



2012-2015 OROL Campaign External Evaluation Report

Evaluation Team

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Acronyms/ Abbreviation

ACD- Association for Community Development

ACED- Association for Community and Ecology Development

BCA- Biodiversity Conservation Area

BMZ- Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

ECR- Ecological Child Rights

FA- Forestry Association

KESAN- Karen Environmental and Social Action Network

OROL- Our Rivers Our Life

RMI- The Indonesian Institute for Forest and Environment

RWG- River Watch Group

RWG BD- The Regional Working Group on Biodiversity in Southeast Asia

SRFD- Svay Rieng Fisheries Department

SRU- Svay Rieng University

TdH- Terre Des Hommes

Evaluation Methodology Overview

This report presents the findings of an external evaluation of the Our Rivers Our Life Project implemented by member organizations of the Regional Working Group on Biodiversity for Southeast Asia from 1 March 2012 - 28 February 2015. This evaluation was supported by Terre des Hommes-Germany/ Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and was conducted during the period of August-September 2014.

Objectives

The evaluation will assess:

- The extent that the planned project outputs and outcomes have been achieved- any unplanned results- and the enabling and hindering factors that were encountered;
- Coordination and management processes, and how these contributed or detracted from the objectives of the project;
- Impacts the project has made in the target communities, in the lives of target groups and beneficiaries, and in the overall direction of protecting biodiversity in Southeast Asia.

Following this, the evaluation will provide practical recommendations which will make the project more effective and efficient, and further increase the quality and value of its outcomes and impact.

Research Questions

The evaluation will investigate the **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability** and **impact** of the OROL program and will address the following questions:

- How can the OROL project be further developed more effectively at the regional level to promote higher awareness on ecological child rights and apply and advocate for appropriate measures towards an integrated and sustainable environmental cooperation?
- To what extent and what are the most effective strategies to bring the mass media on board to influence policy and local laws on the protection and promotion of ecological child rights, river and biodiversity?
- What outcomes (intended and unintended) have been achieved by OROL and project partners?
- Have outcomes been achieved in a cost-effective and cost-efficient way?
- What factors helped and hindered in the achievement of the outcomes?
- What lessons can be learnt about the effectiveness of the intervention strategies used in order to achieve outcomes and policy and practice changes?
- What (if any) organizational structural changes would enable project staff to be able to achieve greater outcomes for the project's next phase?
- What were the drivers and blockers that enabled or prevented achieving outcomes and policy and practice changes?
- What were key strengths and obstacles to OROL's operational base during this phase, and how will these lesson learnt effect the location for the project's next phase?
- How effective is OROL's current monitoring and evaluation methodology?

Methodology

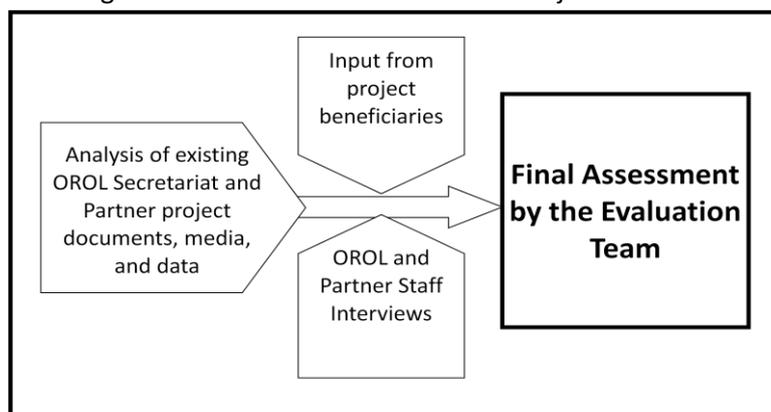
The evaluation methodology was designed to maximize stakeholder participation; be appropriate to the country contexts; and fit the available timeframes and budget. As mentioned in the “Limitations” section below, the amount of activities and wide target area would have made it impossible to design an evaluation that allowed for an external evaluation team to witness all activities and interview all project stakeholders.

This evaluation utilized three main sources of input to triangulate data and assess the work of the OROL project as depicted in Figure 1 below. Initial desk research and review of project documents and media was conducted in Chiang Mai after a preliminary meeting with the OROL Secretariat. However, the document and media review continued throughout the evaluation trip, as each partner organization shared documents and media that were contained at their offices. During the evaluation trip, the evaluation team visited all 7 partner organizations.

Direct observations, interviews, focus group discussions, reviews of project records and reports, and data collection was conducted at partner offices and among project beneficiaries in the target areas. Visiting the partner organizations at their offices and then observing their coordination and interactions with project beneficiaries and government officials was especially insightful and useful during this evaluation. The evaluators were able to witness firsthand the close relationships that project staff have nurtured over many years, as well as the inclusive and participatory methods OROL staff utilize in the field- items that do not emerge from written reports or office interviews.

Due to the limited amount of time that the evaluation team had for each partner visit (2-3 days/ partner organization), sampling was used to assess project activities, instead of attempting to validate all activities and project beneficiaries. 2-4 different activities were selected by the Partner Organization and Evaluation team according to the accessibility and availability of activity beneficiaries. Interviews and discussions with project beneficiaries were conducted in both target areas and partner organization’s offices, depending on the transportation options and distance to target areas. After meeting with beneficiaries, partner organization activity records, attendance sheets and other documents were reviewed to triangulate and validate findings (See Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Triangulation Method Used to Evaluate Project Activities and Results



The evaluation process sought to critically assess OROL project partner’s reporting and information management, while conducting enough firsthand interviews and discussions to validate OROL’s

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reports and documentation. The evaluation team listened closely to the voices of OROL project staff to discern which issues and topics are seen as most critical for them, and then planned follow-up questions and investigation based on this. As a result, this evaluation report does not attempt to describe and evaluate ALL the activities conducted by OROL over the last three years, but rather focuses on those issues and activities which OROL staff identified as most strategic and in need of review at this point in their work.

Data collection methods included:

1. Document Reviews: All relevant documents, reports, and media sources, were collected and studied by the evaluation team, including: annual reports, project activity reports, multimedia documentation (photographs, videos, PowerPoint presentations, campaign materials), website information (including OROL website and linked social media sites), and news articles.
2. Direct Observations: Field visits to the offices and target areas of the 7 partner organizations in Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam to observe firsthand the environment and circumstances under which OROL partners must operate to implement their activities
3. Individual Interviews and Focus Group Discussions: Key project staff and stakeholders met with the evaluation team wherever most convenient. A diversity of evaluation processes were utilized based on the interviewees' involvement and association with the OROL project. Stakeholders included in this evaluation included:
 - Target group: community members, school children
 - OROL partners' project staff
 - TdH-G country representatives
 - Governmental officers and representatives
 - Other CBOs that link with OROL project activities
 - OROL Secretariat staff
4. A "Preliminary Findings and Recommendations" presentation and discussion was conducted in Chiang Mai together with the OROL Secretariat, OROL Convenor, TdH- Germany Regional and Head Office staff to receive feedback from key OROL project administrators.

Limitations

- This evaluation was only able to assess the project's work from 2012 to September 2014, despite the funding cycle for this phase ending in the end of February 2015, due to the timing of the evaluation contract.
- Language and cultural differences may have led to some misunderstandings during the project evaluation, especially during interviews/ discussions among target group members in areas where local dialects and indigenous languages are widely used.
- There was lack of time/resources to fully evaluate all aspects of OROL work in all seven project locations. This is an extremely complex project, and trying to understand the local

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contexts in a few short days is an impossible task. In fact, the evaluation of just one OROL partner organization) would have been a large challenge considering the time frame and geographical distances between project areas.

- Not all OROL partner project staff and target group members were able to be interviewed due to the evaluation trip's short notice and the evaluation team's arrival during weekends and times when partner staff and beneficiaries had other prior commitments.
- Some of the project target areas were inaccessible for the evaluation team due to political instability and the fact the target communities are located in conflict zones or politically sensitive areas (Philippines, Burma, and Laos).
- In Laos, it was not possible for the evaluation team to meet with Government officials, due to the fact that the evaluator entered the country on a Tourist Visa, without any official permission to meet Government officials for work and evaluation purposes.

Executive Summary

The Our Rivers Our Life Campaign's impressive work and strategic interventions have strengthened Southeast Asian riparian communities and their members to be able to withstand the ongoing threats to their rivers and livelihoods. OROL partner organizations have also equipped target beneficiaries with skills and resources to be better prepared for the new challenges that they will be facing in the future. OROL's commitment to children and youth throughout all project activities is impressive, and provides real opportunities for new and much-needed solutions to emerge, as new problems arrive and situations change more quickly than ever. Meanwhile, due to their hard work and dedication, OROL partner staff continue to be held in very high regard by project beneficiaries, community members, partner NGOs, government officials, and donors.

The OROL campaign has so far been able to meet the goals and targets that they set for themselves at the beginning of this project phase, which, as of the writing of this report have included:

- 82 Environmental/ River Watch groups are working to protect rivers and raise awareness.
- 27 Networks were strengthened in order to support OROL Partner's work within their countries.
- 66 Media outlets (radios, newspapers, TV channels, press conferences, press releases) shared OROL news and reports.
- 9 different types of campaign materials (T-shirts, stickers, posters, banners, newsletters, short films/documentaries, handouts/leaflets, internet postings, and billboards) were distributed to promote OROL's work and raise awareness.
- 3,933 Children received trainings about ECR and environmental protection
- 248 Peer educators trained in ECR
- 118 Law enforcement decision makers cooperated with and supported OROL Partner's activities.
- 125 Political decision makers participated in OROL Campaign activities or were communicated with by OROL Partners.

These achievements were accomplished with a limited amount of staffing and funding, and despite the many new challenges and obstacles that have arisen during the last three years. These threats to local communities have included political upheavals; increasing food prices; natural disasters- especially devastating flooding, typhoons, earthquakes, and mudslides; and an increase in the number of environmentally destructive 'development' projects throughout Southeast Asia such as dams, mines, agro-industrial plantations, oil pipelines, and industrial estates.

In light of their past efforts and current plans to improve future work, this evaluation team strongly recommend that this project's donors continue supporting this program during this crucial juncture for the communities and persons living along and near the target rivers in Southeast Asia.

OROL Secretariat

The OROL Secretariat performs the daunting task of coordinating between seven organizations that work in seven countries across Southeast Asia. There are many inherent challenges in this role including language and cultural barriers, communication obstacles to due poor internet connections

and remote target areas, and trying to collect and collate the many reports and updates that are written by partner staff with a wide range of experiences and documentation skills. Information management continues to be a large obstacle for a team with limited time and resources at their disposal.

In spite of these obstacles, the OROL Secretariat was able to fulfill its roles and duties, including preparing regular reports for TdH-G and BMZ; coordinating capacity building trainings; representing the OROL Campaign at international meetings and forums; conducting annual Regional network meetings; assisting in the production of an OROL Regional Publication and DVD; and maintaining the OROL Campaign website and other social media websites. OROL Partners expressed their desire to see this role strengthened in the future, as the OROL Campaign would like to assume a larger regional presence, especially as the ASEAN community plans to become more integrated as the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015.

OROL Partner Organizations

The OROL Partners have been able to continue adding onto their already long list of successful activities and interventions that they have initiated since joining together under the banner of the Regional Working Group on Biodiversity in Southeast Asia in 1999. Each of the seven countries contains a unique set of circumstances and factors that partners must take into account when implementing the principles and strategies of the OROL Campaign in their local areas. However, after taking a deeper look past the surface differences in details, it becomes clear that all the OROL Partners share a common vision and approach to solving the problems facing communities living near waterways in Southeast Asia.

The common thread running through all the seven countries is their commitment to the youth. This value is at the core of their strategies, and each country has achieved great successes through the activities of their school and community based river watch youth groups. Meanwhile, other strategies have also supported the goal of protecting the environment and attaining justice for community members, including media production, education, capacity building, and advocacy with local and national level government officials. All of these strategies, in turn, have been strengthened by the extensive networks that OROL Partners have worked hard to establish and nurture among other NGOs, community based groups, and government officials. These networks allow the voices of the children and the community members to be amplified and have led to a number of both small and large successes during this phase of the OROL Campaign.

The work of the OROL Partners can be improved by more sharing of the excellent resources which have been developed in some countries with other partners that are just beginning to implement that activity- saving that organization a lot of time and effort. Besides this, it would be beneficial to produce some practical handbooks or other materials that could be used to explain the concept of Ecological Child Rights in countries where the meaning of this term has not been developed. Another chance for the OROL Campaign to improve its work would be to try and identify 'best practices' or areas of expertise for each Partner organization, so that this Partner could then be the 'leader' on this topic and be able to share its lessons-learned and give trainings among the other OROL organizations.

As the OROL Campaign looks forward, there are a number of concerns. The effects of climate change are being felt by riparian communities across Southeast Asia in the forms of extreme weather events: extensive flooding, droughts, and even typhoons occurring in places they usually don't occur are all troubling omens. In some countries there are ongoing and new armed low-intensity conflicts that create danger and instability for small scale farmers and an increased demand for natural resource extraction to fund the weapons. Meanwhile, peace talks and negotiations are underway in Burma and the Philippines, which should be viewed as a positive development, but in these two locations it is feared that a false peace will only serve to open these undeveloped lands to an investors looking to exploit their rich natural resources. The OROL Campaign's approach of empowering communities and building their resilience to both man-made and natural disasters is needed now more than ever.

Key Recommendations

The following list of recommendations represents the evaluation team's best estimates about how they believe OROL Campaign's work effectiveness could be improved during the next project phase. Hopefully, these suggestions will be useful, at the very least, to spark some discussions and conversations among the partner organization staff, who share a long history of collaboration. The recommendations are presented under thematic headings, but are not listed in any intentional ranking order.

OROL Secretariat

- The OROL Secretariat should have a master copy of all films, research documents, books, pamphlets, brochures, t-shirts, and other materials that are produced and used as part of the OROL campaign by each partner. These items can be catalogued and then be available for partner organizations, donors, network organizations, visitors, media contacts, evaluators, or other interested persons or organizations.
- The OROL Secretariat should compile and regularly update a "master database" containing partner organization contact information; website/ Facebook/ Youtube addresses; current OROL staff profiles; key media contacts; and other relevant information that could then be circulated among partner organizations.
- The OROL Secretariat should take a more active role in promoting the OROL Campaign at Regional and International events.

