary

The project was implemented in Kratie and Mondulkiri provinces because these provinces are among the richest in the country in terms of forest resources and adequate management and governance of forest resources in these regions has a great importance to Cambodia. The extent of the forest cover of the Kratie and Mondulkiri provinces in 2021 was approximately 497,086 ha (41.52%) and 1,141,578 ha (83.52%), respectively; put together, the forest area of the two provinces is 1,638,664 ha.

Community Forestry (CF) scheme is a key element of efforts to reduce forest loss and alleviate poverty in Cambodia. The RGC has launched the National Forest Programme 2010- 2029 wherein CF development is Sub-programs 4 that targets to establish 1,000 CFs covering 2 million ha of forest area by end of the program.

Available data indicate that achievement of CFP implementation is somewhat below the target defined in the National Forest Program 2010-2029. As of end 2023, only 229 CFMUs were in the stage of management plan development and only 106 CFMPs had been approved by FAs. This slow progress is surely an indication of a weak operational capacity of both LCs and FAs in implementing the program. Therefore, the stakeholders agreed to define the key problem on CF development that has to be addressed by the project as “weak capacity of LCs and FAs to effectively implement the CFP”. If this problem remains unresolved, the immediate consequence was a slow progress in CF development which is definitely undesirable because the program is a matter of national priority, designed specifically for improving the livelihoods of local communities. Limited contribution of CF to livelihood very likely will limit support of LCs on the promotion of SFM. Therefore, there is an urgent need to address this key problem if the intended objectives of the CFP are ever to be realized in the near future.

The critical issues facing the FA were: insufficient number of trained professional to meet changing political environment, i.e. increasing contribution of the forest sector to sustainable development of the country has been emphasized by the government and weak capacity to alleviate poverty through efficient and sustainable use of forest resources, as a vehicle to reduce deforestation and forest degradation in various forms has been a major political and institutional issues.

Development objective: To accelerate the development of CF and increase its contribution to livelihoods of LCs and to promotion of SFM in Cambodia.

Specific objective: To enhance capacity of LCs and FAs to effectively implement the CFP in Kratie and Mondulkiri provinces of Cambodia.

The project was implemented in a participatory and collaborative manner; the activities were executed in close consultation, cooperation and collaboration with competent parties including local communities, FA at central and cantonment, division and triage levels, national consultants and NGOs. Capacity of local communities and Forest Administration of different levels will be enhanced in the implementation of the Community Forestry Programme (CFP) covering three main aspects, namely: management planning, implementation of approved management plans and monitoring as well as of CF operations through full execution of defined project activities.

The most critical difference was the allocation of budget for the implementation of improvement of livelihoods of local communities. There was a budget for hiring a national consultant but no budget was available to support implementation of the microfinance system. In this case, the project in consultation with ITTO to reallocate USD4000 to support microfinance of four community forestry in Kratie and Mondulkiri provinces. The reallocation of the budget did not affect implementation of other activities as the reallocated budget came from Activity 1.2 associated with purchase of satellite imagery while the project used the satellite for free.

The reallocation of budget for the publication of Activity 1.5 was useful as the printing of Quick Review Schedule for effective assessment of community forest management plans was necessary for FA officials who are responsible for the review and assessment of community forestry management plans submitted by CFMCs.

Two communication forums were established in Kratie and Monduliri provinces. However, one communication forum was established by the provincial Office of Monduliri with stakeholders that involved community forest management activities while in Kratie the forum was established a long time before the commencement of the project. In this case the project supported several CFMC members to attend quarterly meetings organized by the FA Cantonment of Kratie.

In consultation with ITTO, the implementation of agroforestry was modified from 16ha to 8ha with indicator adjustment approved by ITTO due to inadequate budget for the establishment of demonstration plots.

The project completed and achieved the below tangible outputs:

- Completion of the Guidelines for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans in Khmer.
- 500 copies of the Guidelines for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans were published and distributed to the Forestry Administration at national and provincial levels and other stakeholders.
- 100 copies of the Report on Validation Workshop on the Guidelines for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans were printed.
- Production of 82 Community Forestry land cover maps distributed to all Community Forestry Management Committees in Kratie and Monduliri provinces to aid Community Forestry to conduct forest inventory with up-to-date land cover maps.
- Completion of the interpretation and assessment of forest cover 2021 in Kratie and Monduliri provinces.
- Completion of the Training on Data Collection and Processing with a focus on CF forest inventory and collection of social and biophysical information with 107 participants from 44 Community Forestry Management Committees in Kratie and Monduliri in attendance.
- Completion of the Training on Document Writing of Community Forest Management and Development Plans with 100 participants in attendance from 34 Community Forestry Management Committees in Kratie and Monduliri provinces.
- Completion of the development of Quick Review Schedule (QRS) with 300 copies of the QRS printed to aid effective assessment of management plans.
- Completion of the Training on the Benefits of Establishing Agroforestry and Soil Improvement Techniques with 102 people in participation from 38 community forestry groups in Kratie and Monduliri province.
- 8 hectares of agroforestry were established in three community forests in Kratie province which include Sre Touk Community Forestry (4ha), O' Da Community Forestry (2ha) and Veal Kanseng Community Forestry (2ha) with cultivation of sweet bamboo, teak, cassava and other tree species.
- Two multipurpose hand tractors were procured and handed over to Sre Touk and Veal Kanseng Community Forestry.
- Agreements between four community forestry and the project signed for the provision of a total of USD 4,000 in the form of community microcredit system. This initiative helped local communities to initiate livelihood activities and contribute to the enhancement, protection and management of community forests.
- A Working Group on Communication Forum was established by the Provincial Office of Monduliri with stakeholders as members to meet quarterly to share information on community forest management and issues arising from the management to be addressed.
- Two community forestry meeting halls were built in Kratie at Kan Tout Community Forestry and Monduliri at Pou Kraoch Community Forestry.

- Completion of the development of the Guidelines for Incentives for Stimulating the Involvement of the Private Sector and Non-Governmental Organizations in Local Livelihood Development of Community Forestry in Kratie and Monduliri provinces to promote and facilitate the involvement of NGOs, private sector and other agencies interested in supporting the development of livelihoods of local communities.
- Completion of the development of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for forest patrolling with 250 copies printed and distributed to relevant stakeholders.
- Training on the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for forest patrolling in Khmer was completed with 52 participants, including community members, provincial forestry officials, and local police.
- Completion of joint community forest patrols with Community Forestry Management Committees, Cantonments of the Forestry Administration in Kratie and Monduliri provinces, commune police and local authorities resulted in the return of about 55 hectares of illegally encroached land, the removal of 300 meters of illegal electric fencing, 940 poles installed to claim community forest land, 51 snares, destruction of 3 charcoal ovens and two huts, confiscation of two chainsaws and the prevention of other illegal activities and numerous meetings have been organized with relevant stakeholders especially commune authority to address community forest illegal activities.
- Completion of the development of monitoring and reporting format for community forestry operations in Kratie and Monduliri in Khmer with 150 copies printed to strengthen the ability of the Forestry Administration to monitor the performance of Community Forestry Management Committees.

The development of guidelines associated with preparation of community forest management and development plans, standard operating procedures for forest patrolling, development of monitoring plans of community forest management and development plans and quick review schedule are important policies related to sustainable community forest management. These policies will provide other milestones for enhancing community forest protection and development as these policies are interconnected which provide guidance and acceleration of implementation of community forest programs in Cambodia especially in Kratie and Monduliri provinces.

Capacity building was provided with regard to the implementation of the guidelines especially training on data collection with focus on community forest inventory, the writing of community forest management plans and standard operating procedures for forest patrolling. The training intended to increase knowledge and capacity of Community Forestry Management Committees and Forestry Administration officials and other stakeholders to use the guidelines for the management and development of community forest effectively and sustainably. In addition to training in the use of the guidelines, capacity building associated with livelihood skills were provided, especially the introduction of agroforestry in community forests as a collective practice with support for piloting and demonstration of agroforestry will enhance the understanding of the benefits of piloting program.

With regard to improvement of livelihoods of local community members, the implementation of returnable seed funds in the forms of microcredit system has been making progress as four community forests are happy with the provision of funds for community forestry members to borrow money for cultivation of agriculture with low interest and make some profits. The revenue generated from interest provides enhancement of community forestry management with some revenue allocated to be used for community forest patrolling while some allocated to increase microcredit capitals.

