

V. Moklan, the Ethnic Group of the Andaman

1. Introduction

Project No: THA/MFFSGF/12/05

Project Title: Moklan, the Ethnic Group of the Andaman

Grantee: Save Andaman Network Foundation

Address: 35/1, Moo 5, Tambon Kaunpring, Muang District, Trang Province, 92000

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1.1 Implementing NGO/CBO: Save Andaman Network Foundation: Established on 28 December 2004 to play coordinating role of partner organizations in launching relief effort for the Tsunami victims in 121 villages in the 6 affected provinces. The coordination for relief is community-based focusing on quick recovery and further advance than before. The foundation is staffed with experience personnel of NGO nature active in the southern region, especially on the issue of marine and coastal resources management. Simultaneously, the foundation has launched research activity on livelihood recovery and sustainability of resources.

1.2 Location of project: Low land area along the Andaman coast of about 6,000 sq.km in Takuapa district, Phang Nga province. The area is a sandy beach where communities lodge traditional fishing boats and a mangrove area for community aquaculture and fishery.

1.3 Target Population: 185 out of 650 households of Moklan cultural group, who earn living through providing general services, small business and fishery. The per capita income is THB: 73,000. Under culture of a sea gypsy, social opportunity and structure of the group are rather limited. Therefore, the project focuses on working with youth group so that they become the main driving forces in community development and management of natural resources, with participation from communities.

1.4 Long-term objectives to support national coastal resources policy:

- 1) Promoting civil society awareness and participation in coastal decision-making (POW 6)
- 2) Improving resilience of coastal communities to disasters (POW 9)
- 3) Strengthening the integration and enforcement of environmental and social safeguards in coastal land use planning (POW 12)

1.5 Specific Objectives:

1. To build capacity of the CBOs and women & youth group on marine & coastal resources together with other groups in target location
2. To equip communities against disasters and climatic variability
- 3) To formulate learning process and encourage establishment of efficient youth group

1.6 Major stakeholders

- 1) Andaman Project for Participatory Restoration of Natural Resources
- 2) Baan Namkhem Village CBO Coordinating Centre
- 3) Marine and Coastal Resources Conservation Centre 5
- 4) Mangrove Management Section 2

2. Project Completion

2.1 Period of Participatory Evaluation: September 2013

2.2 Number of Beneficiaries/ Participating personnel: 654 households

Women: 987 persons
 Men: 1,470 persons
 Children: 115 persons

2.3 Income and Expense

Detail		Amount (THB)	
Budget Allocation		300,000	
Total expenditure		300,000	
% expenditure against allocation		100%	
Co-financing Sources		In-cash (THB)	In-kind (THB)
Andaman Project for Participatory Restoration of Natural Resources		-	213,000
Marine and Coastal Resources Conservation Centre 5		-	6,000
Save Andaman Network Foundation		137,000	111,000
Tsunami Victim Community Network in Phang Nga		-	8,000
Total		137,000	338,000

2.4 Activities and results/outcomes

Main Activities Implemented	Results/Outcomes
1. Launching youth-led resources inventory, pattern of natural disaster and climatic variance followed by participatory analysis 2. Conducting study tours RE: natural resources management, community rights and management of local natural resources and natural disaster 3. Organizing training RE: community rights, democracy and decentralization , and laws relevant to natural resources management 4. Launching deforestation of mangrove and beach forest followed by close monitor and restoration 5. Launching campaign and meeting summary on conservation of natural resources and relevant community regulations	1. Increased capacity and conservation awareness of 4 groups of CBOs, and women & youth groups in management of natural resources and natural disasters, witnessed through active participation in project activities 2. Established learning place for conservation of mangrove, beach forest , as habitat for marine species and natural disaster baffle, as follows: - 3.5 ha of mangrove - 120 ha of mangrove and beach forest - 8 ha of terrestrial forest 3. Systematic cooperation in natural resources management among local government agencies and communities 4. Emergence of community regulations for the management of local natural resources 5. An mangrove of about 80 ha being demarcated with signboards to remind public about community regulations

2.5 Plans and Activities for Sustainability:

The project would keep on with;

- 1) addressing land conflict issues to ensure community livelihood security,
- 2) being assertive on land conflict cases already under legal process, and
- 3) using the regulations as principles or guiding lights on management of coastal & marine resources

2.6 Challenges and constraints

- 1) Giving roles to community leaders in each location to play in planning and conducting activities was the key factor. Support from other stakeholders was only complementary.
- 2) Conduction of study on mangrove management and establishment of community forest against relevant laws should be carried out.
- 3) There are complicated conflicts and issues interfered in the area, namely conflict community land rights, unregulated fishing, ineffective rules and regulations, for example.

2.7 Lessons Learned

- 1) Making use of diverse cultures and ways of lives of different groups to ensure optimal participation in implementing project activities was assessed as satisfactory, to a certain level.
- 2) As Moklan is a unique cultural group, and in nature, with different level of capacity to learn and acknowledge outside society, the project was a good opportunity for mutual learning and recognition.
3. Natural and simple way of life and mentality of elder Moklan made some of them have different level of recognizing outside society, while a group of women was able to play a leading role in conservation. Youth groups appeared to link both old and new system successfully and play a leading role in community development and management of the project.
Therefore, youth was a messenger linking Moklan way of life and globalization.