OROL Regional Network/ Annual Meeting

- OROL partner members need to work together to build a common understanding of roles, responsibilities and goals related to the OROL Regional Network, as well as the benefits of participating in network activities and coordination.
- When possible, OROL partners should bring more youth to Regional Level meetings to gain experience and build networks. One way to accomplish this would be to coordinate the OROL Regional meetings with Regional Youth meetings.
- Expand Regional Level meetings to include public exhibits and field trips to add value to these long journeys.

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- Consider conducting Skype conference calls for Regional meetings. This has been done in the past, and, if partners can agree to a specified regular scheduled appointment time, this could serve to save great amounts time and travel expenses.

Campaign Strategies

- Conduct trainings/ forums and/or produce media/ handbooks on the meaning and **practical uses** of Ecological Child Rights. These materials would be very useful especially in produced in local languages and dialects.
- Identify one outstanding strategy/practice from each partner and have this partner be the ‘champion’ or leader for that particular practice- providing training, expertise, advice and sharing their knowledge and experiences.
- Discuss ways to clarify understanding and further develop the existing 7 strategies/ approaches that the OROL Campaign utilizes. One possible model developed by the evaluation team is illustrated in Chart 2 near the end of the report.
- Continue to ensure gender balance and encourage input and participation from women in areas where this is already being done, while strengthening the roles of women in OROL Partners where there are few women in leadership roles.
- Conduct more participatory action research on river biodiversity in areas where it has yet to be conducted.

Reporting and Monitoring

- Consider alternative reporting forms in order to build on partners’ strengths and capacities. For example, it may be valuable to encourage using photos, stories, pictures, other media forms when reporting on project activities.
- Strengthen partner staff’s ability to communicate about their work activities, strategies, and accomplishments in a more clear and concise manner. This should include both oral and written communication skills.

Media

- Future regional publications should have a specific theme that links the partner organizations and generates wide public interest. For example, a book with river legends and folktales, or explaining ECRs from a child’s perspective may draw reader’s interest more than an academic study or data presentation.
- The OROL Campaign should share existing resources among partners more effectively/ efficiently. For example, the well developed and easy-to-use “River Bio-monitoring Kits” that are used successfully in Indonesia could be of great use in countries that are just beginning to do Bio-monitoring activities, like Laos and Cambodia (assuming these Kits are first translated into English).
- The OROL Secretariat and partner organizations should update websites/ Facebook pages/ Youtube pages/ other social media more regularly.

Future plans

- The OROL Campaign should consider expanding the OROL network to include SW China (Salween and Mekong Rivers) and/or Northern Laos (Mekong and its tributaries) to strengthen the campaign.
- The OROL Campaign should strategize and prepare to counter possible challenges and problems related to transnational rivers that may emerge as the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) integration date nears.
- The OROL Campaign should ensure that all partners feel represented and satisfied with the OROL logo. One suggestion, if a change is felt necessary, is to conduct a contest among regional youth to design the new logo.
- The OROL Campaign should begin discussions and strategic planning as soon as possible for the post-2018 project phase.

Project Background

The “Our Rivers Our Life” Campaign Project (OROL Project) was initially launched in 2012, with a plan for three years of implementation (01 March 2012- 28 February 2015). The project has been implemented by seven partners from seven Southeast Asian countries¹, as listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: List of OROL Partner Organizations, Main Office and Target Area Locations

Partner Organization	Target Area(s)	Target River(s)	Main Office Location
KESAN- Karen Environmental and Social Action Network	Karen State, Burma	Salween	Chiang Mai, Thailand
ACED—Association for Community and Ecology Development	Northern Thailand	Kok, Mekhong, Ing, Ping, Nan, Yom	Chiang Rai, Thailand
Santi Sena	Svay Rieng, Cambodia	Waiko	Svay Rieng, Cambodia
FA- Forestry Association	Southern Vietnam	Saigon, Dong Nai	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
RMI- The Indonesian Institute for Forest and Environment	West Java, Indonesia	Cisidane	Bogor, Indonesia
Gitib Inc./ Kalitawhan	Mindanao, Philippines	Agusan, Rio Grande de Mindanao	Davos, Philippines
ACD- Association for Community Development	Salavan Province, Laos	Xedone, Xelanong	Salavan, Laos

These partner organizations have cooperated and coordinated with each other since 1999. These organizations have common interests and values based on their environmental awareness and collective aim for sustainable ecological well-being of population in Southeast Asia with special focus on ecological rights of children and indigenous people, which are two of the most vulnerable groups of people. Each partner organization focuses on supporting communities living on or near rivers- some partners focus on one river, while others work on multiple rivers, as listed in Table 1 above.

The OROL project is in the final year of implementation after working for two years with great cooperation from multi-stakeholders in each partner country. In the first two years of OROL project implementation (2012-2013), capacity building was significantly provided to project partners in order to improve partners’ knowledge and increase their proficiency in issues in accordance with project’s activity implementation. The OROL network works to achieve Ecological Child Rights (ECR) and river/environmental protection through the follow 7 strategies:

Project Strategies (Activity themes/ Indicators):

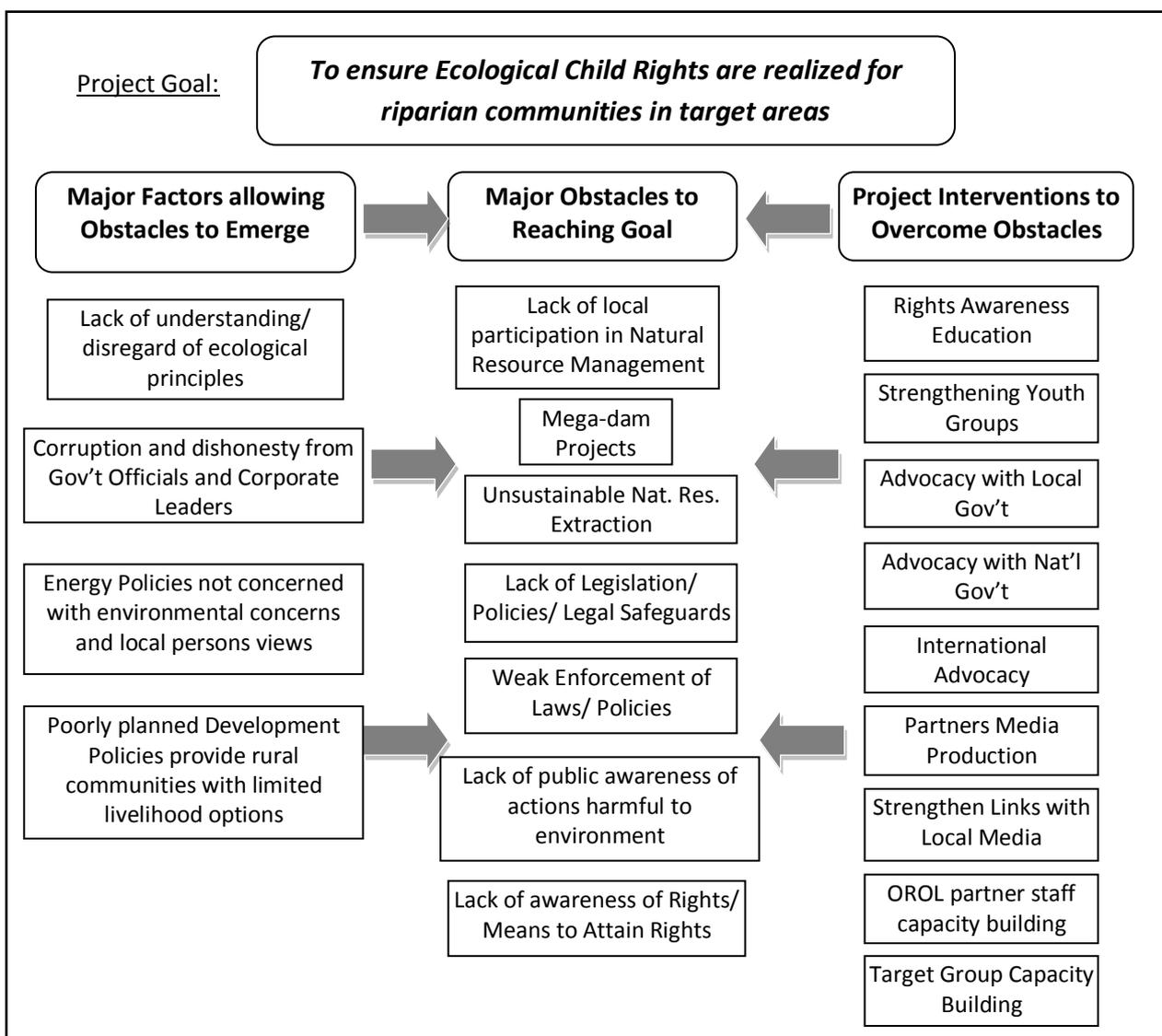
1. Raising awareness among children and youth about the significance of **ecological child rights** as well as the protection of the rivers and biodiversity.
2. Supporting **media** to report about ecological child rights as well as about matters of the environment health of rivers and the need to protect the biodiversity around rivers.
3. **Advocacy** among key decision makers in political institutions to encourage them to stand behind ecological child rights.
4. Establishing and supporting **ecological children and youth groups** (river-watch groups/ tree-planting-groups) to protect the environmental health of rivers.

¹ Originally, these partners collaborated as members of the Regional Working Group on Biodiversity for Southeast Asia

5. Providing and supporting **education** for students and the general public living along the rivers about the need of environmental protection and the preservation of biodiversity.
6. Setting up and strengthening existing **networks** between groups protecting biodiversity and supporting indigenous communities.
7. Ensuring effective roles, responsibilities, communication and coordination is conducted among the members of the **Regional Working Group for Biodiversity (RWG-BD)**.

The OROL Campaign aims to protect rivers and the communities along and near them from the harmful effects of resource extraction and poor planned development projects, so that the communities can continue to sustainably use the many resources the rivers provide to support their lives as well as to enjoy the beauty and wonder of these waterways. Chart 1 below provides a summary of the approach that OROL employs to overcome their challenges and reach their goal.

Chart 1: OROL Project Obstacles and Theory of Change Flowchart



Evaluation Findings

General

The OROL Campaign is an impressive and beneficial project that has met its goals and target indicators. The evaluation team found it very challenging to try and consolidate its findings in a simple and concise manner because of the complexity of the individual partner organizations and the network relationships. For this section of the evaluation report, we have first listed general findings that apply to all or nearly all of the partner organizations and the network. Following the general findings, we will discuss more specific findings about the work of the OROL Secretariat, partner organizations, best practices, project strategy, and conclude this section with findings for specific issues listed in the evaluation framework.

It is difficult to make sweeping generalizations that encompass ALL the partner organizations, and some exceptions could be found for nearly all of the following points, but we feel that the following list represents findings that apply to all or the majority of the partner organizations:

- Partner staff and OROL Secretariat were accommodating and flexible during the evaluation visits. The evaluators felt there was an open sharing of information and opinions.
- The OROL Partner staff are extremely knowledgeable and have a great amount of experience working on issues of environmental conservation, youth development, and community development.
- OROL Partner staff have a strong sense of their past cooperation and shared history with other OROL members and Terre des Hommes. During the evaluation trip, each organization told the evaluation team about their development of their partnership over the years.
- OROL Partner Organizations have extremely dedicated staff, as exemplified in their long hours they work without added compensation and the excitement they exhibited when bringing the evaluation team to meet project beneficiaries.
- The OROL Partner organizations have strong field-based focus. Their strength lies in the relationships and presence in the local communities and target areas, as opposed to the office setting
- Most Partner organizations employ a holistic approach- they simultaneously address multiple factors and causes for river degradation and use multiple strategies and methods to alleviate negative impacts.
- Another key strength of the Partner organizations is their strong and extensive networks and cooperation with other NGOs and government agencies, both on the local and national levels.
- The OROL Secretariat and Partner organizations possess good gender balance.

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- OROL Partner organizations have managed to implement a wide range of activities that have benefited a large number of people and communities, despite a limited amount of budget and number of staff.
- OROL partner organization expressed an appreciation for OROL Secretariat's work in coordinating and compiling reports and documents.
- After visiting all of the OROL Partners, the outstanding impression that the evaluation team has come away regarding project activities is the Youth River Watch Groups. The evaluators feel that OROL's work with the youth groups is the heart of this project, and should be highlighted as the core work of this campaign.