The project created a project Facebook to upload the implementation of project activities, project achievements, events organized by the project and other activities. At the completion of the project, approximately 5000 followers of the project Facebook were observed with uploading of 131 texts with photos and 11 videos. In addition, 18 texts of the project were uploaded to FA's Facebook. An article on the project microcredit system was written to upload to ITTO webpage and video production of the project microcredit was shown at the ITTC 60 meeting held on 2-6 December 2024. Moreover, project progress and achievements were presented at various meetings and other platforms

to disseminate project achievements associated with support for community forest management and development, especially capacity building and livelihood development in Kratie and Mondulhiri provinces.

Capacity gained from the project through training, workshops, meetings and other events continue to be used by CFMCs, FA officials and other stakeholders after completion of the project, especially training on data collection and processing and community forestry inventory while CFMCs with support from other stakeholders will use this capacity to prepare community forest management and development plans while other training on writing of community forest management plans is connected with data collection and forest inventory. In addition, training on forest patrolling and joint patrolling will be used as a model when the project is completed as the patrolling was effective to suppress illegal activity inside community forests.

The publication of guidelines and other documents will be used by the Forestry Administration officials and CFMCs and other stakeholders including NGOs for supporting the implementation and acceleration of community forestry program, the development and adoption of community forest management and development plans, monitoring of community forest management and implementation. In addition, microcredit and agroforestry continue to be used by CFMCs although the project was completed as these programs provided benefits for them. The building of two meeting halls will be used as a venue for meetings and other events by CFMCs and other agencies when they meet with community forestry members and other authorities.

The Cantonments of FA both in Kratie and Mondulhiri and project team as well as local authorities including village, commune and district continue to support community forestry in their respective jurisdiction to monitor and support community forests.

1. Project Identification

1.1 Context

The project was implemented in Kratie and Mondulkiri provinces because these provinces are among the richest in the country in terms of forest resources and adequate management and governance of forest resources in these regions has a great importance to Cambodia. The extent of the forest cover of the Kratie and Mondulkiri provinces in 2021 was approximately 497,086 ha (41.52%) and 1,141,578 ha (83.52%), respectively; put together, the forest area of the two provinces is 1,638,664 ha.

The size of population of Kratie province in 2011 was 339,756 people or a density of around 29 people per sq km, comprising six tribes, namely: the Phnorn, the Kouy, the Mil, the Khonh, the Steang and the Thamoun. Roughly, 70% of Kratie people live along the Mekong river and around 70% of the people are rural with 8% as indigenous people. Most Kratie residents are subsistence farmers or fishermen; around 78% of the labor force is employed in the agriculture sector. In an effort to entice foreign investment, the province is offering generous business concessions in rubber plantations. Mondulkiri province is a hilly area with a sparse population whose size in 2011 was 70,438 people or a density of 4 people per sqkm. The population is made up of ten tribal minorities (80%) with the Chhmer, closely related to the Phnorn, as the largest among them; the remaining 20% consists of Khmer, Chinese and Muslim Cham. Majority of the people make a living through shifting agriculture, hunting and collecting fruits from the forests.

1.2 Origin and problem

Community Forestry (CF) scheme is a key element of efforts to reduce forest loss and alleviate poverty in Cambodia. The RGC has launched the National Forest Programme 2010- 2029 wherein CF development is Sub-programs 4 that targets to establish 1,000 CFs covering 2 million ha of forest area by end of the program. As of end of 2023, available data indicated that around 528,340 ha of forest area had been designated as 648 CF sites of which 468CFs (385,938 ha) had the agreement-signed status, 229 CFs (175,946 ha) were in various stage of management plan development. 106 CF management plans (72,621 ha) have been approved by the FACs, which is 16% of designated CFs or 9.4% of the national target of 1,000 CFs by 2029.

This slow progress was surely an indication of a weak operational capacity of both LCs and FAs in implementing the program. Therefore, the stakeholders agreed to define the key problem on CF development that has to be addressed by the project as “weak capacity of LCs and FAs to effectively implement the CFP”. If this problem remains unresolved, the immediate consequence was a slow progress in CF development which was definitely undesirable because the program is a matter of national priority, designed specifically for improving livelihoods of local communities. Limited contribution of CF to livelihoods very likely will limit support of LCs on the promotion of SFM. Therefore, there is an urgent need to address this key problem if the intended objectives of the CFP are ever to be realized in the near future.

2. Project Objectives and Implementation Strategy

2.1 Project rationale, the Development Objective and Specific Objectives of the Project

The Forestry Administration (FA) which is under the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery (MAFF) is responsible for managing forest resources according to the National Forest Sector Policy and the Law on Forestry. There appears to be some overlap in responsibility with the Fisheries Administration, also under MAFF, which is responsible for the management of flooded forests; and with the Ministry of Environment, which is responsible for the management of protected areas. The Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction is responsible for identifying the

land use, classification and registration of state land to prevent forest encroachment. The FA itself comprises 6 Departments, 1 Research Institute and 1 Wildlife Rescue Center and Zoo, 4 inspectorates, 21 cantonments, 59 divisions and 170 triages which are the lowest sub-division of FA at the local level.

By and large, coordination among the ministries involved in forest resource management was still not sufficient mainly for reasons of sectoral interest and bias. While exchange of information on forest land use conflict, land classification and allocation were taking place, it appears to be weak in light of the significance of forest land related issues relating to livelihood of local communities as well as housing and industrial development. As far as the FA is concerned, coordination among the organization units, both at the vertical and horizontal directions, was also a big challenge due mainly to the large structure of the organization.

The critical issues facing the FA were: insufficient number of trained professional to meet changing political environment, i.e. increasing contribution of the forest sector to sustainable development of the country was emphasized by the government and weak capacity to alleviate poverty through efficient and sustainable use of forest resources, as a vehicle to reduce deforestation and forest degradation in various forms has been a major political and institutional issue.

Development objective: To accelerate development of CF and increase its contribution to livelihood of LCs and to promotion of SFM in Cambodia.

Specific objective: To enhance the capacity of LCs and FAs to effectively implement the CFP in Kratie and Monduliri provinces of Cambodia.

2.2 Project Implementation Strategy

The project was implemented in a participatory and collaborative manner; the activities were executed in close consultation, cooperation and collaboration with competent parties including local communities, FA at central and cantonment, division and triage levels, national consultants and NGOs. Capacity of local communities and Forestry Administration of different levels will be enhanced in the implementation of the Community Forestry Programme (CFP) covering three main aspects, namely: management planning, implementation of approved management plans and monitoring as well as of CF operations through full execution of defined project activities.

The proposition made is that to achieve the specific objective, three outputs as defined shall be delivered; by achieving the specific objective, the development of objective should be realized which can be measured three years after the project completion. To properly deliver the defined outputs, pertaining activities of individual outputs are to be executed in the following manner:

Output 1: Capacity of LCs and FAs in CF management planning enhanced

- Activity 1.1 on enhancing the technical manual for development of CF management plan is best to be executed in collaboration with national consultants having strong scientific and practical experience in order to balance the academic and practical value of the manual produced.
- Activity 1.2 on using satellite imagery to aid forest inventory and field data collection will be executed with the assistance of a GIS expert; most recent satellite imageries of TM band 542 shall be used.
- Activity 1.3 on in-forest training will be implemented by sub-contracting to a competent NGOs because of the wide scope of tasks and it requires an extended stay in the forests.
- Activity 1.4 will be accomplished by a national consultant from the Department of Forest and Community Forestry to provide quality training on writing of management plan document.
- Activities 1.5 will be implemented with the assistance of a national consultant having accumulated experience in forest management planning.

Output 2: Capacity of LCs to operationalize approved management plans promoted

- Activity 2.1 is best to be accomplished by Local Event Organizers (LEO) noting that trainers should be drawn from practitioners that are familiar with forest management and business development.
- Activity 2.2 on the training of LCs and development of demo plots on agro-forestry activities are best to be accomplished with the assistance of competent experienced institution due to the nature of the tasks.
- Activity 2.3 on provision of returnable grant for seed capital will be executed by FA staffs because this activity involves developing and signing binding agreements between LCs and FAs.
- Activity 2.4 on formation and operation of a CF stakeholder forum is best to be accomplished by a senior FA staff to ease consultation process with stakeholders especially cantonment authorities.
- Activity 2.5 on incentive guideline development is to be accomplished with the assistance of a national consultant to ensure, to the extent possible, neutrality and objectivity. An FGD will be organized to examine guideline draft prior to its submission to FA for endorsement.

Output 3: Capacity of FAs in monitoring and reporting of CF operations elevated

- Activity 3.1 will be accomplished with the assistance of a national consultant having practical experience in project monitoring and evaluation.
- Activity 3.2 is best to be executed with the assistance of competent national experts having experience in forest patrolling operations. In the selection process of community members to be trained on forest patrol, it must be emphasized by the expert on the underlying notion of collaborative forest patrolling; it is not a means for making direct income but an endeavor for protecting and sustaining collective source of income.
- Activity 3.3 on development of forest patrolling SOP will be accomplished in collaboration with a national consultant on law enforcement.
- Activity 3.4 on procurement of forest patrolling equipment and facilities is to be carried out by FA at the central and cantonment level.

