Rehabilitating and conserving habitats for clams

Objectives
The main objective of this project was to rehabilitate mangroves for sustainable use and supplementary local income.

Background
Siab Yuan is a small fishing village situated on the coast of Thunkha-Sawi Bay near Mu Koh Chumphon Marine National Park. Because of its location and natural sedimentation, this park used to be one of the richest for marine species, especially clams, on the western coast of the Gulf of Thailand. Poor planning, however, together with upland cultivation, has resulted in a dwindling clam population.

Most of the families who participated in the project make their living from small-scale fishing and aquaculture, as well as some limited cultivation of rubber and oil palm on small hillside plots. Cultivation of these plots has caused noticeable soil erosion, stimulating community members to explore a ridge-to-reef conservation approach.

The Sea and Coastal Resources Protection Volunteer Group of Siab Yuan was formed in 2007 with help from the government’s Mangrove Resources Development Station 12 at Chumphon. Initially comprising 80 members, the group has launched various efforts to rehabilitate degraded mangroves and deserted prawn farms in the area. The group also organizes clean-up activities after monsoon storms.

Target beneficiaries
Forty of 79 households in Siab Yuan who practise small-scale fishing and aquaculture.

Outputs
- Establishment of a 2-km mangrove reforestation zone along the coast.
- Establishment of a 5.5-hectare community aquaculture zone.
- Establishment of a conservation zone for razor clams (*Solen* spp.).
- Planting of about 10,000 mangroves along the coast.
- Adoption of community regulations to protect seagrass and clam conservation zones.
- Demarcation of 16 hectares of mangroves as a rehabilitation zone.

Accomplishments and challenges
In an area of the bay near the shore, the community set out bamboo stakes demarcating a zone for raising clams. The community also developed regulations to protect this zone.

About 16 hectares of mangroves were demarcated as a rehabilitation zone and have been under constant community protection.

Challenges
Severe monsoon storms devastated the clam raising zone.
Contributions to cross-cutting themes

Climate change
The community sees mangrove reforestation as a strategy to lessen the effect of severe storms that may be linked to future climate change.

Lessons learned
Maintaining a positive community spirit by providing mutual support is vital for the successful implementation of project activities.

Partners and their contribution
In-kind contributions were made by the community (US$28,480), Mangrove Resources Development Station 12 (US$100), and Darnsawi sub-district administrative organization (US$34). The Petroleum Authority of Thailand took part in mangrove planting.

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