OROL Secretariat

The OROL Secretariat consists of the Regional Program Coordinator (Ms. Naruedee Janthasing) and the Finance Manager (Ms. Jarunee Arthitarpah) and is based in the ACED Office in Chiang Rai. The Secretariat's main role to coordinate between 7 organizations working in 7 countries presents many unique challenges, including:

- Large amounts of information to collect and collate
- Language barriers
- Communication delays due to poor infrastructure
- Some partners send reports to OROL Secretariat after deadlines
- Limited staff that are trying to complete wide range of tasks and many responsibilities

In the current phase, the major roles and responsibilities of the OROL Secretariat that were described to the evaluation team are comprised of:

- Collecting regular partner reports and combining them as a single project reports for TdH-G and BMZ
- Coordinate capacity building trainings
- Represent OROL at international/ regional level meetings/ forums
 - The Regional Program Coordinator will be attending the International Riversymposium being held in Australia in September 2014
- Conduct Yearly Regional Meeting
- Maintain and update the OROL webpages
- Collaborate/ Coordinate/ Conduct Regional Advocacy efforts

During discussions with OROL Partners, a number of suggestions on how to improve and strengthen the OROL Secretariat for the next Phase were shared, as follows: Checklist of potential roles/responsibilities for OROL Secretariat for the next phase:

- Strengthen OROL's Regional Profile
 - Attend more regional events
 - Identify a recognizable 'face' for OROL (both adult and child/youth)
- Should coordinate an 'ASEAN River Week'- conducting simultaneous events sharing a common theme occurring in each partner country

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- Should coordinate/ work closely with sub-Regional Youth groups, such as the Mekhong Youth Assembly
 - Coordinate the OROL Regional Meeting with the Regional Youth Network/ Assembly meeting
- Capacity Building trainings may be more effective if conducted at national, not regional, levels
- Survey Partners to find out what people are interesting in learning about when visiting another country for a regional meeting BEFOREHAND, so the host organization can prepare/ arrange for an appropriate activity
- Expand/ Contract the roles and responsibilities of the OROL Secretariat depending on what OROL Partners decide is most valuable and the capacity of the OROL Secretariat members. A list of potential roles that were suggested follows:
 - ✓ Coordinate Regional Research
 - ✓ Produce Coordinate Regional Publications/ Media
 - ✓ Maintain updated database with Partner Contacts/ Information
 - ✓ Collect and Organize all OROL project media and materials in a central location ('library' or 'museum')
 - ✓ Collate regular reports from partners
 - ✓ Coordinate Logistics for Donors and other visitors
 - ✓ Coordinate Logistics for Regular Regional Meetings/ Forums
 - ✓ Attend Regional/ International events as OROL representative to raise awareness of OROL's activities and accomplishments
 - ✓ Collate/ Publish a regular newsletter or information update
 - ✓ Maintain/ Update OROL website/ FB page/ Blog/ other social media

In order to synthesize data and reports and analyze partner organization's contributions and roles, as well as more easily compare contexts of partner's work, it may be beneficial to utilize a matrix or spreadsheet format. Some examples of how such a tool could be arranged are shown in the Charts on the following pages. The first two 'local context' charts (Charts 2 and 3) were filled in based on the findings during the short evaluation visits, but the purpose of the matrices is to encourage discussion and build understanding among the OROL Partners instead of serving as a final report by the evaluation team. Of course, items should be added or deleted from the list according to what the partners feel are the most important issues. Chart 3 provides more information by assigning a score (for this scale- 1 represents the lowest level of concern and 3 the highest), but it also creates a greater challenge to determine accurate values.

Chart 2: Local Context Matrix Example 1

	KESAN	ACED	Santi Sena	FA	RMI	Gitib	ACD
Work in Indigenous Persons (IP) Area	X	X			X	X	X
Target area is in conflict zone	X					X	
Dams are major issue	X	X					X
Mining is an major issue	X				X	X	X
Plantations are a major issue				X		X	X
Logging is a major issue	X					X	X
Factory pollution is a major issue				X		X	
Strong Government Oversight of NGO activities	X		X	X			X
Decentralization gives Local Gov't Strong Mandate		X			X	X	

Chart 3:Local Context Matrix Example 2

	KESAN	ACED	Santi Sena	FA	RMI	Gitib	ACD
Work in Indigenous Persons (IP) Area	3	2			2	2	2
Target area is in conflict zone	3					2	
Dams are major issue	3	2				1	2
Mining is an major issue	2			1	2	3	1
Plantations are a major issue			1	2		3	2
Logging is a major issue	2					3	3
Factory pollution is a major issue		1		3		1	
Strong Government Oversight of NGO activities	3		2	3			3
Decentralization gives Local Gov't Strong Mandate	1	2			2	3	1

The next example, Chart 4 on the following page, attempts to present a quick 'snapshot' view of similarities and differences in how partner organizations are working to attain the goals of the OROL Campaign. As demonstrated in the Country Context Charts, this chart could be filled in with numeric values, a rating scale, or simple 'X's; depending on how the results would be used. This example only lists a few examples of activities, and there are more that could be added. Another way to organize this kind of a matrix could be to have sub-headings under the 7 current project strategies with details and examples of the type of activities typically implemented for each of the project strategies. This biggest challenge for an 'activity matrix' like this is to avoid making it too large and complicated. A chart like this should be a useful tool and provide insight and support instead of merely being another piece of work that the Secretariat is assigned to complete.

Chart 4: OROL Partner Activities Matrix

	KESAN	ACED	Santi Sena	FA	RMI	Gitib	ACD
Publish Research Reports	X	X			X		
Produce ECR Handbook in Local Language			X				
Conduct Regular Water Quality Tests					X	X	
Conduct Regular Biodiversity Tests					X	X	X
Maintain close cooperation with Government Agencies	X		X	X		X	X
Active Website / Social Media presence	X	X			X		
Active in Environmental and/or Child Rights National Networks	X	X			X	X	
Use local partner organizations to implement OROL activities	X					X	
Have established River Conservation Zones		X	X				

Partner Organizations

While the 7 partner organizations implementing OROL project activities share common approaches and understanding of the issues and problems, they also work in very different contexts and have a wide range of resources and experiences to draw from. After meeting all partner organizations, it was an extremely challenging task to try to summarize the information and synthesize all of the evaluation data into a single framework. While the complete notes from the field visits can be found in Appendix 5, for this part of the evaluation report, the evaluators selected on a few of their key findings and constructed a summary matrix presented on the follow pages as Table 2. The purpose of this matrix is to highlight significant differences among the partner organizations outside of the more general findings presented in the section above that tend to be shared by most if not all partner organizations. This matrix, therefore, does not represent a complete or comprehensive picture of the partner organizations, but rather highlights a few points that stood out most during the very brief evaluation visits.

Table 2: “Snapshot” Partner Organization Findings Summary

Partner Org.	Major Strengths	Major Challenges and Opportunities	Best Practice(s)	Unique Characteristic(s)
KESAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -KESAN works closely with Karen gov’t (KNU) to build gov’t capacities - Support local livelihood initiatives and land rights issues, as well as river and environment conservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political uncertainty and ceasefire negotiations - Salween River issues involve multi-ethnic stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Networking with other Ethnic Groups and Internationally - Mass Rallies for Campaigns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main Office not in Target Area Country - Salween River flows through 3 other Ethnic States
ACED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong networks in Northern Thailand to support advocacy efforts - Deep knowledge of local, regional, national and international issues relating to youth and river conservation - Solid understanding of ECR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Including more ‘local wisdom’ in the River School curriculum - Turnover of students/ inability to conduct activities during school breaks - English language skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth involvement with River Watch patrols - River Education Curriculum development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working in many river basins with a variety of ethnic groups - Campaigning against dam construction in a neighboring country
Santi Sena	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Empowerment of biodiversity zone management committee - Strong support from local community (donations for community radio) - Youthful staff with a lot of positive energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of baseline data about Waiko River biodiversity - No women in leadership roles - Limited documents/resources for RWG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child Supported Community Radio Broadcasts - Close cooperation with Local Fishery Department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Based in a Buddhist Temple - Former volunteers now administrating project
FA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experienced staff with deep understanding of local context - Good cooperation/ understanding with Government - Deep understanding of ECR - Strong support from TDH-G country office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involve more youth in organization leadership roles - Urban youth have little connection to natural world and environment - Limited number of full time staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth Exchanges between downstream urban students and upstream rural students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main office based in largest urban center - Strongest Government oversight

Partner Org.	Major Strengths	Major Challenges and Opportunities	Best Practice(s)	Unique Characteristic(s)
RMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong media: Films, Youtube, posters - Impressive documentation - Holistic approach - Deep knowledge and understanding of roots of problems by staff - Good gender balance among staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land and housing estates are being invested in by wealthy Jakartans in greater numbers - Difficult and dangerous roads to reach target areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - River bio-monitoring group records monthly data - High quality youth written and produced short video 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sand mining and water extraction are major problems on the Cisadane River - Collaborating w/ Indo. Univ. Crisis Center to conduct Green Camp
Gitib	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourages youth and local CBOs to speak for themselves during presentations - Strong documentation for OROL project activities - Clear and easy-to-follow accounts - Very open and transparent about sharing work issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some parts of target area are in conflict zones - Villagers contributing to environmentally destructive activities due to lack of income - Only 3 staff to oversee 4 distant areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth 4 Climate Justice Group inspired by former intern - Empower local Indigenous CBO to negotiate with local gov't officials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support 2 local CBOs to implement OROL project activities - RWGs contain adults as well as children
ACD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dedicated and sincere staff- family atmosphere - Gender and youth well represented on ACD staff - Close working relationship with Gov't officials - Strongly encourage child and youth empowerment and critical thinking skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff feel they have low understanding of "ECR". - Laos children are not traditionally taught critical thinking skills - Good posters/ brochures, but room for improvement for media production (especially website and social media) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Empowering local secondary school students to plan activities and coordinate with gov't officials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise pigs and chickens at office - Director speaks local ethnic language after working alongside this group for many years

Good practices

Despite the limited time allotted for the visits to each partner organization, the evaluators were still able to observe and record a large number of ‘good practices’. After finishing the evaluation trip, the evaluation team selected one example from each organization that stood out as being particularly innovative or noteworthy for some other reason. It was difficult, in some cases, to select between a number of interesting and impressive activities or approaches, but for the purpose of keeping this report as practical as possible, only one was chosen. The chosen activity or practice may not necessarily be the most impressive or successful one, and the evaluators hope that their choice will encourage discussion and debate within OROL and each partner organization about what they perceive to be their own ‘good/best practices’.

Identifying each partner’s strongest skill or the activity that they have the most experience and expertise in would be useful for future capacity trainings and exchange visits, as well as to provide a more clear framework for how this network’s relationships and interactions can be viewed. Each partner organization could be an ‘expert’ or ‘leader’ in one type of strategy or activity, and could focus on that strategy or practice as their special contribution to the OROL network. Below, are summaries outlining what the evaluators understood as examples of good practices that were observed or learned about during the field visits.

1. Burma/Myanmar Good Practice: Networking/ Advocacy Campaigns

Burma has recently very gradually begun to ‘open up’ and allow public political debates, discussions, and more open media coverage. KESAN has been taking advantage of these new spaces and has increased network connections and stepped up advocacy campaigns both within and outside of Burma.

On March 14, 2014, the International Day of Action for Rivers and Against Dams, more than 200 people, including participants from Arakan, Shan, Karenni, and Karen State and local residents from Mawlamyine, the Mon State capital gathered on “Kaw Mu Pone” Island in the Salween River delta near Mawlamyine to take action to protect the rivers. The event was jointly organized by Karen Rivers Watch (KRW) and the Burma Rivers Network (BRN) for the purpose of raising awareness on the impacts of dam, motivating people, and presenting the results of their signature campaign against the six Salween Dams.

During the event, Burma Rivers Network presented the results of their signature campaign against the six Salween Dams, conducted by their members in collaboration with other civil society groups inside Burma. Over 33,500 people in Shan, Karenni, Karen and Mon States and from Yangon, Sagaing and Magwe division signed the petition, while over 130 civil society organizations and political parties representing thousands more formally endorsed the signature campaign. The petition calls for an immediate halt to the plans to dam the Salween River.

As part of the Salween campaign the petition letter will be sent to the Burmese, Chinese and Thai governments, and the companies listed as the dam developers. These include Thailand’s EGAT International Co.Ltd, the China Three Gorges Corporation, Hanergy Holding Group, Sino Hydro Corporation, China Datang Overseas Investment Co.Ltd, and the Burmese crony companies Asia World, the International Group of Entrepreneurs Co.Ltd and Shwe Taung Hydropower Company.

2. Thailand Good Practice: Kaew Wua Dam River Watch Conservation Youth Group

The Kaew Wua Dam River Watch Conservation group consists of about 30 local youth- most of whom are girls. The main activities of this group are tree plantings and patrolling the 500 meter Fish Conservation (FC) zone next to their community. This zone was established seven years ago, when community members decided the number of fish in the river was greatly decreasing.

Originally, villagers were allowed to fish in the zone only using traditional fishing methods. Community forums and discussion had to be conducted in order to build understanding and explain about the importance and benefits of establishing this protected zone. After a few years of this regulation, all fishing was officially banned in the FC zone. Youth group members help patrol and enforce the regulations, especially at night, when some people try to sneak out and catch fish unnoticed. Youth group members talked about how they would have fun staying up late and monitoring the activities on the dark river.

Currently, the villagers have seen a noticeable gain in the number of fish in the FC zone and have noted that, in the dry season, you can now find large amounts of eggs on the sandbars in the river. Future plans include testing water quality and biodiversity in the FC zone and conducting research about fish species.

3. Cambodia Good Practice: Community Radio

Radio broadcasts are a highly effective way to reach community members in rural Cambodia. In Svay Rieng District, it was reported that 80% of the households listen to radio broadcasts (some even listen on their mobile phones). Venerable Ouk Sary and Mr. Ros Sopa are the directors of the Buddhism and Society Community Radio Program, which has been broadcast since January 2012 from a sound room at the local temple. The program provides information and updates about child ecological rights, environment and natural resources issues that affect local communities.

Originally, this program was only broadcast for one hour/ week on one radio station. However, soon after it began, community members became very interested and asked for longer broadcasts. The program then expanded to 2 hours/day on Mon-Sat and 3 hours on Sundays. It also began to be broadcast on a second radio channel in Svay Rieng (there are only a total of four radio channels available in Svay Rieng Province). Local people have made donations to support the increased running costs for this program.

Students from the primary school (46 students) located on the temple grounds are very interested in this program and often call in and ask questions. The radio broadcast sometimes also organizes talk shows, round table discussions, and invites youth and community members to participate.

4. Vietnam Good Practice: Urban Ho Chi Minh City Students building relationships with Rural Students living upstream

In quickly developing Vietnam, there is a growing gap and disconnect between modern urban centers and tradition rural communities, causing increasing misunderstandings between these two areas about the causes and solutions for problems facing the rivers. The FA is working to bring a

greater understanding between the rural and urban youth by facilitating exchange trips, forums, and camps that bring River Watch Groups together to share information, views, and experiences. During the evaluation trip, a teacher and the Saigon RWG (5 girls and 2 boys) traveled to the La Nga Community (located along the Dong Nai River (La Nga) 2 hours north of HCM City) to meet the La Nga High School RWG(4 girls and 3 boys).

During this exchange, students shared stories about the activities they have involved with, which included: meeting and discussing with Dong Nai River fisherfolk; taking photographs to document the practices that pollute the Dong Nai River; cleaning school grounds and home communities; planting trees on Ho Chi Minh's Birthday (May 19); organizing a demonstration in their commune in June this year; and conducting forums/ discussion with students and community members about current issues in Dong Nai River.