2.3 Identified Assumption and Risks

The key assumptions made as regards achievement of the specific objective are approval by DG of FA on revised, enhanced version of technical manual for development of CFMPs, cooperative CFMCs, and cooperative LCs. If the first assumption does not hold, development of CFMPs by CFMCs will remain slowly moving and planned approval of 50 CFMPs may not be realized. If the second assumption is invalid, delivery of Outputs 1 and 2 may be delayed or failing thus compromising achievement of the project objectives. The assumption on cooperative LCs will affect selection of LC leaders or members to be trained and involved in the piloting of collaborative forest patrolling. It is to be noted that the basic notion of a collaborative forest patrol is “shared responsibility for protecting and sustaining forest resources as a sustainable source of livelihood”. Thus, LC leaders or members that are involved in such a task are not solely motivated by financial incentive but more strongly by obligation to protect collective ownership and tenure on source of income.

In case either one of the assumptions, delivery of the outputs will be jeopardized and so is achievement of the specific objective. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to anticipate the potential risks of invalid assumptions by putting in place mitigating measures since the early stage of the project development.

3. Project Performance

(a) Specific Objective:

Specific objective: To enhance capacity of LCs and FAs to effectively implement the CFP in Kratie and Monduliri provinces of Cambodia.

Specific Objective was achieved, the project fulfilled the outcomes indicators except the 50 management plans approved which require continuation of the preparation of management plans (Table 1).

Table 1. Indicators and achievements

Indicators	Achievements
300 copies of technical manual and 82 copies of forest cover maps distributed to CFMUs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Guidelines for the Preparation of Community Forest Management and Development Plans approved by FA/MAFF. 500 copies of the Guidelines for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans in Khmer were published for distribution to the Forestry Administration at national and provincial levels and other stakeholders. 82 Community Forestry land cover maps were produced and distributed to Community Forestry Management Committees in Kratie and Monduliri provinces to aid Community Forestry to conduct forest inventory with up-to-date land cover.
100 CFMUs trained on development of management plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three training on document writing of community forest management and development plans were conducted in Kratie province with a total of 100 Community Forestry members in attendance from 34 community forestry.
Additional 50 management plans approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 CF management plans have been approved.
100 CFMUs trained on skills for business development and agroforestry livelihood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four training on the Benefits of Establishing Agroforestry and Soil Improvement Techniques were conducted in 2024 with 102 participants in attendance, including 31 women and CFMC members from 38 community forestry, 33 which were in Kratie and 5 which were in Monduliri.
2 SHFs operational in 2 provinces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One SHF was operational in Monduliri province instead of 2 because there was an existing SHF operational in Kratie.
2 monitoring plans for CF operations developed in 2 provinces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The monitoring plan, and a practical reporting format for CF operations community members for the two provinces in Khmer was approved by both FA Cantonments of Kratie and Monduliri in October 2024. 150 copies of the monitoring plans in Khmer were printed and distributed to the FA Cantonments of Kratie and Monduliri.
Operation of collaborative forest patrolling piloted in 2 provinces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two joint operations of collaborative forest patrolling were established and operational in two provinces which include FA officials, CFMCs, commune police, district authorities and other stakeholders.
Incentive guideline on private involvement endorsed by FA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The incentive guidelines on the involvement of private sector and NGOs in development of livelihoods of local communities was endorsed.

(b) Outputs and related activities

Output 1. Capacity of LCs and FAs in CF management planning enhanced

Output 1 was achieved, considering the completion of the planned activities (Table 2).

Table 2: Planned Activities and Achievements of Output 1

Planned activities	Percentage executed	Achievements/Note
1.1. To review and improve existing technical manual for development of CF management plans	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A National Consultant was selected and approved by ITTO in December 2021 to review and improve existing manual for the development of CF management plans. • The revision of existing Manual for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans was completed in May 2022. • A provincial consultation meeting in Kratie was organized in cooperation with RECOFTC on 10 May 2022 at Hor Bunny Hotel with 25 participants in attendance from FA officials, RECOFTC and WWF and representatives of CF network in Kratie, Stung Treng, Preah Vihear and Kampong Thom provinces to discuss the draft revised Manual for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans and to collect inputs, comments and recommendations. • A provincial consultation meeting in Mondulakiri was organized on 24 June 2022 at FA Cantonment of Mondulakiri with 19 (2 females) participants in attendance which include FA officials at Cantonment and Divisions levels, WCS, My Village Organization, CF Management Committees in Mondulakiri province to discuss drafted revised Manual for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans to collect inputs, comments and recommendations. • A National Validation Workshop on Guidelines for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans was organized on 4-5 August 2022 at Phnom Penh Hotel, with 151 participants in attendance from FA, Provincial Departments of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Provincial Cantonments, Divisions and Triages of FA, Royal University of Agriculture, Prekleap National Agricultural Institute, CFMCs, community forestry network, ITTO organization, Korea-Mekong Forestry Cooperation Center, Agency for Development of Switzerland (SDC), United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Representatives of national and international organizations and relevant stakeholders. The Workshop was aimed at sharing information on community forestry-supported developments in Cambodia, successful stories and challenges and collecting inputs from participants for further revision of the guidelines. • The Report on Validation Workshop on the Guidelines for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans was completed in September 2022 and 100 copies of the Report on Validation Workshop were published. • A FA internal meeting was organized on 17 November 2022 to discuss the draft revised Guidelines for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans with 13 directors, deputy directors and representatives of the departments under FA in attendance. The objective of the meeting was to review and collect comments and recommendations from line departments under FA. • FA/MAFF organized a meeting on 12 May 2023 with attendance from high ranking officials to discuss the Guidelines on the Preparation of Community Forest Management and Development Plans. The discussion was focused on the development of community forestry especially the planting of

		<p>trees to generate revenues for the community and retain community forest land.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Guidelines for the Preparation of Community Forest Management and Development Plans was approved by FA/MAFF in late June 2023. • 500 copies of the Guidelines for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans were published in October 2023 for distribution to the Forestry Administration at national and provincial levels and other stakeholders.
1.2. To publish and disseminate forest cover maps of CFs in the project sites to aid effective designing of forest inventory	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A National Consultant was selected and approved by ITTO in December 2021 to conduct forest cover assessment and disseminate forest cover maps of CFs in Kratie and Mondulkiri. • Interpretation of satellite images Sentinel 2 of forest cover assessment in Kratie and Mondulkiri province was completed in April 2022. • Verification of points using program Collect Earth program with a total of 1015 points in both Kratie and Mondulkiri provinces was completed in April 2022. • The project team completed the review of the draft report on the interpretation and assessment of forest cover 2021 in July 2022 and asked the Consultant to revise the report based on comments from the project team and ITTO program officer. • The report on the assessment of forest cover 2021 in both provinces was approved by FA in early September 2022. • 82 Community Forestry land cover maps were produced and distributed to Community Forestry in Kratie and Mondulkiri provinces to aid Community Forestry to conduct forest inventory with up-to-date land cover.
Activity1.3. To conduct in-forest training on data collection and processing	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RECOFTC was selected and approved by ITTO in June 2022 to conduct training on data collection and processing. • Four field training sessions were organized on data collection and the processing of community forest inventories for use in the development of CFMPs, three of which were conducted in Kratie province and one of which was organized in Mondulkiri province. The total number of participants in those training was 107, which included 27 women, who were Community Forestry Management Committee members from 44 community forestry groups. • Report on the training on data collection and processing with a focus on CF forest inventory and collection of social and biophysical information was completed in June 2023.
Activity1.4. To conduct training on document writing of management plan	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A National Consultant on training on document writing of community forest management and development plans was selected and approved by ITTO in early August 2023. • Three training on document writing of community forest management and development plans were conducted on 26-27 September 2023 in Chhlong district, 28-29 September 2023 in Chet Borey District and 30 September and 1 October 2023 in Sambo district, Kratie province with a total of 100 Community Forestry members in attendance from 34 community forestry management members. • Report on the training on document writing of community forest management and development plans was completed in November 2023. • 150 copies of the report have been printed in late December 2024.

Activity 1.5. To develop a Quick Review Schedule (QRS) to aid effective assessment of management plans.	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A National Consultant on development of Quick Review Schedule for effective assessment of CF management plan was selected and approved in early August 2023. • The development of Quick Review Schedule was completed and 300 copies of the QRS were printed for distribution in October 2023.
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Output 2. Capacity of LCs to operationalize approved management plans promoted

Output 2 was achieved, considering the close completion of the planned activities (Table 3).