3. Story of change

3.1 Change in people or human knowledge, attitude, and practice (behavior)

Updated knowledge and capacity building transferred to targeted population were community rights in democracy, decentralization, natural resources management and rules, disaster management and climate change with adaptation. As the results, there were 4 youth groups and a network of women groups emerged eventually with common understanding and readiness of these topics towards their own management and activities rolled out.

3.2 Change in socio-economic status or livelihood

As Moklan is a sea minority group whose livelihood and culture is unique, and nature-loving. However, this style of livelihood had been overshadowed by globalization and mainstream socialization. For mainstreaming, this project had contributing to shedding light on it by involving Moklan as a key stakeholder and advocating their the essential knowledge based on community rights, natural resources management and conservation. As the result, Moklan was one of important leader group to protect the community forest that is acknowledged to public.

3.3 Change in participation and social interaction

The project gained participation and cooperation from various groups, namely youth/school group, housewives (women) group, Moklan, Muslim, Buddhist, and local government that worked together with the will of protecting their forest under the pressure of massive tourism in over Phang Nga province. This kind of change or initiation could be used as an example for resolution of natural resources use conflicts somewhere else.

3.4 Change in coastal governance frameworks

The 136-ha community mangrove conservation area is acknowledged as the public spaces of communities by Phang Nga Forestry Office, Community Forest Unit / Forest Resources Management Office of 12nd (Krabi), and Khao Lak-Lam Ru National Park and mass media inclusively. This is to protect land encroached illegally by powerful investor.

3.5 Change in natural environment or ecosystems, and practices in ecosystem/coastal conservation

1) There were new community conserved areas including tropical forest, beach forest and mangrove with biodiversity status being recovered, several of which served as learning places for students and their activities.

2) The project had initiated the involvement of a blended traditional ritual, religious belief and political authority as an efficient approach in successfully conserving community beach and mangrove forest, i.e. forest ordination and Khao Lak God Rite, against an encroachment which, originally, seemed impossible by community usual conservation practices.

4. Monitoring visit by the National Coordinator, NSC and NCB members

4.1 Findings and observation

Together with 7 project leaders, the visiting team was led to witness a sacred forest in Baan (village) Lam Kaen, an extension of targeted location initiated since the last visit. Progress of activities to protect the forest was related, beginning with youth camps for core students from 5 schools in targeted villages, followed by forest ordination or sanctification on November 29, 2012, where the governor was invited to witness. In order to ensure sustainable protection, concerned authorities including one member of the parliament were informed of the activities and concerns of communities.

Aiming to interact with core students, the visiting team conducted an unplanned visit to Baan Lam Kaen Community School. Core students were called by names to meet with the team. The students shared with the team their leading roles in launching the forest ordination.

A brief interaction with the community school director led the visiting team to understand that activities with students were carried out successfully. School staff appeared eager about the project.

Due to time constraint and unfavourable weather condition, the team was not able to witness another mangrove area in Baan Tha Din Deang that the communities were proud of and would like the team to visit. It was related that over 60 % of the mangrove in the location was reclaimed and well protected through community efforts.

In term of promoting civil society engagement and strengthening integrated costal planning, this project had demonstrated initial success. Since the area was a multi-starred hotel and resort zone, land speculation was rather severe. Communities realized and were prepared for the possibilities of forest encroachment, turning it into hotels and resorts through improper legalized procedures – a number of known cases in the Andaman Coast, or even countrywide.

4.2 Photos



A group of core students in Baan Lam Kaen School share their roles in conservation of local forest, including mangrove.



Project leaders in Baan Lam Kaen are briefing the visiting team about the significance of this sacred forest. Over hundreds of years, the forest was well respected and protected under the belief that each tree had an angel of Khao Lak god to take care of. But that did not mean much for unbelievers who wanted to possess the land and use it for lucrative business.



After a series of youth camps, core members of youth group initiated a religious rite called "Forest Ordination" for this 5-ha sacred forest in Baan Lam Kaen. Over 300 students in project location, and the governor of Phang Nga participated in this ritual. In addition to protect the existing trees, hundreds of new native trees were being grown.



Targeted location is a sandy beach where communities lodge traditional fishing boats and a mangrove area for community aquaculture and fishery. Majority of communities are traditional group "Moklan", where their sea gypsy life style are limited due to population growth and less well planned coastal land use. Mangrove under recovery/protection of the project looms in the background.



This rip-rap to slow down erosion was built by the Royal Thai Navy/Army just after the Tsunami. But in order to improve resilience of coastal communities to disasters, the project would plant several species of strong roots and stems for one kilometers from this point ,to further slow down erosion and prepare for another Tsunami, if it should happen again.



This river serves as a channel to the Andaman Sea for fishing communities. During the Tsunami, the river was filled with several hundreds of victims. Before Tsunami, both sides of the river were filled with mangrove. Now, only a portion on the right is being managed, while on the left was filled with soil to make an access to collect bodies of the victims- so becoming an orchards.