Following the presentation of activities by the students a lively exchange was held between the two groups of students and their advisors and teachers. Parts of the conversation that stood out included:

"In Saigon, we have seen one of the dirty canals get cleaner in the last few years, but it cost a lot of money and took a lot of hard work to improve the water quality. It still needs a lot of work, and we are afraid it will get dirty again, if people don't maintain it."

"We try to teach the other children and some of the adults, but sometimes they don't listen to us. What should we do to convince them to listen to us?"

"Last year, we came together and made new friends from other communities along the Dong Nai River. We have stayed in touch with them since then and are looking forward to meeting them once again in a few months when we have another youth camp activity."

5. Indonesia Good Practice: Student written, directed and produced film

During the evaluation trip, a film screening was conducted for 35 Environment Club students. The film was written and directed by Youth with technical assistance and advice provided by a media/arts group based in Jakarta. It took nearly one year to complete this project and over 30 youth were involved. The goal of the film is for youth to be able to tell their version of what is happening in their communities.

The plot of the film is that a Jakarta-raised girl comes to the upstream area of the Cisdane River and meets a young boy there, who then explains to her about what life is like for the villagers here. He also takes her to a beautiful jungle waterfall and she is so impressed with everything she has seen and learned that she goes back to Jakarta and posts videos of her trip on Youtube. Issues that are presented over the course of the film include the effects of sand mining, the challenges children face to get an education, the debt that most farmers accrue after payments to middlemen for fertilizers and land rent, and skin rashes caused by bathing in the polluted river.

This film was screened at a film festival and the youth who were involved with this production plan to make another film. They will involve new youth with the production and will act as mentors so a new generation can learn video production skills. A short clip about the making of this video can be viewed at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4SIITGZ3J0> .

6. Philippines Good Practice: Lively exchange between Indigenous Group and Government Officials

During the evaluation trip, representatives from the indigenous peoples' CBO (PASAKK) and the Bunawan Municipal River watch group held an exchange with the Commune Captain at the Bunawan Commune office. The Captain was recently elected and said he would like to learn more about the RWG's activities so that he could find ways to cooperate and support their activities. The RWG mentioned that they would be receiving a 1.5M Peso grant from the Central Government to conduct tree planting along the river next year, and they needed the Captain to assist them to ensure that the funds will reach the RWG as promised.

The Captain expressed concern about activities to stop small scale mining in the Agusan River, because if these miners could no longer work, they would not be able to gain income to support their families. He also suggested that it would be beneficial for the community if Del Monte would be granted a concession to set up a 2,000hA commercial plantation operation in this commune, as it would provide many jobs for local persons. He also suggested that persons involved with illegal logging could be employed by the British Palm Oil Plantation that would soon be operating in this area. A RWG member replied that, to the best of his knowledge, in other areas that had new plantations, few local people were employed and the employment was erratic and low-paid.

Finally, the Captain thanked the RWG for their efforts to keep the rivers and environment clean and healthy; however they must also be careful, because the enemy they are up against is very powerful. A RWG member retorted that they would not be intimidated or stop their activities, because they were sure that the other side would never relent in the pursuit of their goals.

The exchanges between the Government officials and members of the RWG seemed to be good-spirited and open. Even when there were clear disagreements, it appeared that both sides were at least listening and allowing each other to express their opinions.

7. Laos Good Practice: Salavan Secondary School Volunteer Group planning for Xedone River Boat Racing activities

This student group meets about once/month- depending on the school schedule and other activities. During the evaluation visit, the group planned activities for the upcoming Boat Racing Festival on the Sedone River (September 9-10). The students led this discussion and also wrote down their plans on a flipchart by themselves. ACD Staff and Advisor gave limited input and mostly allowed the students to decide things for themselves. Planned activities included:

- A Parade with campaign signs and chanting slogans
- A Public Forum for Raising Awareness
- A Recycled Costumes Contest
- A Question/Answer Game Contest
- Games that teach about the importance of forest and water conservation
- Teaching about Garbage Separation and playing the "Eat and Clean" game

Children in Laos are limited in their ability to think/analyze independently, due to educational and political structures. Therefore, ACD is trying to find ways to encourage more child centered participation. In the case of the upcoming Sedone River Boat Racing Festival, ACD is encouraging the Youth Group to directly coordinate their planned activities with local authorities, so that they can learn about how to work effectively in the Laos systems. Students have already done some self-organizing and have learned that it is more effective to present their activities as a group, instead of only having 1-2 leaders ask permission from local authorities.

Strategies/ Objectives

For the current project phase, the OROL Campaign has classified their strategies/ approaches to achieve project goals as listed in order below. A summary of the findings will be presented for each strategy followed by an analysis of the list as a whole.

1. Raising awareness among children and youth about the significance of **ecological child rights** as well as the protection of the rivers and biodiversity.

Ecological child rights (ECR) are the basis for all of the OROL campaigns interventions and activities; therefore, this strategy is implicitly incorporated in all other strategies. Despite its centrality for the OROL Campaign, though, there remains a great deal of uncertainty about the meaning of this term among some of the OROL Partners. During the evaluation, many different answers were provided to the question “What are ECRs?”, some of which were more concrete than others. Some staff explained ECR as “Children have the right to live in a healthy environment”, and others understood ECR as being stronger and more inclusive than the CRC.

The evaluators do not believe that a single, simple definition of this term is desirable, but feel it is more useful and appropriate for each country to have its own understanding of the meaning and implications of this term. However, this understanding should be able to be articulated clearly and in a way that can be easily understood by project beneficiaries. In places where it does not exist, a practical ECR guide or manual should be developed and compiled in local languages, and distributed among both project beneficiaries and the general public.

2. Supporting **media** to report about ecological child rights as well as about matters of the environment health of rivers and the need to protect the biodiversity around rivers.

Media materials were produced by all OROL Partners during this phase ranging from stickers and t-shirts to short documentaries and Facebook pages. Besides producing materials, most OROL Partners also maintain close contact with local and national journalists, whom they notify when a ‘news-worthy’ event will take place or when the partners have produced a press release they want to share with the public. Mass media is a very effective tool to raise awareness, especially when a variety of mediums are used that can reach wider audiences. In order to more clearly understand what kinds of media are being used and produced by which partner, it may be useful to design and maintain another matrix or chart. An example is shown on the following page in Chart 5. Like other matrices used earlier in this report, this chart could be filled in with number of materials or activities, using a scale to rank how successful each category has been, or with a simple “X”, depending on what this tool will be used for.

Chart 5: OROL Partner media production matrix

	KESAN	ACED	Santi Sena	FA	RMI	Gitib	ACD
Campaign Posters	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
T Shirts	X			X			X
Brochures	X						X
Stickers					X		
Radio Broadcasts			X	X	X	X	X
Videos/ Movies/ Short Films	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Photo Exhibits		X			X	X	X
Local Language Website	X	X			X	X	
English Language Website	X	X			X	X	
YouTube Page	X				X		
Facebook Page	X		X			X	X

3. **Advocacy** among key decision makers in political institutions to encourage them to stand behind ecological child rights.

For the OROL Campaign, most of the national level policy advocacy work is done through networks, which is a more effective approach than attempting to negotiate as an individual or an individual organization. For local advocacy, the most successful strategies have been to involve local government officials in forums and trainings, as well as to provide technical support for local government initiatives that support environmental and child rights. These methods have been especially successful in the following cases which highlight a few of the many examples of successful local advocacy efforts that OROL Partners have achieved:

- In Laos, local authorities have been so impressed with the River Conservation Regulation Handbook that ACD has compiled and given trainings about, that they have asked ACD to print more and give more trainings in other communities.
- In Thailand, coordination with the local government officials resulted in the issuing of an order for hotels to cease dumping chlorine-rich swimming pool water into the Kok River.
- In Cambodia, the Svay Rieng Fisheries Department has been active in the establishment of the BCA Management Committee after Santi Sena has coordinated with this office river conservation activities and trainings

4. Establishing and supporting **ecological children and youth groups** (river-watch groups/ tree-planting-groups) to protect the environmental health of rivers.

This strategy was the most impressive activity that the evaluation team observed during the target area visits, but the names, membership, and activities of these groups were quite varied from country to country. Names of these groups include: River Watch Groups, Environment Clubs, Youth

Groups, Conservation Clubs, Tree-Planting Groups, Youth 4 Climate Change, or Nature Lover Clubs. Depending on the project location, group members could consist of primary school students, secondary school students, university students, adult community members, or a combination of any of these groups. Group sizes vary from 7 to 50 members. Activities that these groups have conducted during the last 2.5 years have included: field trips to rivers and communities, producing art from recycled materials, youth camps, parades, environmental games and contests, picture drawing and story writing contests, water bio-diversity testing, producing short films, cleaning rivers and school grounds, teaching about recycling, and others.

It would be useful, as was suggested in the Media section above, to compile and maintain a chart or matrix with different characteristics and activities of the clubs. A summary chart like these could be a useful tool to compare and better understand the interesting adaptive models and forms that these clubs take depending on local contexts.

5. Providing and supporting **education** for students and the general public living along the rivers about the need of environmental protection and the preservation of biodiversity.

This strategy is closely related to and overlaps with the 'awareness raising', 'media', and 'river watch/ youth groups' categories, so it will not be analyzed in this section. The only exception to this is the work that Santi Sena and ACED have accomplished developing environmental curriculum used in local primary and secondary schools.

6. Setting up and strengthening existing **networks** between groups protecting biodiversity and supporting indigenous communities.

Networking has been an effective strategy in every OROL Campaign country. Networks have been developed on many levels, including governmental and non-governmental actors; local, national, and international; environmental, child rights, anti-dam, and indigenous based organizations. Especially noteworthy for their extensive networking lists are KESAN, ACED, RMI, and Gitib with estimates of hundreds of contacts. Networking has especially strengthened the OROL Campaigns advocacy efforts.

7. Ensuring effective roles, responsibilities, communication and coordination is conducted among the members of the **Regional Working Group for Biodiversity (RWG-BD)**.

This role of the OROL Secretariat is discussed in detail above and suggesting about improve the OROL Regional Network are listed in the Recommendations section.

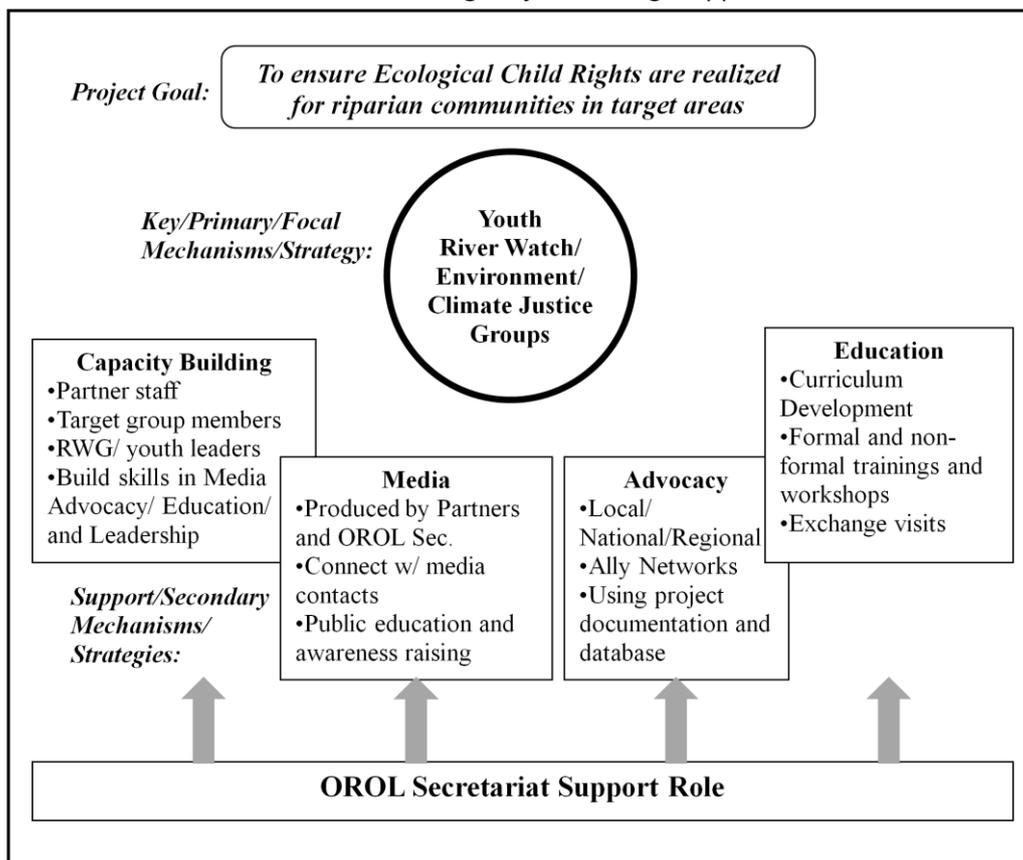
OROL Campaign overall strategy

OROL project partner's approaches can be understood as 'holistic': they address the underlying causes of river and environmental pollution/degradation and attempt to solve the problems in the most sustainable manner. The evaluation team agrees that this method is the most effective way to produce long term change in communities. However, one drawback to such an approach is the complexity and wide-ranging activities that any project using this type of holistic strategy will need to undertake.

Oftentimes, project activities and interventions do not neatly fall into one, and only one, of the above 7 strategies. For example, if a River Watch Group produces a short film that teaches about ECRs, should this activity be classified as River Watch Group, media, or awareness-raising about child rights? One simple approach to this dilemma could be to ‘tag’ activities as contributing to multiple strategies, instead of trying to force it to belong to only one strategy when recording and classifying activities. In the previous example, therefore the activity would be recorded at “River Watch ECR Short Film” and three ‘tags’ (1. River Watch Group, 2. Media, 3. ECR awareness-raising) could be ‘attached’ to it. This single activity, therefore, could be counted for three different indicators under the current project strategy model.

A different approach to this dilemma might be more complicated, but it also could render the issue of overlapping strategies less confusing in the long term. It would require the OROL Campaign to reorganize or restructure the existing 7 strategies. This is easier said than done, especially as the current format is a result of many years of discussion and project evolution. In order to try to move this process forward, the evaluators were asked to formulate an improved model, which is illustrated below in Chart 6.