Table 2: Planned Activities and Achievements of Output2

Planned activities	Percentage executed	Achievements/Note
2.1. Organize workshops and comparative studies on forest-based business development.	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subcontractors to organize two workshops on forest-based business development were selected in May 2023 with the engagement of the two FA Cantonments of Kratie and Mondulkiri which was approved by ITTO in late March 2024. • A workshop on Comparative Study of Forest based Business Development was organized on 6 June 2023 at Hor Bunny Hotel in Kratie province to collect information on livelihoods of local communities with 44 participants in attendance from authority of Kratie province, FA Cantonment of Kratie, FA Divisions in Kratie, provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, district and commune authorities, 15 Community Forestry, Community Forestry Network, RECOFTC and FLO organization. • Another workshop was conducted on 8 June 2023 at Picheada Hotel in Mondulkiri province to collect information on livelihoods of local communities with 46 participants in attendance from provincial authority of Mondulkiri, provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, provincial Department of Environment, FA Cantonment of Mondulkiri, Divisions of FA in Mondulkiri, district and commune authorities, five Community Forestry and My Village Organization. • Reports of the two workshops were prepared and completed in July 2023.
2.2. Train LCs on skills for implementing selected sustainable livelihood activities.	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keo Leakta Garden Nursery was selected by the project to establish agroforestry in three community forestry including Sre Touk, Veal Kanseng and O' Da community forestry which was approved by ITTO in August 2023 and May 2024. • 8 hectares of agroforestry has been established in three community forests in Kratie province including Sre Touk Community Forestry (4ha), O' Da Community Forestry (2ha) and Veal Kanseng Community Forestry (2ha). 8 hectares of land were cultivated with sweet bamboo, teak, cassava and other tree species. Agroforestry projects, such as mixed planting of crops and trees, have contributed to the operationalization of approved management plans by integrating sustainable livelihood activities.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two multipurpose hand tractors were procured and handed over to Sre Touk and Veal Kanseng Community Forestry. • Forest and Livelihood Organization (FLO) was selected by the project to conduct training on skills for implementing selected sustainable livelihood activities and approved by ITTO in late December 2023. • Four training sessions on the Benefits of Establishing Agroforestry and Soil Improvement Techniques were conducted-three in Kratie and one in Mondulkiri provinces in April and May 2024. There were 102 people who participated in the training, including 31 women and CFMC members from 38 community forestry groups, 33 which were in Kratie province and 5 in Mondulkiri province. • A Report of the four training sessions were prepared and completed in June 2024. • 150 copies of the report on the Training on the Benefits of Establishing Agroforestry and Soil Improvement Techniques were printed.
2.3 Provide returnable small seed funds under agreed upon pre-specified conditions, to initiate selected livelihood activities.	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A national expert was selected and approved by ITTO in December 2021 to develop terms and conditions and Agreement between FA and CF Management Committees for the Provision of Returnable of Small Seed Fund. • The development of terms and conditions and other related documents for the provision of small seed funds and agreements were completed in April 2022. • Agreements were signed between the project and four community forestry which include Kantout, Phnom Torteung, O' Dar and Ping prong Klangpestho in May 2022. • USD4,000 was granted to four community forestry in Kratie and Mondulkiri provinces, where one community forestry received USD1,000 in May 2022. • Progress has been substantial, with revenue of about USD 2,087 generated in interest from loans to community forestry members as of November 2024. • The USD4,000 was borrowed by community forestry members and paid interest to the credit team every month. The full amount paid by the member must be lent to other members in turn. So far no one has been in default meaning that borrowers pay in full both the principal and the interest. • Report of returnable small seed funds including terms and conditions and signing of agreements were completed in July 2022. • 150 copies of the Report on Returnable Small Seed Funds have been published.
2.4 Develop CF communication forum for experience and information sharing among LCs, FA and	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A National Expert was selected and approved by ITTO in late March 2023 to develop the CF communication forum in Mondulkiri exclusive of Kratie because Kratie has an existing community forum called provincial community forest network.

other interested parties.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A consultation meeting was organized in May 2023 with involved stakeholders which include the authority of Mondulkiri province, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Department of Environment, district and commune authorities to discuss structure, TORs and establishing of a working group to facilitate organizing of stakeholders' community forum. • The Office of Mondulkiri authority issued a Decision on the Establishment of a Working Group to Facilitate Community Forest Management in Mondulkiri province in April 2023 which is related to the development of the stakeholder's communication forum. The working Ground consists of Office of the Authority of Mondulkiri province, FA Cantonment of Mondulkiri and FA Divisions under FA Cantonment in Mondulkiri, Department of Environment of Mondulkiri, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, district and commune authorities and NGOs. • Five community fora were organized quarterly in 2023 and 2024 at the FA Cantonment of Mondulkiri with participation from members of working group established and NGOs in Mondulkiri province to discuss community forest management, sharing of information among stakeholders and address issues raised by CFMCs. • Report of the development of CF communication forum including its structure and TORs was completed in May 2023. • The project provided two community forestry meeting halls- one in Kratie at Kan Tout Community Forestry and one in Mondulkiri at Pou Kraoch Community Forestry. The building of the two community forestry meeting halls was completed in late June 2023.
2.5 Formulate incentive guideline on promotion of private sector involvement in livelihood development.	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A national consultant on the formulation of incentive guidelines on promotion of private sector involvement in livelihood development was selected and approved by ITTO in late June 2022. • The draft formulation of incentive guidelines on promotion of private sector involvement in livelihood development was completed in August 2022. • A Consultation meeting was organized by the project on 22 September 2022 in Kratie province to discuss drafted incentive guidelines for involvement of private sector in the development of livelihoods of local communities with 30 participants in attendance from FA Divisions and Cantonment of Kratie, commune authority, Chet Borey district authority, RECOFTC, WWF and FLO and community forestry representatives and community forestry network in Kratie province. • The incentive guidelines on the involvement of private sector and NGOs in development of livelihoods of local communities was completed in September 2022. • 150 copies of The incentive guidelines have been published.

Output 3. Capacity of FAs in monitoring and reporting of CF operations elevated

Output 3 was achieved, considering the close completion of the planned activities (Table 4).

Table 4: Planned Activities and Achievements of Output3

Planned activities	Percentage executed	Achievements/Note
3.1. Develop a monitoring plan establishing indicator, CFMUs, dates and executors, and a practical reporting format for CF operations community members	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of a monitoring plan, and a practical reporting format for CF operations community members was completed in July 2024. A consultation meeting was organized on 9 September 2024 to discuss the draft monitoring plan for CF operations in Kratie province with 35 participants in attendance (4 females) including FA Cantonments of Kratie and Mondulkiri, provincial and district community forest network, CFMCs and FLO. The objective of the consultation meeting was to consult the draft monitoring plans and collect comments and inputs from stakeholders. The monitoring plan, and a practical reporting format for CF operations community members was approved by both FA Cantonments of Kratie and Mondulkiri in October 2024. 150 copies of the monitoring plans in Khmer were printed and distributed to the FA Cantonments of Kratie and Mondulkiri.
3.2. Pilot operation of a collaborative forest patrolling involving FA personnel and trained	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerous meetings were organized with CFMCs, district and commune authorities and FA at district and commune levels to discuss and address issues of community forest management especially illegal activities which include community forest clearing. 225 signs and 35 posters were installed in seven community forests to demarcate and raise awareness of community forest boundaries and penalties associated with logging and clearing of forest inside community forests. On 29-30 January 2024, the project team organized 2 separate trainings on Standard Operating Procedure for Forest Patrols for provincial FA officers both in Kratie and Mondulkiri provinces, commune authorities, commune police and representatives from Community Forestry Management Committees in Mondulkiri and Kratie provinces with a total of 52 participants (02 female) in attendance. The purposes of the training are: 1) Introduce the Standard Operating Procedure for Forest Patrols, 2) Understand legal framework related to the forest patrolling and 3) Prepare affective community patrolling plans. Some 44 Joint patrolling in community forests in Kratie and Mondulkiri were conducted between Community Forestry Management Committees and its members and Cantonments of the Forestry Administration in Kratie and Modulkiri provinces, commune police and local authorities. The join patrolling has resulted in the return of about 55 hectares of illegally encroached land, the removal of 300 meters of illegal electric fencing, 940 poles installed to claim

		community forest land, 51 snares, destruction of 3 charcoal ovens and two huts, confiscation of two chainsaws and the prevention of other illegal activities and logs and sawn wood confiscated.
3.3. Develop sound SOP for forest patrolling	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft SOP for forest patrolling developed by the National Consultant in Khmer, was completed in June 2023. • A focus group discussion meeting was organized on 28 July 2023 in Kratie province to discuss the draft SOP for forest patrolling to collect inputs from stakeholders with 26 participants in attendance from the Cantonments of the FA of Kratie and Mondulkiri, CFMCs from both provinces, commune authorities and NGOs which include RECOFTC and FLO. • The SOP was approved by FA for publication and distribution in October 2023. • 250 copies of the SOP were printed for distribution to stakeholders in November 2023.
3.4. Procure needed equipment and facilities for collaborative forest patrolling	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five motorbikes, four GPS, one drone and two cameras were procured in late December 2023 after ITTO issued NOL for the procurement of those equipment on December 11, 2023. • The five motorbikes, four GPS and two cameras have been used to patrol community forests in Kratie and Mondulkiri provinces in cooperation with FA Cantonments of both provinces, Community Forestry Management Committees and other stakeholders.

