



CUSTOMARY FOREST USE AND MANAGEMENT THROUGH TRADITIONAL HERBAL HEALERS



Culture Identity Resources Use and Management

ABOUT CIRUM

CIRUM (LNGO) works with ethnic minority communities in Northern Vietnam through models on:

→ Conflict Resolution and Forest Land Allocation

→ Community Forest Management

** By community groups (CBOs)*

** Traditional Herbal Healers & Associations*

Crosscutting Themes: Community Forest Rights, Customary Law, Indigenous Knowledge, Local Participation



FOCUS ISSUES & MODELS



SITUATION:

Conflicts and unequal forest land distribution → Conflict Resolution and equal forest land distribution

Non-Sustainable forest governance → Sustainable Forest Governance

Lack of Community Rights to Forests → Communities access, use and control forests based on own culture, customs and indigenous knowledge



HERBAL MEDICINAL PLANTS AND TRADITIONAL HEALERS

AS A BASIC START

Why work with and through traditional herbal healers? a way to understand local system (local structure and ecological system)

- Respected and trusted for knowledge on indigenous plants and herbal medicine.
- Social roles and important role in local health and customary law
- Local identity (indigenous knowledge, customary law) that is getting lost
- Strategic for raising awareness about local values for land/forest management

HERBAL HEALERS MODEL in BAC LANG I (Dzao, Tay groups)

Since 2006

- Identify healers and re-establish Healers Association (HA)
- HA members map areas containing valuable indigenous species
- HA request local authorities legal right over the mapped areas
- Involvement and seeking support from local authorities and commune members

RESULTS AND LINKING

- HA received official supports to manage over the requested ‘Conservation Forest’ and formulated regulations for its protection and regeneration (30 ha)
- HA was given office space in the local health centre with own herbal garden next to the office (community herbal garden + local health care station)
- Family gardens as pilots (02) to grow threatened herbal species
- Exchange visits to healers in other areas (linking with other EM groups)
- Joint activities (such as medicinal production, herbal book made by different healers)



HERBAL HEALERS IN DONG THANG

New Project to replicate the model in Bac Lang with taking account the lessons:

- Need to involve local people more intensively for increased awareness
- Need to have more networking and advocacy (both local, national and regional)



CHALLENGES

Severe and rapid **loss of forests** – losing IK/CL (local culture)

→ lack of local **land/forest rights** security

→ poverty/low income

→ (Chinese) **companies** and private actors (like mid-men)

- * extensive extraction herbal plants

- * Plantation and Wood Industry

- * Mining

- * ???



QUESTIONS

1. What are effective strategies to address challenges? (business companies,...)
2. How can we share and join forces more at national and regional level?

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

REGIONAL NETWORK

Multi-Cooperation

for instance:

- Linking Pilot models and local people (confident and stronger voice)
- Monitor (national) programs like REDD
- Joint Research and Publications
- Using Media (campaigns) – (Asian forum)
- Joint Training (capacity building)
- etc...

THANK YOU
AND LET'S MAKE IT MOVED!