Chart 6: Restructuring Project Strategic Approaches



The evaluation team feels that the central project strategy or the ‘heart’ of the OROL Campaign’s approach is the Environmental/ Youth/ River Watch Groups. This facet of the OROL Campaign most directly connects the project work with its overarching goal- ensuring ECRs- since it directly involves the youth and it usually incorporates other project strategies. The remaining current strategies could then be realigned into the strategies of ‘Capacity Building’, ‘Media’, ‘Advocacy’, and ‘Education’-

each of which provides support to the goal, but often still have areas which overlap. For example, to conduct advocacy effectively, media materials need to be used and the OROL Partner staff must have the capacity to explain the issues to the government official who is being advocated. The role of the OROL Secretariat would remain to support all of the project strategies as well as the Regional Working Group for Biodiversity.

Specific Evaluation Framework Issues

Relevance of the project for the target group

The OROL project has adapted its approaches in each country depending on the local context and needs. Although each country shares the common goal of 'river protection and conservation', the challenges and problems facing communities living along and near the rivers vary from country to country. The fact that each country addresses its own most pressing issues is a major strength of the OROL project. OROL partner organizations have been working in the target areas for more than 15 years, and they have been able to closely follow and understand the developments among the target communities, as well as strengthen long-term relationships with community members. Because of this shared history and trust, local stakeholders have been extensively consulted and included in activity planning, implementation and evaluation. Besides this, each partner has been able to adapt to their local context's security situation, potential threats and government oversight in order to most effectively conduct activities that will be of greatest benefit to the project beneficiaries.

Project partner staff efficiency

There exists a wide range among project partners regarding organizational structures and management styles, but, in general, the project administrators and managers seem to be very approachable with a 'hands-on' style of management. Each partner organization contains a great deal of information and experience, but some partners were more organized and methodical in their data and information management. Best practices included the Gitib, Santi Sena, and RMI who all shared extensive documentation and powerpoint presentations during the evaluation visit. Budget records and plans were produced upon request during visits to partner offices, and the accounting staff were all competent and detail-oriented. OROL Partners coordinate closely with local authorities, institutions, target groups and other NGOs.

Within each OROL partner organization, internal monitoring and evaluating is continuously conducted in order to learn from previous work and improve the quality of future work. The latest internal evaluation report that was made available to the evaluation team for review was the 2013 Annual Report, which was an impressive collation representing the breadth of OROL's activities. The photographs arranged according to project strategies were an especially useful addition to this report- as this visually demonstrates the variety of approaches that exist with the OROL network. The major drawback of this report for the evaluators was that the amount of data was overwhelming and sometimes difficult to understand the differences between strategy classifications (this issue was addressed in the 'Strategy/ Objectives section above).

Project Impact

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During the first 2+ years of project implementation, the OROL Campaign has attained tangible impacts and reached a large amount of target beneficiaries- both according to project plans and unexpectedly. This was not only confirmed by project records and testimony from project beneficiaries, but feedback from government officials and other NGOs staff also supported this conclusion. A few examples (though not a complete list) of activities that have already exceeded project indicators and impacts include:

- Santi Sena supports 2 community radio stations, despite only planning to broadcast from one station
- Gitib has coordinated to establish 50 River Watch Groups, even though they originally planned to establish 4, due to community based organizing.

Some highlights of unexpected results (once again, there are more examples than these) that have achieved during this project phase include:

- Gitib: Establishment of the Youth 4 Climate Justice (Y4CJ) group- this was not planned, but it was a student driven initiative.
- ACD: The local government offices requested ACD to supply villagers with more River Conservation Regulations guides and trainings, even though this was not planned in the original project proposal.

A challenge for the OROL Campaign with regards to impact is that it is sometimes difficult to measure longer term environmental impacts. Also, some of the quantitative impact indicators for a water conservation project, such as water quality and the number of pollution producing activities occurring alongside rivers are outside of the scope and control of the OROL project interventions. In order to address this, the OROL campaign should look for more qualitative ways to measure impacts. For example, instead of just reporting on number of River Watch Groups established, collect more data on the activities RWGs have conducted and interviews/quotes about how this Group/Club has had an effect on them.

Project Sustainability

OROL's current implementation model and program strategies are considered to be highly sustainable by the evaluation team. This conclusion was reached based on the following points:

- The OROL project empowers local communities and youth in order to ensure a greater chance that project activities could be continued without the direct support of OROL. The evaluation team observed OROL Partner organizations encouraging Youth and River Watch Groups to plan and implement activities that they are most interested in. Socio-cultural factors accounted for in project planning and implementation, for example, the local perception of traditional ways of production and distribution, local power structures in regard to aspects of status and religious beliefs
- OROL partners also cooperate and coordinate with Government offices and staff, providing a greater likelihood that project activities would continue without the OROL campaign's support.

OROL Project (2012-2015) External Evaluation Report

- The OROL Campaign also provides capacity trainings and technical support for partners and project beneficiaries, which ensures a greater level of self sufficiency in both local CBOs and communities.
- The intricate web of networks that OROL Partners contribute to and support increases the ability for activities to continue in the absence of one network member's involvement.
- Some specific examples of sustainable practices by OROL partners include:
 - Gitib implementing OROL project activities through local indigenous CBO's.
 - Public donations used to support Santi Sena's community radio program.
 - Former volunteers/interns now work as full time project staff in RMI and Santi Sena.
 - Environment and Lindalang RWGs in Indonesia sell products made from recycled materials to raise funds for their activities.
 - ACD encourages Youth Groups to directly apply for permission to conduct activities in Laos so they can learn how to negotiate government bureaucracy.
 - The Y4CJ Group in Davao plans to conduct a concert to raise funds for their activities.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Evaluation Terms of Reference

1. Terms of Reference (TOR)

Evaluation of Our River Our Life Campaign Project: OROL-Conservation and Protection of Our Rivers to Promote Life

2. Introduction

This ToR applies to the evaluation of the **“Our River Our Life Campaign Project: OROL-Conservation and Protection of Our Rivers to Promote Life”** implemented by Regional Working Group on Biodiversity for Southeast Asia. It is a formative evaluation which intends to assess the achievements of the project as well as the problems and difficulties, identify enabling and hindering factors, and put forward recommendations which will make the project better realise its objectives .

3. Project Background

The “Our Rivers Our Life” Campaign Project (OROL Project) was initially launched in 2012 with the project period of 3 years from 01 March 2012- 28 February 2015. The Project has been implemented by seven partners from seven Southeast Asian countries (Regional Working Group on Biodiversity for Southeast Asia) which include the Karen Environmental and Social Action Network (KESAN) of Myanmar located in Chiang Mai, Thailand; the Santi Sena of Cambodia located in Svay Rieng province, Cambodia; the Indonesian Institute for Forest and Environment (RMI) of Indonesia located in Bogor, Indonesia; the Association for Community Development (ACD) of Lao PDR located in Salawan, Lao PDR; the Gitib Inc. (a leading organization of the network of Biodiversity KALITAWHAN) of the Philippines with office based in Davao, the Philippines; the Association for Community and Ecology Development (ACED) of Thailand located in Chiang Rai, Thailand, and the Forestry Association (FA) of Vietnam located in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; based on their environmental awareness and collective aim for sustainable ecological well-being of population in Southeast Asia with special focus on ecological rights of children and indigenous people which are most vulnerable groups of people.

The year 2014 is the last year of the OROL project implementation after having been implemented for two years with great cooperation from multi-stakeholders in each partner country. In the first two years of OROL project implementation (2012-2013), capacity building was significantly provided to project partners in order to gain the partners’ knowledge and increase their proficiency in issues in accordance with project’s activity implementation. This has been an important foundation for the achievements/results of project implementation. With great cooperation of project partners and continuity of project implementation from the first year, it is undeniable that the river biodiversity in the South East Asia region where many children and local and indigenous communities depends on rivers for their livelihoods has effectively been protected through variety of project activity in each country, such as awareness raising, network strengthening, campaigning, advocacy, media coverage promoting, and so on.

The objectives of the project

8. Awareness has been raised in children and youth about the significance of ecological child rights as well as the protection of the rivers and biodiversity.
9. The media reports about ecological child rights as well as about matters of the environment health of rivers and the need to protect the biodiversity around rivers.
10. Decision makers in political institutions stand behind ecological child rights.
11. Ecological children and youth groups (river-watch groups/tree-planting-groups) protecting the environmental health of rivers are established, interconnected and active.
12. Students and the general public living along the rivers have been educated about the need of environmental protection and the preservation of biodiversity.
13. The cooperation between groups protecting of the biodiversity and indigenous reservations is set up and improved.
14. Responsibilities, communication and coordination within the RWG-BioDiv have been defined and improved.

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ) and terre des hommes Germany (tdh Germany) are co-funding the OROL project. The total funding amount is 698,852 Euro over a three year project period extending from 2012-2014. BMZ has contributed 75 per cent of the total amount which is 524,139 Euro and tdh Germany has contributed 25 per cent of it which is 174,713 Euro. Allocations are 224,028 Euro in 2012; 225,497 Euro in 2013, 222,897 Euro in 2014, and 26,430 in 2015 (January-February 2015).

The total amount of funding (698,852 Euro) for OROL project has been allocated to Burma (90,620 Euro), Cambodia (68,093 Euro), Indonesia (98,903 Euro), Lao PDR (78,677 Euro), the Philippines (70,787 Euro), Thailand (89,481 Euro, Vietnam (78,960 Euro), and OROL Secretariat (99,123 Euro).

4. Purpose of Evaluation

The evaluation will assess to what extent the planned outputs and outcomes of the project have been achieved, what are the enabling and hindering factors, what unplanned results were realised, and what are the problems and difficulties encountered in the implementation. It will also look into the coordination and management processes insofar as these contribute or detract from the objectives of the project. It will also determine whatever positive impacts the project may have made in the target communities, in the lives of target groups and beneficiaries, and in the overall direction of protecting biodiversity in Southeast Asia. Finally, it will point out practical recommendations which will make the project more effective and efficient, and further increase the quality and value of its outcomes and impact in the different countries where the project is implemented and the entire region of Southeast Asia.

5. Scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation is expected to document and assess whether or not, and to what extent, the following indicators have been actualised:

Indicator 1:

- 145 young leaders and environment activists in five countries who have already been trained in the environmental protection of river, biodiversity and ecological child rights have had

deeper training to become leading figures (10 Burma, 20 Cambodia, 10 Indonesia, 45 Philippines, 60 Thailand)

- A further 150 children (compiling of 10 Burma, 20 Cambodia, 10 Indonesia, 50 Philippines, 60 Thailand) have been part of awareness raising measures about rivers, biodiversity and ecological child rights, have been taught leadership skills and are actively involved in the protection of the environmental health of rivers.
- A further 2,500 children know about the ecological child rights and are aware of the significance of the environment protection and the biodiversity.
- A further 300 peer-educators from 7 countries have been trained in ecological child rights, pass these on and are organised and actively involved in the protection of the rivers environmental health.

Indicator 2:

- A further 18 local and national media outlets in 7 countries routinely report about biodiversity and the environmental health of rivers.
- 13 local and national media outlets who reported about this in the past still do so.

Indicator 3:

- A total 130 decision makers in 7 countries make ecological child right part of discussion and bring forward laws to enforce or improve local and national laws protecting river and the biodiversity.
- An additional 50 decision makers support this lobby work.

Indicator 4:

- 14 river-watch groups/networks are consolidated and take part in activities protecting the rivers and the biodiversity together (2 Thailand, 2 Philippines, 3 Burma, 7 Indonesia).
- 17 new river-watch groups in 6 countries (Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines, and Vietnam) have been established

Indicator 5:

- A curriculum for environmental education for classes 8-10 is additionally developed and applied in 3 schools in Thailand.
- A mini-library with campaign-related material has been set up, promoted and is easily accessible for other interested groups.
- A regional set of campaign-related material is published, both in English and in various national languages.
- Social networks and internet platforms like Facebook, twitter, blogs, you tube are set up and optimised, to spread campaign content.

Indicator 6:

- A summit conference in the Philippines interconnects 40 new networks and defines compulsory new working structures.
- Connection to a further 4 networks in 3 countries have been made. 4 countries will be connecting to other network; Burma (3), Cambodia (2) Indonesia (2) and Vietnam (5)

Indicator 7:

- Communication and coordination within the working group go effectively and efficiently, and fulfil the legal and formal requirements of the different socio-political contexts.
- Report about the progress in work and the finances are presented in time.
- Monitoring and evaluation-systems are set up and working.
- Project partners know about ways to raise funds and are motivated to apply these.

The evaluation will address the following questions which are significant for the implementing partners:

- How can the OROL project be further developed more effectively at the regional level to promote higher awareness on ecological child rights and apply and advocate for appropriate measures towards an integrated and sustainable environmental cooperation?
- How can the project bring together national river watch groups, strengthen and make them a powerful in their respective countries and in the region?
- To what extent and what are the most effective strategies to bring the mass media on board to influence policy and local laws on the protection and promotion of ecological child rights, river and biodiversity?
- How to optimise the combination of different measures to ensure a sufficient protection of ecological child rights, river and biodiversity in the region in the long run?

The evaluation will follow the following scope:

1) Relevance of the project for the target group

- Are the existing problems and/or the needs (of the target groups) as well as the proposed solutions identified in an appropriate way to reach the objectives of the project in the project period from March 2012 to February 2015?
- Has the absorption capacity as well as the implementing capacities of the target group been assessed realistically?
- Have the local stakeholders been included appropriately in the process of consultation and participation?

2) Planning / Logical framework

- Are the objectives clear and result oriented? Are the inputs well-adjusted to reality? Can the project objectives be reached through the concretely intended project measures? Are the verifiable indicators well-chosen and broadly accepted?
- How flexible and adaptable is the project to respond to changing conditions for the project?

3) Efficiency of the participants

3.1) Quality of daily project management for example:

- Budget control
- Personnel management, documentation and information
- Guarantee of flexibility in project management with respect to changes in the project environment

- Involvement of and coordination with local authorities, institutions, target groups and other NGOs

3.2) Monitoring

- Status and quality of project monitoring (timely? related to baseline?)
- Is the actual monitoring system adequate for impact monitoring and steering?