Joint patrolling was conducted from the commencement of the project in late 2021 due to requests by CFMCs in both Kratie and Mondulkiri. The project team, in addition to coordinating and working with CFMCs and local authorities, conducted joint patrolling with CFMC members and FA officials to crack down on illegal forest activities. Signs and posters were installed in community forests to disseminate community forest boundaries and penalties applied to committing illegal activities in community forests in accordance with the Forestry Law in Cambodia. The installment of signs and posters were not stated in the project document. However, when discussing with CFMCs in both provinces, they requested that the project should help CFMCs in this matter while commune authority supported the request.

Outreach of the project

Concerning project outreach, the project created a project Facebook to upload the implementation of project activities, project achievements, events organized by the project and other activities. At the completion of the project, a total of 5000 followers of the project Facebook were observed with uploading of 131 texts with photos and 11 videos. In addition, 18 texts of the project were uploaded to FA's Facebook. An article on the project microcredit system was written to upload to ITTO webpage and video production of the project microcredit was shown at the ITTC 60 meeting held on 2-6 December 2024. Moreover, project progress and achievements were presented at various meetings and other platforms to disseminate project achievements associated with support for community forest management and development, especially capacity building and livelihood development in Kratie and Mondulkiri provinces. Publication of guidelines and reports produced by the project is part of outreach which include:

- Report on Validation Workshop on the Guidelines for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans.
- Guidelines for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans in Khmer.
- Forest Cover Assessment in Kratie and Monduliri provinces.
- Forest Training Report on Data Collection and processing: Community Forest Inventory for Management Planning.
- Quick Review Schedule to aid effective assessment of management plans in Khmer.
- Report of the Training on the Benefits of Establishing Agroforestry and Soil Improvement Techniques.
- Report on Preparation of Returnable Seed Funds to Improve Local Livelihoods and Forest Protection for Community Forestry in Kratie and Monduliri Provinces.
- Guidelines on Incentives for Stimulating the Involvement of Private Sector and Non-Governmental Organizations in Local Livelihood Development in Kratie and Monduliri Provinces.
- Community Forest Monitoring Plans in Khmer.
- Standard Operating Procedures for Forest Patrols in Khmer.

(c) Schedule:

- Starting date; 1st October 2021
- Duration; 39 months (originally scheduled 36 months)

The project was originally scheduled to finalize in September 2024. Some key activities need extensive consultations and comprehensive reviews with regard to 1) the development of a monitoring plan establishing indicators, and a practical reporting format for CF operations community members. 2) Printing of activity reports can be implemented only when all activities have been completed, 3) Monitoring of the implementation of agroforestry and microcredit and 4) Preparation of biannual, completion and financial reports and auditing. In this regard, ITTO approved the no-cost extension of the project period until 31 December 2024 requested to complete the three scenarios above.

(d) Total amount of expenditures; analysis of applied input

The project used funds effectively to implement the planned activities and to achieve the outcomes and objectives in consultation with ITTO and Forestry Administration. Budget modifications were subsequently proposed and modified in consultation with ITTO to reallocate budget for a number of activities considered additional budget. In addition, savings and carryovers of the project budget were reallocated to implement activities that need additional funds.

The expenditure incurred shown in the Project Budget at present is explained below:

- The up-to-date utilization of the ITTO project finance as of 27 December 2024 was USD 339,869.64 or close to 100% of the six installments received from ITTO and the total budget of three years (USD 339,920.00).
- The up-to-date balance of the six installments received from ITTO: USD 339,920.00 - USD 339,869.64 (Liquidated) = USD 50.36 (Fund of USD50.36 in the Project bank Account) and USD 00.00 (Fund in hand for operation)].
- The financial statement of the project is separately attached with this completion report.

4. Project Outcome, Target Beneficiaries Involvement

i) Extent to which the Project Specific Objective(s) was achieved;

The project has successfully achieved the Project Specific Objective against the outcome indicators (Table 1) and the planned activities (Table 2 to 4), except for the development of CF management plans that require time to achieve 50 management plans.

ii) Situation existing at Project completion as compared to the pre-project situation with respect to: the tangible Outputs of the Project; sectoral policies and programs; and the physical environment.

The project completed and achieved the below tangible outputs (Table2, 3 and 4)

- Completion and approval of the Guidelines for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans in Khmer.
- 500 copies of the Guidelines for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans were published and distributed to the Forestry Administration at national and provincial levels and other stakeholders.
- 100 copies of the Report on the Validation Workshop on the Guidelines for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans were printed.
- Production of 82 Community Forestry land cover maps were distributed to Community Forestry Management Committees in Kratie and Monduliri provinces to aid Community Forestry to conduct forest inventory with up-to-date land cover.
- Completion of the interpretation and assessment of forest cover 2021 in Kratie and Monduliri provinces.
- Completion of the Training on Data Collection and Processing with a focus on CF forest inventory and collection of social and biophysical information with 107 participants from 44 Community Forestry Management Committees in Kratie and Monduliri in attendance.
- Completion of the Training on Document Writing of Community Forest Management and Development Plans with 100 participants in attendance from 34 Community Forestry Management Committees in Kratie and Monduliri provinces.
- Completion of the development of Quick Review Schedule (QRS) with 300 copies of the QRS printed to aid effective assessment of management plans.
- Completion of the Training on the Benefits of Establishing Agroforestry and Soil Improvement Techniques with 102 people in participation from 38 community forestry groups in Kratie and Monduliri provinces.
- 8 hectares of agroforestry were established in three community forests in Kratie province which include Sre Touk Community Forestry (4ha), O' Da Community Forestry (2ha) and Veal Kanseng Community Forestry (2ha) with cultivation of sweet bamboo, teak, cassava and other tree species.
- Two multipurpose hand tractors were procured and handed over to Sre Touk and Veal Kanseng Community Forestry in Kratie province.
- Agreements between four community forestry and the project were signed for the provision of a total of USD 4,000 in the form of community microcredit system. This initiative helped local communities to initiate livelihood activities and contribute to the enhancement, protection and management of community forests.
- A Working Group on Communication Forum was established by the Provincial Office of Monduliri with stakeholders as members to meet quarterly to share information on community forest management and addressing issues arising from the management to be addressed.
- Two community forestry meeting halls were built in Kratie at Kan Tout Community Forestry and in Monduliri at Pou Kraoch Community Forestry.
- Completion of the development of the Guidelines for Incentives for Stimulating the Involvement of the Private Sector and Non-Governmental Organizations in Local Livelihood Development of Community Forestry in Kratie and Monduliri provinces to promote and facilitate the involvement of NGOs, private sector and other agencies interested in supporting the development of livelihoods of local communities.
- Completion of the development of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for forest patrolling with 250 copies printed and distributed to relevant stakeholders.
- Training on the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for forest patrolling in Khmer was completed with 52 participants, including community members, provincial forestry officials, and local police.

- Completion of joint community forest patrols with Community Forestry Management Committees, Cantonments of the Forestry Administration in Kratie and Monduliri provinces, commune police and local authorities resulted in the return of about 55 hectares of illegally encroached land, the removal of 300 meters of illegal electric fencing, 940 poles installed to claim community forest land, 51 snares, destruction of 3 charcoal ovens and two huts, confiscation of two chainsaws and the prevention of other illegal activities and numerous meetings have been organised with relevant stakeholders especially commune authority to address community forest illegal activities.
- Completion of the development of monitoring and reporting format for community forestry operations in Kratie and Monduliri in Khmer with 150 copies printed to strengthen the ability of the Forestry Administration to monitor the performance of Community Forestry Management Committees.