4) Effectivity of project measures in regard to the target group

- Have the project measures been implemented according to planning and have they reached (the target group)?
- What kind of changes in the livelihood of the target group have been caused by the project?

5) Impact of the project

- What has been the direct contribution of the project to reach the objectives?
- Which results have been reached so far?
- How flexible did the project participants react to unforeseen changes in the project environment?
- Have there been unforeseen results in the project? If yes, in which way did it influence the general goal of the project?
- Have the selected project indicators been appropriate? If not, have they been adapted in the course of the project?
- Are the applied project measures effective to reach the objectives? Are better measures or methods conceivable?

6) Sustainability of the structures initiated by the project

- Can the project measures be continued by the target group after the end of the project period? Are the self-help structures initiated by the project capable to carry on the activities on their own after the project period?
- Is there a sufficient degree of commitment and responsibility among the participants, stakeholders and institutions to guarantee an independent continuation of the activities?
- Is the relationship between input and returns with respect to the project purpose (cost-benefit) justifiable?
- Are socio-cultural factors accounted for in project planning and implementation, for example, the local perception of traditional ways of production and distribution, local power structures in regard to aspects of status and religious believes?
- Can the access of the target group to the inputs and services by the project be maintained even after the project period?
- Have cross-cutting issues as gender equality, environmental protection and good governance been respected?

7) Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1) Lessons learnt

- Which kind of conclusions can be drawn from the project implementation so far and which recommendations can be formulated for the remaining project period?
- On the basis of the project implementation up to now, which kinds of measures are still necessary to assure the achievement of the targets respectively securing the project success?

7.2) Conclusions

- The conclusions should be organised in clusters in order to provide an overview of the assessed subject.
- It should feature references to the findings (responses to the evaluation questions) showing how the conclusions derive from data, interpretations, and analysis and judgement criteria.
- The evaluation team presents its conclusions in a balanced way, without systematically favouring the negative or the positive conclusions.
- The major conclusions should be organised by order of importance, while avoiding being repetitive for better communicating the evaluation messages that are addressed to partners and other stakeholders.

7.2) Recommendations

- Recommendations are intended to improve or reform the project/ programme in the framework of the cycle under way, or to prepare the design of a new intervention for the next cycle.
- Recommendations must be related to the conclusions and a recommendation derives directly from one or more conclusions.
- Recommendations should be as realistic, operational and pragmatic as possible; that is, they should take careful account of the circumstances prevailing in the context of the project, and of the resources available to implement them both locally and regionally.
- Recommendations must be clustered and prioritised, carefully targeted to the appropriate audiences at all levels, especially for OROL partners, OROL Secretariat, terre des homes Germany, or any other target groups if necessary.
- Recommendations must be commented by OROL partners and terre des hommes Germany on how to handle the recommendations and which measures will be taken to solve problems mentioned in the recommendations of the evaluation.

6. Methods of evaluation

This evaluation is a formative and creative evaluation which includes field trips in 7 partner countries, meetings and focus group discussions with major stakeholders of the project.

7. Duration of the evaluation

The entire evaluation will take place for a period of 40 working days within the period of 21 July – 12 September 2014. This includes the review of relevant information, field data collection, validation, and finalization of report.

Proposed dates for collecting and acquainting project documents, project progress reports and other relevant project-related materials are from 21 July to 25 July 2014

Proposed dates for data-gathering in the field are from 28 July-15 August 2014 and the validation meeting on 22 August 2014.

The first draft report shall be made available by the evaluator not later than 10 days after the validation meeting; the final report, not later than 7 days after comments from the project management staff and staff of the terre des hommes - Germany South East Asian division (TdH SEA), is received by the evaluator. Those comments shall be made by seven project partners and tdh and sent to the evaluator within 3 days after the draft report is received.

8. Evaluation Process

8.1 Review of Project Documents/Materials

The evaluators will collect and acquaint with the project document, project progress reports and other relevant project-related materials, design the detailed evaluation scope and methodology (including the methods for data collection and analysis, set up the mission dates and preparation of the detailed mission programme in cooperation with the project management staff and staff of the terre des hommes - Germany South East Asian division (TdH SEA).

8.2 Field Mission

The evaluation is to include a site visit to 7 partner countries: Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam to consult with project stakeholders; and to collect information in accordance with the requirements stipulated in the evaluation work plan. This mission is expected to be no longer than three weeks in duration.

8.3 Evaluation Report

The evaluators will prepare an evaluation report that describes the evaluation and puts forward the evaluator's findings, recommendations and lessons learned. The presentation of results is to be intrinsically linked to the evaluation issues. Evaluation results are to bring a focus to the factors set out in the project's framework for results.

The evaluator will submit a draft evaluation report for review tdh Germany by within two (2) weeks of returning from mission.

Within one (1) week of receiving comments from the project management staff and staff of the terre des hommes on draft report, the hard copies of the evaluation report are to be submitted to terre des homes Germany South East Asian division (TdH SEA).

9. Outputs and Deliverables

The output of the mission will be the Evaluation Report in English. The structure and content of the report should meet the requirement of BMZ evaluation policy.

The evaluator will submit a final evaluation report which should:

- Contain an executive summary (mandatory)
- Be analytical in nature (both quantitative and qualitative)
- Be structured around issues and related findings/lesson learnt

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- Include conclusions
- Include recommendations
- Include a summary of the evaluation with its main results and main recommendation (around 5 to max 10 pages)

These deliverables are to be:

- Prepared in English only
- Submitted to terre des homes- Germany and terre des hommes - Germany South East Asian division (TdH SEA) electronically via e-mail
- Submitted in three hard copies to terre des homes Germany, terre des homes Germany South East Asian division (TdH SEA), and OROL Secretariat

10. Expert Profile of the Evaluation Team

The evaluation will be carried out by a team of two external evaluators from any of seven partner countries.

The evaluators are expected to:

- Be a reliable and effective evaluator with extensive experience in conducting project evaluations and a proven record delivering professional results.
- Be fully acquainted with results-based management orientation and practices
- Have experience with donor funded programs.
- Have a good working knowledge of environmental issues locally,
- Be fluent in English
- Have Excellent writing skills

11. Tentative Timetable

Activities	Timetable (2014)											
	July				August				September			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	3
Review of project documents												
Field work												
Debriefing, Analysis & Report Preparation												
Final Report												
Total	40 days											

12. Evaluation Cost

The basis for payment and payment scheduling will be determined during contract negotiations.

Appendix 2: Evaluation Schedule

Evaluation Plan (8 August-27 September 2014)			
August		Place	Activities
8	Fri	Burma	Meetings/ Interviews with KESAN
9	Sat	Burma	Return to Chiang Mai
10	Sun	Rest Day	
11	Mon	Chiang Mai	Meetings/ Interviews with KESAN/ OROL
12	Tue	Thai Official Holiday	
13	Wed	Chiang Mai	Review documents/ prepare for field visits
14	Thu	Chiang Rai	Meetings/ Interviews with ACED/ OROL
15	Fri	Chiang Rai	Field Visit with ACED
16	Sat	To Cambodia	Flight to Phnom Penh
17	Sun	Cambodia	Meetings/ interviews with Santi Sena
18	Mon	Cambodia/ Vietnam	Field visits/ meetings with RWG travel to Vietnam
19	Tue	Vietnam	Meetings/ interviews with FA
20	Wed	Vietnam	Field visit/ Discussions with FA, travel to Bangkok at night
21	Thu	Bangkok	Report writing/ coordination
22	Fri	Bangkok/ Indonesia	Travel to Indonesia, arrive to Bogor
23	Sat	Indonesia	RMI Office/Field visit/ discussions
24	Sun	Indonesia	Continue meetings/ visits
25	Mon	Indonesia/ Bangkok	Travel to Bangkok
26	Tue	Bangkok	Report Writing
27	Wed	To Philippines	Travel to Manila
28	Thu	Philippines	Travel to Davao/ Field Visit/ Discussions with Gitib
29	Fri	Philippines	Field Visit/ Discussions with Gitib
30	Sat	Philippines	Field Visit/ Discussions with Gitib
31	Sun	Philippines	Travel to Bangkok
September			
1	Mon	Bangkok	Report Writing
2	Tue	To Laos PDR	Field visit with ACD
3	Wed	Laos PDR	Meetings/ Discussions with ACD
4	Thu	Laos PDR	Field visit with ACD
5	Fri	Laos PDR	Field visit with ACD
6	Sat	Laos/ Chiang Mai	Return to Chiang Mai
7	Sun	Chiang Mai	Report writing
8	Mon	Chiang Mai	Report writing
9	Tue	Chiang Mai	Report writing
10	Wed	Chiang Mai	Report writing
11	Thu	Chiang Mai	Report writing
12	Fri	Chiang Mai	Validation meeting
13	Sat	Chiang Mai	Report writing
14	Sun	Chiang Mai	Rest Day
15	Mon	Chiang Mai	Report writing
16	Tue	Chiang Mai	Report writing
17	Wed	Chiang Mai	First draft report due
18	Thurs	Chiang Mai	Rest Day
19	Fri	Chiang Mai	Rest Day
20	Sat	Chiang Mai	Rest Day
21	Sun	Chiang Mai	Final Report editing

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September		Place	Activities
22	Mon	Chiang Mai	Final Report editing
23	Tues	Chiang Mai	Final Report editing
24	Weds	Chiang Mai	Final Report editing
25	Thurs	Chiang Mai	Final Report editing
26	Fri	Chiang Mai	Final Report editing
27	Sat	Chiang Mai	Final Report editing

Appendix 3: Meeting/ Interviews Schedule

Date	Country	Place	Evaluator(s)	Attendees
Aug-08	Burma	KESAN office, Rangoon	Jay	Saw Hein Kyaw, KESAN OROL Coordinator
Aug-10	Thailand	Chiang Mai	Jay	Khun Nareudee, OROL Secretariat
Aug-14	Thailand	ACED Office, Chiang Rai	Jay	Khun Thewin, ACED Director Khun Nakorn, OROL Project Coordinator Khun Sudarat, Mon Saeng Dao Coordinator Khun Nareudee, OROL Secretariat
Aug-15	Thailand	Ban Khaow Wua Dam, Chiang Rai	Jay	Thewin and Sudarat Khun Sompong, Ban Khaow Wua Dam Village Head Ban Khaow Wua Dam Assistant Village Head Ban Khaow Wua Cam Youth Group Leader Ban Khaow Wua Cam Youth Group Leader
Aug-17	Cambodia	Santi Sena Office, Svay Rieng	Jay, Yai	Mr. Ros Sam An, Acting Director Santi Sena Mr. Lay Samphors, OROL Project Coordinator
Aug-18	Cambodia	Santi Sena Office, Svay Rieng	Jay, Yai	Sam An and Samphours Ven. Ouk Sary, Ministry of Social Affairs Officer, Svay Rieng Ros Sopa, Community Radio Program Director
Aug-18	Cambodia	Santi Sena Office, Svay Rieng	Jay, Yai	Sam An and Samphours River Watch Group Members (7 women, 3 men)
Aug-18	Cambodia	Santi Sena Office, Svay Rieng	Jay, Yai	Samphors Sthray Kree, Chief Administrator Svay Rieng Fishery Department Nu Saree, Fishery Administration Officer
Aug-18	Cambodia	Kday Romdul Temple, San Kway	Jay, Yai	Samphors Mr. Sanyong, Commune Chief 5 Bio-diversity Management Committee Members (5 men) 2 Fishery Administration Staff

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Date	Country	Place	Evaluator(s)	Attendees
Aug-19	Vietnam	TDH-Germany Vietnam Office, Ho Chi Minh City	Jay, Yai	Dr. Nguyen Te The, TDH-G Vietnam Coordinator Mr. Tran Viet My, OROL Project Coordinator
Aug-20	Vietnam	La Nga Middle School, Dong Nai Province	Jay	Dr. Te and Mr. My Saigon River Watch Group (5 girls, 2 boys) Dong Nai River Watch Group (4 girls, 3 boys) Mr. Thuat, La Nga Middle School Headmaster RWG advisors and school staffs
Aug-23	Indonesia	SMAN1 Cigombong School	Jay	Mrs. Ratnasari (Nana), OROL Focal person Mr. Fahmi, OROL Project Campaign and Advocacy Officer Mr. Mahmud, Satria Muda Youth Leader Ms. Wardah, Sangarhijo Club Leader Mr. Yundani, Nature Loving Club Member 50 members of Sangarhijo, Nature Loving and Science Clubs
Aug-23	Indonesia	Cisadane River, Lindalang Environmental Group	Jay	Nana, Fahmi and Mahmud 14 Landalang Environmental Group Members (14 girls)
Aug-24	Indonesia	Bogor Botanical Gardens and RMI Office, Bogor	Jay	Nana and Fahmi
Aug-28	Philippines	GITIB-OROL Office, Davao	Jay, Yai	Mr. Roldan Gonzales, GITIB director Mr. Ian Rivera, OROL Project Coordinator Mrs. Janice Camus, Admin/Cashier OROL Project Mr. Alex, OROL Office Caretaker Youth 4 Climate Justice Group Members (5 women, 1 man)
Aug-29	Philippines	PASAKK Office Bunawan, Agusan del Sur Province	Jay, Yai	Roldan, Ian, and Janice Mrs. Becky Barrios, General Secretary PASAKK, Inc. Mrs. Grace, Director, PASAKK, Inc. 11 PASAKK Staff and RWG members (5 women, 6 men)

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Date	Country	Place	Evaluator(s)	Attendees
Aug-29	Philippines	Buawan Commune RWG	Jay, Yai	Roldan, Ian, and Janice Mrs. Becky and Mrs. Grace, PASAKK, Inc. 9 Community River Watch members Bunawan Sangunian Captain 2 Sanguanian staff
Aug-30	Philippines	Legaspi Suites, Davao	Jay, Yai	Roldan, Ian, and Janice
Sep-03	Laos	ACD Office, Salavan Town	Jay	Dr. Boualaphet Chounthavong (Nong), ACD Director Sousamai Khampamai (Noy), ACD Project Director Phomma Siamphone (Viet) Nouanlamai Sisomboun (Nouan) Vilasorn Thongminivong (Sorn) Jantara (Yai), Deputy Director and Accounts
Sep-03	Laos	ACD Office, Salavan Town	Jay	Nong and Noy Kru Rasami, Teacher advisor Salavan High School Volunteer Group 9 Students from Salavan High School Volunteer Group (6 girls, 3 boys)
Sep-04	Laos	Ta-Oy District, Salavan Province	Jay	Noy 12 Students from Ta-Oy High School Volunteer Group (7 girls, 5 boys)
Sep-04	Laos	Houn Secondary School, Ta-Oy District, Salavan	Jay	Noy Headmaster and 3 Teachers from Houn School
Sep-05	Laos	Nong Sakeung School, Salavan	Jay	Noy Grades 1 and 2 teacher and 32 students
Sep-05	Laos	ACD Office, Salavan Town	Jay	Nong, Noy, and Viet
Sep-08	Burma	KESAN Office, Chiang Mai	Jay	Ms. Toi, former OROL Accountant, KESAN Mrs. Sisi, Media Coordinator, KESAN

Appendix 4: Field visit notes and observations

OROL Secretariat:

The OROL Secretariat consists of the Regional Program Coordinator (Ms. Naruedee Janthasing) and the Finance Manager (Ms. Jarunee Arthitarpah) and is based in the ACED Office in Chiang Rai.

Roles and responsibilities:

- Collect and combine partner reports for TdH-G and BMZ
- Coordinate capacity building trainings
 - Suggestion: In future, CB trainings may be more effective if conducted at national, not regional, levels
- Represent OROL at international/ regional level meetings/ forums
 - The Regional Program Coordinator will be attending the International Riversymposium being held in Australia in September 2014
- Conduct Yearly Regional Meeting
- Collaborate/ Coordinate/ Conduct Regional Advocacy efforts

Challenges:

- Language barriers
- Communication delays
- Some partners send reports to OROL Secretariat after deadlines
- Large amount of information to collect and collate
- Limited staff that are trying to complete wide range of tasks and many responsibilities

1. Myanmar/Burma

Schedule: August 8 at KESAN Office, Rangoon and September 8 at KESAN Office, Chiang Mai

Summary of meetings/ interviews:

1. KESAN Office, Rangoon

KESAN is expanding their approach by increasing presence and networks within Burma from a new 'satellite' office.

OROL members last gathered together during the ASEAN Peoples' Forum (APF) conducted in Rangoon for three days this year. Here OROL shared information about their campaigns using many types of media, including vinyls, brochures and report documents. Signatures were also collected for the Anti-Salween Dam campaign. More than 1,000 headbands were distributed with the message "No Dams" on it, and many APF participants wore these during forums and discussions.

Major OROL Activities:

- Annual Youth Camp

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- This year, the camp was held in March in Pa'an Town and more than 100 youth attended. They shared experiences and information about the Salween River.
- Youth Exposure trips/ Peer Educator Trainings
 - "Dream Mapping": have children draw pictures of what they want their environments to look like.
 - After trainings, participants went on a four-day exposure trip to the Thoweeekha Dam to see firsthand what the effects of dams are on local communities.
- Signature Campaign
- March 14 Anti-Salween Dam activities
- Media releases and coordination
 - Regular contact with Eleven, Myanmar Times, Irrawaddy, Voice, Mizzima, DVB, The Farmer Journal, and the Myanmar Post
 - Have taken media to visit Taungoo, Weigy, and Eh Htoo Hta areas to learn about river issues
- Media production: Videos, posters
- Participatory River Research Trainings
 - Train community river research volunteers in 4 communities along the Salween River (2 above Pa'an Town and 2 below) about how to document/record existing fish species using photography.
- Advocacy through Karen MPs and Ministry of Energy representatives, but difficult to engage Central Burmese Government directly.

Future activities:

- Focusing on completing the signature campaign (so far 30,000 signatures collected) and submitting a petition to oppose large scale dam projects without local community FPIC to:
 - President's Office
 - The Hluttaw (Parliament)
 - Ministry of Energy
 - Chinese Consultancy Firm Office
 - Electricity Generation Authority of Thailand (EGAT)
- Producing advocacy campaign materials
- Mobilizing in more communities/ building and strengthening networks
- Strengthening CBO network
- Adjusting to new government policies and strategies
- Expanding work to other rivers: Chitwin and Irrawaddy and/or to tributaries of the Salween: Pawng Laung, Sitton River, etc.
- Take more youth and community members on exposure trips
- Increase research and database in order to easier link our campaigns to International Advocacy networks

KESAN key organizational strengths:

- Holistic approach: Support local livelihood initiatives and land rights issues, as well as river and environment conservation

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- Strong networking, especially recent expansion to inside Burma to raise awareness for Salween Dam issue (KRW, BEWG, etc.)
- Maintaining work operations center outside of Burma, while beginning to establish new networks and presence from within Burma provides opportunities while not risking everything at once by moving completely inside.
- Staff have deep knowledge and experience about issues in Karen State
- KESAN works closely with Karen government (KNU) to build government officer's capacities, while keeping independence and non-government status in eyes of Karen people.
- Longstanding links/ relationships with international community: International Rivers, EITI-Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, etc.
- Website/ Youtube/ Social Media updated regularly and contain a large amount of English language content

KESAN Challenges/ Opportunities:

- Political uncertainty and ceasefire negotiations limit ability to campaign and operate freely in Rangoon and Karen State
- No office base in Karen State: difficult to coordinate/ communicate/ conduct activities among target group
- Non-transparent extractive industry and mega-project developments occurring at an alarming rate since the 'opening' of Burma/Myanmar two years ago
- Salween River issues involve multi-ethnic stakeholders, including Karenni, Shan and Mon States
- Email communication within Burma can be difficult
- Sometimes confusing, overlapping roles with Karen Rivers Watch, Burma Rivers Watch, Burma Environmental Working Group

KESAN Office:

- Main office is in Chiang Mai, but new 'unofficial' office has been quietly opened in Rangoon to raise profile within Burma and build networks and alliances across Burmese and other ethnic groups.
- Because the new office wants to keep a low profile until they are officially registered, it is unmarked and would be difficult to locate without going with a KESAN staff.
- Most KESAN staff working in Burma also live at the office.
- In the KESAN Rangoon office, the OROL project's activity and budget lines are posted on the office walls, which allows for clear understanding about implementation and a high level of transparency.
- KESAN's target area, Karen State, requires a long bus ride to reach, so this limits the Rangoon office staff's ability to easily reach target areas.
- The KESAN Rangoon office does not have any vehicles, but the Chiang Mai office has project vehicles available for staff transportation.
- KESAN's Chiang Mai office has had to keep a low profile and move documents away from their office due to the increased security risks post-coup.

2. Thailand

Schedule: August 14-15 at ACED Office in Chiang Rai and at Ban Kaow Wua Dam Village

Summary of meetings/ interviews:

1. ACED Office Chiang Rai

OROL is a 'field based' project.

ACED originally had proposed 7 rivers for their project, but due to budget limitations, decided to focus on just four: the Ing, Ping, Kok, and Mekhong Rivers. Dams are a big concern for these Northern Thailand rivers, especially for the the Yom (Kaeng Sua Den), Kok (proposed dam upstream of Thaton in Shan State), and Mekhong Rivers. Other concerns are pollution from factories and restaurants along these rivers, as well as sand dredging (especially in the Kok River). There have been huge fluctuations in water levels along the Mekhong River in recent years- from flooding in Wiang Kaen to being able to walk across the Mekhong this past dry season.

In the past, communities along these rivers did not have much involvement with environmental conservation groups (with the exceptions of Chiang Khong and Chiang Dao communities). Most community-based actions were reactive instead of pro-active. Among elder generations, there was a close relationship to these rivers in daily life, but these values and ways of life have not been passed on to the new generations.

ACED's main target group is youth and children, and their main project activities include youth camps, River Watch groups, developing river school curriculum, and drama performances. ACED feels satisfied with their efforts and results over the last three years, but not 100% satisfied. They have received little support and/or interest from schools/teachers in the target areas. Also, some of the children in communities are not ready to participate in river conservation activities. Furthermore, children seem to be only interested in participating in activities during the school year, not during school break periods.

Ecological Child Rights (ECR), in ACED's understanding, mean that children should be able to access and utilize rivers as sources of food, play, heritage, and clean drinking water. In other words, children have the right to safe and secure water sources. If rivers are polluted or dry, this is a violation of ECR. ACED wants to see Thailand emerge as a leader for ECR, and have regulations that provide compensation for violations of ECRs.

One successful campaign that ACED was a part of recently concerned the Dusit Thani and Rim Kok Hotels along the Kok River in Chiang Rai. These hotels were discharging chlorinated water from their pools into the Kok River, which was killing fish and insects in the river. ACED coordinated with the government authorities to issue warnings about this discharge to the hotels, and since then the hotels have ceased doing this.

Future activities:

- Art exhibition in February 2015 in Bangkok. Could use this as an opportunity to invite partners to join together and present their work and have a public forum about ECR.

- Establishing a “Kok River Protection Network” to mobilize communities in the Kok Watershed and to campaign against the proposed dam inside Shan State. Use research and international allies to put pressure on and advocate with Burmese and Thai dam construction stakeholders.

Regional Network/ OROL Secretariat

- During OROL Regional Meetings, not enough time to reflect/ share visions and ideas
- Different understandings about the Regional Network’s roles/ responsibilities. Need to clarify network’s purpose and roles
- Should focus on building leadership skills among key partner staffs
- Partner organizations have ability/ experience producing media for issues on the national level, but have not yet been able to produce useful media materials on a regional level
- Need to have an ‘Information Officer’ to compile and manage website, documents, reports, research, media materials
- Roles/ functions of RWGB that need to be more clearly outlined/ defined:
 - o Information management
 - o Research
 - o Administration/ Finances
 - o Media
 - o Advocacy
 - o Website development/ maintenance
 - o Newsletters/ blogs/ information update mechanisms
- Hire/ find a ‘volunteer’ for each organization (or for the OROL Secretariat) to work on documentation
- Need to begin discussing/ analyzing/ preparing for 2018 NOW (end of the next phase of OROL). Would be useful to begin compiling a list of possible options for structure/ role of OROL at that juncture.

2. Ban Kaow Wua Dam Village

This Karen community has been located along the banks of the Kok River since 1956, after the previous inhabitants left when they heard that a dam was being constructed on the Kok River. Since their arrival, these Karen villagers have been continually struggling against proposed dams, as well as for land and citizenship rights. This village is located in a State Protected Forest Zone, so they have joined with other communities in similar circumstances to received government recognition and approval under a Community Land Title mechanism.

A positive development for this village is that corn crops have decreased from over 40 families planting to now only 10. They claim that the decrease is due to the villager’s perception that their land rights are more secure since this community has been active in the community land title movement.

Kaew Wua Dam River Watch Conservation Youth Group:

This group consists of about 30 local youth (most are girls). The main activities of this group are tree plantings and patrolling the 500 meter fish conservation (FC) zone next to their community. This zone was established seven years ago, when community members decided the number of fish in the river was greatly decreasing.

Originally, villagers were allowed to fish in the zone only using traditional fishing methods. Community forums and discussion had to be conducted in order to build understanding and explain about the importance and benefits of establishing this protected zone. After a few years of this regulation, all fishing was officially banned in the FC zone. Youth group members help patrol and enforce the regulations, especially at night, when some people try to sneak out and catch fish unnoticed. Youth group members talked about how they would have fun staying up late and monitoring the activities on the dark river.

Currently, the villagers have seen a noticeable gain in the number of fish in the FC zone and have noted that, in the dry season, you can now find large amounts of eggs on the sandbars in the river. Future plans include testing water quality and biodiversity in the FC zone and conducting research about fish species.

ACED key organizational strengths:

- Strong networks in Northern Thailand to support advocacy efforts
- Deep knowledge of local, regional, national and international issues relating to youth and river conservation
- Solid understanding of ECR
- River School curriculum

ACED Challenges/ Opportunities:

- Including more 'local wisdom' in the River School curriculum
- Increase local communities participation/ involvement
- Involve more youth in OROL Project activity management and design
- English language skills
- Turnover of students and inability to conduct activities during school breaks
- Find ways to link River School curriculum that have developed for different rivers

ACED Office:

- The evaluator met with ACED staff at their office in Chiang Rai. At this office, ACED sells some artwork, t-shirts, and small items produced by project youth.
- The OROL Secretariat also shares office space with ACED here.
- ACED's main base, though, is at Mon Saeng Dao School which is located outside of Chiang Rai town- the evaluator did not go to Mon Saeng Dao during the evaluation trip.
- ACED mentioned that they were interested in selling coffee at their Chiang Rai town office in order to attract more tourists and passer-bys to stop in and learn about their work or purchase souvenirs.

Other comments:

- Coordinating with Chiangrai Rajabhat University to establish relationship with university in Kunming, China and build understanding/ exchange forums/ study trips in upstream Mekhong areas.
- Could be beneficial for TDH-G to identify partners in Luang Prabang to monitor Northern Laos river issues
- Would like to publish an ECR handbook

3. Cambodia

Schedule: August 17-18 at Santi Sena Office and Kday Romdul Commune, Svay Rieng Province

Summary of meetings/ interviews:

1. OROL Project Overview

Both Mr. Sam An and Mr. Samphors used to work as volunteers at Santi Sena before taking on full time positions. Currently, Santi Sena continues to accept volunteers/interns from universities for 2-3 month periods. The introduction of Santi Sena's program was conducted by Samphors, who utilized an impressive PowerPoint presentation.

Main Outcomes/ Accomplishments included:

- 2 Biodiversity conservation areas (total area of 64.97 hectares) have been established and recognized by local authorities.
- 1,290 families (made up of 4,934 persons- 2,554 females) living along the Waiko River gave their finger print to become members of the biodiversity conservation areas.
- Illegal fishing methods have decreased (fishing by electricity and fishing using small size nets) through cooperation with the Fishery Administration Office.
- 228 Biodiversity Conservation Area (BCA) members were trained about fishery laws by Fishery Administration Office staff.
- A community supported "tree planting day" event was conducted. 1,000 tree seedlings were planted in Kday Romdoul and Prochum Koh pagodas.
- By-laws (regulation and statute) and a BCA Management Committee structure were drafted and approved by local authorities and the Forestry Association.
- 500 fruit trees were distributed to 50 families living along the Waiko River in Sangkhour and Svay Chek communes.
- Students, Buddhist monks, and community members conducted a flood prevention tree planting activity. 3,000 seedlings were planted in the biodiversity areas.
- Community members contributed donations to support the Mohasal Svay Rieng FM 88.30 MHz. radio broadcasts.