The development of Guidelines associated with preparation of community forest management and development plans, Standard Operating Procedures for Forest Patrols, development of monitoring plans of community forest management and development plans and quick review schedule are important policies related to sustainable community forest management. These policies will provide key milestones for enhancing community forest protection and development as these policies are interconnected which provide guidance and acceleration of implementation of community forest program in Cambodia especially in Kratie and Monduliri provinces.

Capacity building were provided with regard to the implementation of the guidelines especially training on data collection with focus on community forest inventory, the writing of community forest management plans and standard operating procedures for forest patrolling. The training intended to increase knowledge and capacity of CFMCs and FA officials and other stakeholders to use the guidelines for the management and development of community forests effectively and sustainably. In addition to the training of the use of the guidelines, capacity building associated with livelihood skills were also provided especially the introduction of agroforestry in community forests as a collective practice with support for piloting and demonstration of agroforestry will enhance the understanding of the benefits of the piloting program.

With regard to improvement of livelihoods of local community members, the implementation returnable seed funds in the forms of microcredit system has been making progress as four community forestry are happy with the provision of the funds for community forestry members to borrow money for cultivation of agriculture with low interest and make some profits. The revenue generated from interest will provide enhancement of community forestry management with some revenue allocated to be used for community forest patrols while some allocated to increase microcredit capitals.

Two multipurpose hand tractors were provided to two community forestry to use for transport and patrolling as necessary while two community meeting halls were built for community forestry to organize events and meetings among community forestry members and community forestry management committees.

iii) Participation of the target beneficiaries in the implementation of the Project and how its results have been used by them or will be used in the future.

The project was designed to involve all stakeholders in the implementation of the project from the commencement especially CFMCs and members of community forestry, Forestry Administration at national and provincial levels and local authorities, especially district and commune ones. The launching of project implementation in October 2021 was intended to inform direct stakeholders especially FA officials at provincial levels and NGOs working in Kratie and Monduliri provinces.

The development of guidelines to enhance community forest management and development involved FA experts and consultants from the beginning. During the consultation process of guidelines at provincial and national levels, CFMCs and FA Cantonments of Kratie and Monduliri and FA in

other provinces of Cambodia were invited to join consultations as their voices and comments were important to improve the guidelines while their capacity increases accordingly. It is expected that Guidelines for the Preparation of Community Forest Management and Development Plans has been used by both CFMCs and Forestry Administration at Cantonment level while Standard Operating Procedures for Forest Patrols is a good tool for both community and FA officials to conduct joint patrolling.

The training of the guidelines, especially data collection and processing with focus on community forest inventory, the writing of community forest management plans involving CFMCs, Community Forestry members in Kratie and Monduliri provinces including field practice are so important for CFMCs. It is anticipated that Community Forestry Management Committees continue and will use the guidelines and their knowledge gained from the project to enhance and develop community forest management and development plans. In addition, capacity of community forestry members and FA officials gained from the training on Standard Operating Procedures for Forest Patrols are used to conduct either patrolling or joint patrolling of community forests. Joint patrolling of community forest involving FA Cantonments at Kratie and Monduliri, CFMCs, commune police and local authorities supported by the project resulted in cracking down illegal community forestry activities and return of cleared forests to community forestry for restoration. It hopes that joint patrolling and use of SOP will continue as guidance to enhance data collection and addressing of illegal forest activities in community forests.

The discussion, assessment and selection of community forestry for the implementation of microcredit and agroforestry were made with Community Forestry Management Committees to collect information on several criteria before the final selection. In addition, commune authorities were actively consulted to provide support for microcredit capitals for four community forestry in Kratie and Monduliri provinces and establishment of agroforestry demonstration in Kratie. Moreover, the project team worked closely with the microcredit team to review and monitor the management of microcredit and CFMCs for monitoring of agroforestry. It is anticipated that CFMCs and microcredit teams will continue to participate and manage microcredit and agroforestry after completion of the project as the program continues to provide benefits for community forestry members associated with livelihood development and protection of community forests.

In addition, one of the important engagements with community forestry members with the project is the addressing of illegal forest activity issues in community forests especially community forest clearing and encroachment as well as charcoal production. Numerous meetings were organized at offices of commune authorities with participation from commune chief, CFMCs, community forestry members, commune police and FA at Triage level (the lowest level of FA) and culprits. In this regard, commune and district authorities played important roles to solve issues with community forest clearing and encroachments. As a result, cleared community forest land were returned to CFMCs for restoration and warning letters were also issued to culprits who were advised to stop committing forest clearance and encroachments.

Realizing the critical role of stakeholders in ensuring a successful implementation of the project activities on the ground, a stakeholder forum (SHF) was established under the project in Monduliri province while in Kratie the forum was already created before the commencement of the project, where the main stakeholders of community forests, the FA at different levels, NGOs, government authorities and other interested groups have met quarterly to exchange views and ideas, and make recommendations to EA in view of improving efficiency of project implementation and community forest management.

In general, the project worked with various stakeholders at national and provincial levels. In addition, the project cooperated with CFMCs and district and commune authorities and FA at provincial level to ensure that they participated in the implementation of the project actively which provided benefits through microcredit scheme and agroforestry. Policy development and capacity enhancement for

community forestry members and other stakeholders through meetings, training, consultation workshops and other events were organized by the project.

vii) Sustainability after Project completion

- The project and its impact can be ensured through continuation of critical activities after project completion using state funds. The Department of Forest Management and Community Forestry under the Forest Administration will continue to implement some of the activities especially, allocation of some funds from the government to implement activities including agroforestry and review of community forest management and development plans. The Cantonments of the Forestry Administration in Kratie and Mondulkiir that manage, oversee and work closely with Community Forestry Management Committees will continue and monitor project activities supported by ITTO project.
- Currently measures and cracking down on illegal activities especially illegal clearing of forest claiming for ownership implemented by competent agencies in Kratie and Mondulkiir provinces which is consistent with project support for forest patrols. It is anticipated that community patrolling will continue after the completion of the project.
- The activities related to capacity building in community forest management planning, implementation and monitoring have to be continued considering the large number of community forestry management committees and their members receiving training and participation in workshops and consultation meetings provided by the project.
- The guidelines on the Preparation of Community Forest Management and Development Plans, Standard Operational Procedure for Forest Patrols and Checklist for Effective Assessment of Community Forest Management and Development Plans provide important guidance for relevant Forestry Administration at national and provincial levels to use them for sustainable management of community forests especially Community Forestry Management Committees continue to use those guidelines for their sustainable management and development of their community forests.
- The skills acquired by local communities and Community Forest Management Committees from the project for developing community forests as a sustainable source of income ought to be utilized as it is a reliable productive asset. Using the skills properly and consistently should improve livelihood. Improved livelihood is most desirable, not only by the communities, but also by the cantonment governments because improved livelihood also means increased incomes from the return seed funds and agroforestry supported by the project. Hence, improved livelihood is a strong incentive for local communities and the governments to sustain the project. It is anticipated that the target community forestry supported by the project with return seed funds and agroforestry feel that they benefits from the project so they continue to implement and manage the microcredit and agroforestry sustainably to improve their livelihoods and contribution to management of community forests through the allocation of incomes generated from microcredit.
- While the implementation of activities is complementing with other projects supported by other projects in partnership with NGOs in both provinces, the activities will continue to be implemented although the ITTO project is completed.

viii) Understanding and appropriateness of the roles and responsibilities of the institutions involved with the Project Implementation

The Executing Agency (EA) of the project was the Forestry Administration of Cambodia (FAC), an experienced institution in implementing ITTO-assisted projects. The primary responsibilities of FAC include selection of key project personnel and development of contact with the main stakeholders.

The Mondulkiri and Kratie Forestry Administrations Cantonments were responsible for supporting the field operations of the project. The Cantonments were responsible for the management of forest resources including production and community forests and worked closely with community forestry associated with patrolling and enforcement, provision of technical advice and support of management and protection of community forests.

The partners in implementing the project included the Department of Forest Management and Community Forestry, Department of Legislation and Law Enforcement, national consultants, experts, NGOs, judicial authority and community leaders and commune and district authorities.

Commune and district authorities were responsible for assisting community forestry in their respective jurisdiction to ensure sustainable management of community forests, especially reservations to address threats to community forests and wildlife resources. Communication between CFMCs and commune and district authorities has been regular through the mechanism of meetings at commune or district levels. Similarly, the commune police play a role to help protect community forests through joining patrolling and urgent interventions. Importantly, commune and district authorities play crucial roles in responding to illegal activities inside community forests, especially community forest clearing and encroachments.

5. Assessment and analysis

i) Project rationale and the Project identification process

The project rationale and identification process were appropriate since the project was formulated based on discussion with relevant stakeholders and information from the Forestry Administration of Cambodia, FA Cantonments of Kratie and Monduliri provinces as well as relevant departments under FA. The project's original idea emerged from dialogues and discussions with the Forestry Administration, Department of Forest Management and Community Forestry, and NGOs working in Kratie and Monduliri and FA Cantonments of Kratie and Monduliri and ITTO. It was also built on review of Forestry Law associated with the community forestry section and National Forest Program of Cambodia with regard to development, management and implementation of community forest program, community forestry regulations and needs for intervention on the ground in consultation with FA relevant departments and NGOs. Focus is also on consultation with Cantonments of FA in Kratie and Monduliri related to community forest management and necessary infrastructure to improve protection of community forests and improvement of livelihoods and increase capacity of local communities.

ii) Adequacy of the results of the identification process

The identification process was appropriate, as the project addressed the issues directly related to the low capacity of local community and Forestry Administration officials for acceleration of the implementation of community forestry program described in the National Forest Program. In addition, livelihoods of local communities were focused by the project as part of incentives for community forestry members who actively participate in community forestry program.

In order to ensure that the project results would be practical and useful for beneficiaries which include CFMCs and community forestry members, the project first identified and analyzed the interests, needs, and challenges of capacity building, livelihood improvement and by reviewing existing reports and documents, Forestry Law and community forest regulations and consultations with competent departments, Cantonments of FA at Kratie and Monduliri and NGOs working in both provinces as well as CFMCs.

iii) Most critical differences between planned and actual Project implementation

The most critical difference was the allocation of budget for the implementation of improvement of livelihood of local communities. There was a budget for hiring a national consultant but no budget was available to support implementation of microfinance. In this case, the project in consultation with ITTO reallocated USD4000 to support microfinance for four community forestry in Kratie and Monduliri provinces. The reallocation of the budget did not affect implementation of other activities of the project as reallocated budget came from Activity 1.2 associated with purchase of satellite imagery while the project used the satellite for free.

The reallocation of budget for the publication of Activity 1.5 was useful as the printing of Quick Review Schedule for effective assessment of community forest management plans was necessary for FA officials who are responsible for the review and assessment of community forestry management plans submitted by CFMCs.

Two communication forums were established in Kratie and Mondulkiri provinces. However, one communication forum was established by the provincial Office of Mondulkiri with stakeholders that involve in community forest management while in Kratie the forum was already established long before the commencement of the project. In this case the project supported several CFMC members to attend quarterly meetings organized by the FA Cantonment of Kratie.

In consultation with ITTO, the implementation of agroforestry was modified from 16ha to 8ha with indicator adjustment approved by ITTO due to inadequate budget for the establishment of demonstration plots.

Moreover, the project did not organize project advisory committee meetings during the implementation of project in both province as the project focused on meetings and consultations with district and commune authorities and FA officials at Triage level to address issues and threats to management of community forest management on the ground including community forest clearing and encroachment. In addition, experts and national consultants working for the project are from departments as members of the project advisory committee.

iv) Adequacy of time and Project Inputs

The project was staffed with the Forestry Administration officials with expertise and experience in implementing project activities, especially FA staff that worked for ITTO projects in the past. In addition, national consultants and experts were selected from the Forestry Administration as they had better experience and expertise with community forestry management and legal framework of community forestry, especially the revision of Guidelines for Preparation of Community Forest Management and Development Plans, Development of SOP for Forest Patrols and monitoring plans. Moreover, FA officials at Cantonment level were selected to conduct joint patrolling with CFMCs and patrolling teams of community forestry in both provinces. In addition, regarding the financial resources, the project was flexible and consulted with ITTO to modify the budget for reallocation to project activities that need additional budget for effective implementation. However, monthly budget support for field supervisors were low for covering work and staying in Kratie and Mondulkiri provinces. The extension of the project for three months ending December 2024 was associated with dealing with preparation of financial and completion reports and administrative work.

v) Anticipation and reality of external influences, assumptions and risks etc. and the effectiveness of mitigating measures

The global pandemic (Covid-19) was one of the main challenges for the implementation of the project at the beginning during the fourth quarter of 2021. The spread of Covid-19 hindered the implementation of the project activities especially activities related to meetings with stakeholders and consultations. The project resorted to online platform to conduct a number of consultations and launching of the project considering the infection of Covid-19. However, the project coped well with the situation with the Covid 19 and no substantial impacts on the project was affected.

The adoption of revision of the guidelines for preparation of community forest management and development plans experienced delay due to the review and consultation with various stakeholders especially at internal FA which required relevant departments to provide comments to improve the guidelines. The project worked closely with the Forestry Administration and revised the guidelines based on comments to ensure that the guidelines were approved and published for distribution.

vi) Participation of anticipated and actual Project beneficiaries in Project implementation and how they have and will be benefited from the Project

The implementation of the project provided substantial benefits to community forestry members and FA officials both at national and provincial levels. Capacity building provided by the project to CFMCs, community forestry members and other stakeholders associated with community forest inventory, information collection for preparing community forest management and development plans, how to write community forest management and development plans and livelihood skills are beneficial as they continue to use their knowledge and experiences to implement and manage their community forest sustainably. Similarly, CFMCs, community forestry members and other stakeholders gained knowledge and experiences from participating workshops, meetings and other events organized by the project or supported by the project. Their knowledge and experiences continue to share with other community forestry members.

In addition to capacity building, the provision of livelihood development through the microcredit system and agroforestry have benefited community forestry members. It is expected that CFMCs and community forestry members continue to maintain microcredit and agroforestry after completion of the project for their livelihoods and environment. In addition, local authorities continue to monitor and support the implementation of livelihood options provided by the project.

The Forestry Administration officials and CFMCs and other stakeholders continue to use guidelines developed by the project which are included at national, provincial and community levels through the publication and distribution of those guidelines.

Numerous meetings including community forums organized in Mondulkiri province were conducted with participation from commune authorities, Forestry Administration and CFMCs and other stakeholders to address issues related to illegal community forest activities. The meetings serve as good models that can address issues of community forest clearance and encroachment by returning cleared community forests to CFMCs for restoration. It is confident that the mechanism will continue after the project completion.

vii) Sustainability after Project completion

Capacity gained from the project through training, workshops, meetings and other events continue to be used by CFMCs, FA officials and other stakeholders after completion of the project especially training on data collection and processing and community forestry inventory while CFMCs with support from other stakeholders will use this capacity to prepare community forest management and development plans while other training on writing of community forest management plans is connected with data collection and forest inventory. In addition, training on forest patrolling and joint patrolling will be used as a model when the project is completed as the patrolling was effective to suppress illegal activity inside community forests.

The publication of guidelines and other documents will be used by the Forestry Administration officials and CFMCs and other stakeholders including NGOs for supporting the implementation and acceleration of community forestry program, the development and adoption of community forest management and development plans, monitoring of community forest management and implementation. In addition, microcredit and agroforestry continue to be used by CFMCs although the project was completed as these programs provided benefits for them. The building of two meeting halls will be used as a venue for meetings and other events by CFMCs and other agencies when they meet with community forestry members and other authorities.

The Cantonments of FA both in Kratie and Mondulkiri and project team as well as local authorities including village, commune and district continue to support community forestry in their respective jurisdiction to monitor and support community forests.

viii) Understanding and appropriateness of the roles and responsibilities of the institutions involved with the Project Implementation

The roles and responsibilities of institutions involved in the implementation of the project were appropriate during the implementation of the project especially the roles of the Forestry Administration and departments under FA including the Department of Forest Management and Community Forestry overseeing community forest management and policy guidance, the Department of Litigation and Law Enforcement dealing with enforcement of illegal activities in the production forests including community forests and the Department of Wildlife and Biodiversity working with conservation and protection of wildlife and biodiversity and habits. Those departments were involved in the implementation of the project.

The Mondulkiri and Kratie Forestry Administrations Cantonments are responsible for supporting the field operations of the project. The Cantonments are responsible for the management of forest resources including production and community forests and have worked closely with CFMCs associated with patrolling and enforcement, provision of technical advice and support of management and protection of community forests.

Commune and district authorities were responsible for assisting community forestry in their respective jurisdiction to ensure sustainable management of community forests especially, work to address threats to community forests and wildlife resources. Communication between CFMCs and commune and district authorities has been regular through mechanisms of direct meetings at commune or district levels. Similarly, the commune police play a role to help protection of community forests through joining patrolling and urgent interventions. Importantly, commune and district authorities play crucial roles in responding to illegal activities inside community forests especially, community forest clearing and encroachments.

6. Lessons learned

a) Project identification and design matters

Aspects of Project identification and development

Close communication and building trust relationships with key stakeholders are critical for effective project identification and development. Also, the problem analysis needs to be conducted through stakeholder dialogues, including discussion, and based on a literature review. The identification of stakeholders and problem analysis are consistent with the situation on the ground during the implementation of the project. However, some structure of the FA was changed as Cantonments of FA are under the Departments of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries which are appointed by the provincial governor.

The formulation of the project was in line with the ITTO Project Manual and its relevant guidelines. However, data and information used for the preparation of the project is not sufficient and sometimes did not reflect on the ground. Solid data and information are limited which may require to be collected during the implementation of the project. As the project formulated in 2017 and approval of the project for implementation was in late 2021, physical and environmental situation was dramatically changed while structural management at provincial level was changed as well.

The formulation of the project had not taken into the account of the global pandemic (Covid-19) while the risk of the project was oriented to internal aspects that may hinder the implementation of the project.

• Additional arrangements

The cooperation with RECOFTC and FLO was imperative for the capacity building of local communities as the two organizations had experiences in conducting training on data collection and community forest inventory and livelihoods of local communities. The communication forum, established in Mondulakiri province with involvement of various stakeholders including NGOs, was a platform to meet every quarter of each year to share information on community forest management and challenges as well as development of livelihoods of local communities while addressing issues raised by CFMCs.

- ***Aspects of Project design***

The project first identified Community Forestry Management Committees, line departments under the Forestry Administration, development partners and local authorities and FA Cantonments of Kratie and Mondulakiri and held discussions with them to understand their interests and challenges in the management and implementation of community forests especially strategies employed to achieve activities of the project. Such a needs-oriented approach was critical to design detailed project design and activities to achieve Specific objectives.

- ***Actions to be taken to avoid variations between planned and actual implementation***

Identifying local consultants/experts, subcontractors and their involvement in discussion as early as possible can support detailed plans and options for the project activities, which may support avoiding variations. There may be avoidable external factors that impact the project implementation, such as COVID-19. The close communication with ITTO and the PSC meetings enabled us to revise and modify the workplans and budget effectively. Also, the project team regards the adaptive management of the project implementation as an effective tool. The assumptions in the Project Document allowed us to reflect on external situations and modify the workplan and budget plans and indicators smoothly for effective project implementation.

- ***Factors which will most likely affect Project sustainability after completion***

Experience in conducting training on different aspects of CF management was useful for developing a sound training programme on community forestry and livelihood development. Enhanced capacity of FAs and LCs was not confined only to Kratie and Mondulakiri Provinces but expanded to other provinces as well; this must be so, because CF Programme is a national interest thus should involve FAs and LCs across the country. Experiences gained and lessons learned from operational management of the project were adequately documented and disseminated which include Guidelines for the Preparation of Community Forestry Management and Development Plans, SOP for Forest Patrols, Monitoring plans and Quick Review Schedule for effective assessment of community forest management and development plans. Those guidelines will be used by CFMCs, FA and other stakeholders not only in Kratie and Mondulakiri but other provinces of Cambodia. The publication of the guidelines and other documents will continue to be distributed to CFMCs and Cantonments of FA in other provinces and line departments under FA and NGOs.

b) Operational matters

- ***Project organization and management***

Adaptive management and close communication with ITTO, FA Cantonments of Kratie and Mondulakiri, line departments under FA, local authorities and CFMCs were critical to react to avoidable external factors that impacted the project implementation, such as COVID-19. Regular meetings with the project team to share the progress against the Workplan and challenging situation serves as the basis of such adaptive management.

- ***Flow of funds***

Proper scheduling of payments in contracts with consultants, experts and subcontracts considering implementation costs, is critical to the adequate flow of funds to implement the project. In addition, review of project finance for the implementation of project activities with effective adjustment of budget and indicators was crucial to maximize the impacts and reduce risks. The instalments of the project budget should be based on Agreement between ITTO and FA.

- ***Definition of the roles and responsibilities of the institutions involved in the Project implementation***

The implementation of the project was in collaboration with various institutions at national, district and commune levels especially the Forestry Administration including departments responsible for community forestry management and law enforcement, FA Cantonments of Kratie and Mondukiri that worked closely with CFMCs on the ground and local authorities including commune and district authorities with regard to community forest law enforcement. National consultants and experts were selected based on roles and responsibilities as well as subcontractors for implementation of some activities with their roles and responsibilities corresponding to project requirements.

- ***Project documentation***

The project coordinator scheduled and arranged the required documentation, and the project members provided inputs and necessary support. It is essential to define a note taker at the decision-making and meetings (e.g., PSC meetings and meetings) and use the same format for reporting.

- ***Monitoring and evaluation***

The project applied a monthly monitoring system using the Work plan and indicators presented in the Logical Framework Matrix in the Project document, which helped to implement the project effectively, share the progress and challenges with the project team, and discuss solutions. The Project Steering Committee was also imperative for effective project implementation, reporting, and evaluation. The progress report format and monthly highlights of project activities provided by ITTO were a helpful tool for systematically monitoring the project implementation. Results of the monitoring were reviewed, first internally by the project management team and then by the PSC.

- ***External factors that influenced the Project implementation and that could have been foreseen and that could not have been foreseen***

The external factor that could have been foreseen was the impact of COVID-19. While its impacts were more significant and longer-continued than expected, the project prepared options and measures to reduce the negative influence of COVID-19 on the project implementation. Another factor is the change of management system of the Forestry Administration at Cantonment, Division and Triage levels. The FA Cantonments, Divisions and Triages are not directly under the Central FA. They are under the Provincial Departments of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. However, the change of structure management did not affect the implementation of the project. It is important to discuss possible options and available information with involved institutions at the early stage of the project to avoid variations or mitigate the influences of such external factors. Also, close communication with PSC is critical to decide promptly to find solutions for effective project implementation and achievement of outputs.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

- ***Identification***

- Engagement and dialogues with stakeholders are critical for the project identification process. Close communication and building trust relationships with key stakeholders are critical for

effective project identification and development. Also, the problem analysis needs to be conducted through stakeholder dialogues, including discussion, and based on review of relevant literature.

- Since the project was capacity building and livelihood improvements, it was helpful to identify non-governmental organizations working to support community forestry and community forestry experts in discussion to understand possible options to achieve outputs.
- It is crucial to review policy, regulations and guidelines associated with community forestry establishment, management and development to identify gaps and propose options for revisions and development to be consistent with changing trends of community forest management with social, economic and environmental dimensions.

- ***Design***

- For the design of the project, it should be based on a needs-oriented approach. For this, identification of stakeholders and discussion with them should be realized at the project formulation or at least the initial phase of the project implementation to understand their challenges and what activities could support solving the problems.
- The project's impact is more significant if the project activities and results are directly related to the interests, benefits and challenges of the target stakeholders. To increase public awareness, there may be ways to relay messages of the implementation of the project through various platforms which include local meetings, Facebook, workshops and consultations, training and other social media etc.
- Identification and discussion with community forestry experts and NGOs supporting community forestry and CFMCs and FA at provincial level at the early project stage are imperative to design the project in detail as they help to identify options for the project activities.

- ***Implementation***

- Communication with relevant authorities and stakeholders at national, provincial, district, commune and community levels at the beginning of the implementation of the project is imperative to explain the objectives and plans in advance through launching of the project.
- Regular contacts with district and commune authorities and FA at local levels through meetings to address issues of community forest management are effective as part of participatory approach.
- The implementation of the project should be flexible to tackle issues arising from implementation of activities on the ground.
- Outreach of the project is critical through social media including Project Facebook, FA's Facebook and other workshops and meetings at national and provincial levels. In addition, publication of articles associated with the project through online news and video of impacts of livelihood improvements through the microcredit system supported by the project is important.

- ***Organization and Management***

- In order to optimize the effectiveness of the project workforce. The Forestry Administration as Executing Agency appointed a project team with FA officials. It is beneficial to assign FA officials to work with the ITTO project as they have experiences and technical, legal and regulatory knowledge associated with the development of technical guidelines for management and development of community forestry which need approval from the Executing Agency.
- It is crucial to communicate with all stakeholders and institutions involved in the project implementation at national, provincial, district, commune and community levels as well as with ITTO to make quick decisions to address urgent issues arising from the project performance.

ii) Comment on the potential for replication and/or for scaling up

The project focused on implementation of community forestry program in Kratie and Mondulkiri by building capacity of local communities and FA officials and other stakeholders as well as support for the improvement of livelihoods of local communities through capacity building on livelihood skills, demonstration of agroforestry and microcredit system and other activities. The activities could be replicable in other provinces where there are more community forests that need support to promote sustainable management and protection and development of community forests.

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Responsibility for the analysis, opinions, and any other content of this report belongs to the authors.

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