Major challenges that Santi Sena has encountered during OROL project activity implementation have included:

- Exchange rate losses when exchanging from Euros to local currency.
- Lack of support documents and staff knowledge about the ECR concept.
- Too short time for radio broadcasts (1 hour/broadcast)

- Lack of a budget to conduct the monthly and quarterly meetings with Biodiversity Conservation Area Management Committees

OROL Regional Network discussion:

- There are many advantages to cooperating on at the regional level: it provides us with a more powerful voice and offers us more opportunities to advocate at higher levels of government.
- The Regional Network should not only help us through advocacy, it should also bring greater awareness to a larger audience for each organization's work and efforts.
- Santi Sena would like to also pursue more Bi-lateral relationships to benefit both staff members and the target groups. For example, Santi Sena would like to facilitate exchange trips for youth in Cambodia and Vietnam who live along the same waterway.

Santi Sena identified their most unexpected outcome from OROL activity implementation as the Community Radio program: Initially it was only planned to broadcast over one radio station, but the community was so interested in this program that they contributed their own money to support an increase in the number of programs and another radio station.

2. Buddhism and Society Community Radio Program

Radio broadcasts are a highly effective way to reach community members, as it was reported that 80% of the households in Svay Rieng District listen to radio broadcasts (some even listen on their mobile phones). Venerable Ouk Sary and Mr. Ros Sopa are the directors of the Buddhism and Society Community Radio Program, which has been broadcast since January 2012 from a sound room at the local temple. The program provides information and updates about child ecological rights, environment and natural resources issues that affect local communities.

Originally, this program was only broadcast for one hour/ week on one radio station. However, soon after it began, community members became very interested and asked for longer broadcasts. The program then expanded to 2 hours/day on Mon-Sat and 3 hours on Sundays. It also began to be broadcast on a second radio channel in Svay Rieng (there are only a total of four radio channels available in Svay Rieng Province). Local people have made donations to support the increased running costs for this program.

Students from the primary school (46 students) located on the temple grounds are very interested in this program and often call in and ask questions. The radio broadcast sometimes also organizes talk shows, round table discussions, and invites youth and community members to participate.

3. River Watch Groups (3)

10 River Watch Group members (7 women and 3 men) from 3 different RWGs met to speak with the evaluation team about their activities and experiences. All the RWG members attend Svay Rieng University (SRU), which has a close working relationship with Santi Sena (especially with the SRU Agricultural Department). Each of these groups was established in February 2014

and all of the groups have an advisor from SRU. Santi Sena has worked closely with the RWG members since the beginning, provided advice, materials, and trainings to improve their ability to work in target communities.

Activities that the RWG have conducted in the communities located along the Waiko River include:

- Conducting forums/ exchange meetings about ECR and environmental issues with youth and children in local primary schools.
- Conducting forums/exchange meetings about environmental issues and river conservation with adults in local communities.
- Trainings Youth Peer Educators
- Tree plantings in local temples and communities. (over 300 seedlings in the temple, and more than 500 fruit seedlings for 50 families in communities)

Reasons for joining RWGs and participating in these activities included:

- To gain experience and knowledge
- To share with children and youth
- To meet and learn from people in target areas
- To gain facilitation and communication skills
- To gain practical experiences, and not just learn from books or lectures
- To learn how to deal with real world problems
- To support natural resource conservation

Challenges that RWGs have faced included:

- Heavy rains in the afternoon stopping and/or slowing down meetings
- Difficult for villagers to participate when they are busy working in the fields
- Sometimes the RWG members feel they do not know enough about the topics they are discussing with villagers
- Participants arriving late to meetings/ activities

Suggestions/ Ideas about improving future work included:

- Trainings for RWG members to learn more about laws, regulations, and legal matters
- Focus more on the youth and children, instead of with the adult villagers
- Develop and produce more documents and media that explain about these issues in simple language
- Identify clear tangible examples of how climate change affects these communities

4. Savy Rieng Fishery Department (SRFD)

Mr. Sthray Kree, Svay Rieng Fishery Department Chief Administrator and Mr. Nu Saree, Svay Rieng Fishery Department Officer, met with us to discuss their work with Santi Sena. SRFD have collaborated with Santi Sena for the last two years. They praised Santi Sena for their support and efforts to sustain and conserve the Waiko River. Activities that have been conducted jointly during the last two years include:

- Demarcation of 2 Biodiversity Conservation Areas (BCAs) on the Waiko River: Tamnuk Tamaeng (located in Svay Rieng Town) and Kday Romdul.
- Fisheries Day events: This day celebrates local traditions and livelihoods that connect with the Waiko River. Santi Sena has coordinated with the SRFD to release 190,000 Silverback and Tilapia fingerlings in the Waiko River.
- Trainings about Fisheries Laws and Regulations in 9 local communities (228 attendees)
- Establish and drafting of Community Fishing Regulations and By-Laws
- Campaign to collect fingerprints for BCA Registration and Regulations from community members in 9 local villages (1,290 families, 4,934 persons)

Challenges that the SRFD have faced during the implementation of these activities have included:

- Local community members lacking knowledge of fishing laws and regulations
- Low participation during trainings
- SRFD lack resources needed to enforce regulations. It would be very useful to have a boat with an engine to patrol the waters more effectively.
- Some villagers still want to use small nets and electricity to catch fish, which is against the BCA regulations
- Some villagers try to reclaim land and fill in the land next to the river and swamp areas
- Some villagers still catch fish during spawning season, which is banned under BCA regulations

Future activities plan:

- Increase community-based River Patrol
 - o Need support to purchase a motorboat
- Increase awareness of fishery laws
- Research
- Community based fisheries
- Increase target area

5. Kday Romdul Biodiversity Conservation Area (BCA)

- The BCA Committee was established with the support of Santi Sena in order to manage efforts to protect the plants and animals in the part of the Waiko River that flows next to the Kday Romdul Commune and Temple. 5 members of the Committee (all men) were present for this discussion at the Kday Romdul Temple.
- The BCA Committee appreciates the support and efforts of Santi Sena and the local government Fishery Department. Santi Sena's help in setting up the BCA Committee management structure was critical. Other support from Santi Sena has included provision of fingerlings for release in the river, distribution of seedling for planting along the river banks, and providing trainings.
- The yield of fish from this section of the Waiko River has increased since the BCA was established.
- The BCA would like to establish sub-groups within the commune to exchange information and assist with patrolling the BCA.

OROL Project (2012-2015) External Evaluation Report

- The BCA believes that this project has been successful because the community members have been able to easily see the results/ effects- they now can catch more fish for eating and selling. Also when the river floods during the rainy season, the fish from the BCA fill their rice fields.
- The BCA Committee members are concerned about the young generation's ability to maintain their fields and way of life. Since the Vietnamese garment factories have expanded their operations in Svay Rieng (especially near the Vietnamese border), more and more young people are working in the factories to earn income instead of farming.
- One committee member said that he teaches his children about the value of the BCA in this way: "It is for everyone, not just for our family, so we need to protect this area so there is enough for EVERYONE, not just for us."

Santi Sena key organizational strengths:

- Youthful staff with a lot of energy
- Former volunteers have become 2 key full time staff
- Close links with local university (SRU)
- Close cooperation with government agencies (especially Fisheries Department)
- Impressive media materials: posters, powerpoint presentation, photos, (soon to be launched website)
- Empowerment of biodiversity zone management committee
- Strong support from local community (donations for community radio)
- Work closely with respected religious institution (office is located within temple compound)

Santi Sena Challenges/ Opportunities:

- Limited documents/resource for RWG
- Weak understanding of ECR
- Overload of work for limited number of staff
- Lack of baseline data about Waiko River biodiversity
- Need more infrastructure to more effectively work (motorboat, trucks, etc.)
- No woman in leadership roles
- Not sure if non-Buddhists are in the target area, or if those groups would feel comfortable coming to the temple to meet with Santi Sena

Santi Sena Office:

- The Santi Sena office is located within the serene grounds of a forested local temple in Svay Rieng town very close to the main Ho Chi Minh- Phnom Penh Highway.
- Santi Sena has two vehicles that they use to travel to target areas.
- Finance and Secretary staff work in one building, while Administrators work in another building.
- Target Area maps, Organizational Structure charts, and donor logos are all readily visible at the SS office.

4. Vietnam

Schedule: 19-20 August at TDH-Germany, Vietnam Office in Ho Chi Minh City and Dong Nai Province

Summary of meetings/ interviews:

1. Forestry Association (FA) OROL project overview

- The Forestry Association (FA) was established 25 years ago. The FA is officially registered with the State, but receives no State funding, which allows it to operate more independently.
- There are over 500 scientists/ academics that advise and collaborate with the FA, but, currently, there are only 3 full time staff: (1) Mr. Tran Viet My- President of the FA since 2011; (2) Mrs. Do Thi Hong- Campaign Coordinator; (3) Mrs. Xuan Hue- Accountant.
- The FA has branch offices in other provinces, but the Ho Chi Minh Branch is the strongest/ most active.
- FA and the TDH-G staff have a clear understanding and description about ECR: "Children have the right to live in a healthy environment"
- Future work plans:
 - o Involve children more in project planning and implementation of activities- the FA should be play more of a facilitation role than directly planning and managing activities.
 - o Encourage children to be more active in their community and reach out to the youth in the communities who do not attend school.
 - o Conduct more research about plant biodiversity in and around Ho Chi Minh City, as well as river pollution.
 - o Focus on only one key river or canal in the Saigon Area
 - o Conduct another youth exchange camp in the Upper Dong Nai River watershed where youth from different areas of the Dong Nai River can meet and share experiences.

Challenges

- Pollution watch and regulatory body (Pollution Watch Board) has been established by the Government, but this agency has not been effective.
- In the Dong Nai mid-stream areas, there are a number of large factories that send wastewater into the Dong Nai River. Recently a Taiwanese Company (Vedan) dumped large amounts of pollution into the Dong Nai.
- In Saigon, there is a large amount of household waste that is dumped into the Dong Nai River. Now in Saigon it is becoming more difficult for people to have access to fresh and clean water.

Activities

- Focus on children's education and awareness raising through River Watch Groups (RWGs)- currently, there are 6 RWGs (4 based in HCM City, 2 based in upstream Dong Nai communities) with a total of 60 students (average group size = 10 students).
- Environmental Themed Writing and Picture Drawing contests for children
- Youth Drama Performances conducted in District 7 were inspired by OROL activities

- Media
 - o Radio Broadcasts (Voice of Ho Chi Minh City) broadcasts an environmental awareness raising program using information/ input from the FA once a week.
 - o Posters
 - o Newspapers: FA regularly invite print journalists to attend and report on their activities and events

Recommendations for improving OROL Regional Network:

- The major challenges and obstacles regarding the Regional Network do not result from poor structure or lack of clarity of roles, responsibilities and goals. Rather, each partner organization needs to ensure that they are fully contributing to the network and its goals.

2. Dong Nai River Watch Group Exchange Meeting

The evaluation team traveled with FA and TDH-G staff to a rural community located along the Dong Nai River (La Nga) 2 hours north of HCM City. A teacher and the Saigon RWG (5 girls and 2 boys) also traveled to La Nga with the evaluation team. At the La Nga Middle School, a meeting was held with the school's principal, vice-principal, and English teacher, and the La Nga RWG (4 girls and 3 boys). The activities of the La Nga RWG have included:

- Meeting and discussing with Dong Nai River fisherfolk
- Taking photographs to document the practices that pollute the Dong Nai River
- Cleaning school grounds and home communities
- Organizing one demonstration in their commune in June this year
- Discussion with students and community members about current issues in Dong Nai River:
 - o Low water levels in the dry season
 - o Deforestation in areas along the river
 - o Increased water pollution from
 - Household waste
 - Unfiltered factory discharges
 - Pesticides and Herbicides used by farmers along the river
- Using peer educators to reach younger students at school. It was estimated that over 1,000 students have received information about river conservation and ECR.
- Tree planting activities on Ho Chi Minh's Birthday (May 19)
- La Nga students also coordinate and collaborate with the local commune leader to conduct activities.

Following the presentation of activities by the students a lively exchange was held between the two groups of students and their advisors and teachers. Parts of the conversation that stood out included:

"In Saigon, we have seen one of the dirty canals get cleaner in the last few years, but it cost a lot of money and took a lot of hard work to improve the water quality. It still needs a lot of work, and we are afraid it will get dirty again, if people don't maintain it."

“We try to teach the other children and some of the adults, but sometimes they don’t listen to us. What should we do to convince them to listen to us?”

“Last year, we came together and made new friends from other communities along the Dong Nai River. We have stayed in touch with them since then and are looking forward to meeting them once again in a few months when we have another youth camp activity.”

FA key organizational strengths:

- Experienced staff with deep understanding of local context
- Good cooperation/ understanding with Government
- Use of radio to create awareness of ECR and river issues
- Deep understanding of ECR
- Strong support from TDH-G country office

FA major challenges/ opportunities:

- Difficult to work on sensitive issues in Vietnam and deal with government bureaucracy (one of the reasons they have not chosen to change their organization’s name)
- Involve more youth in organization leadership roles
- Urban youth have little connection to natural world and environment
- Lack of full time staff

FA Office:

- For the Vietnam/ FA visit, the evaluation team met FA staff at the TdH-Germany Vietnam office in Ho Chi Minh City, and were not able to visit the FA Office.

5. Indonesia

Schedule: 23-24 August to meet youth groups in Cigombong-Caringin Sub-Districts and RMI Office, Bogor

Summary of meetings/ interviews:

1. SMANI Cigombong School: Sangarhijo (Environment) Club’s screening of youth-produced film: “Upstream Area of the Cisdane”

At the SMANI Cigombong State High School, the Sangarhijo Environmental Club hosted a screening of the Youth produced film “Suara Hulu Cisdane” (“Upstream Area of the Cisdane River”). The Sangarhijo Club contains 15 students (10 girls, 5 boys) and is very active conducting a number of activities, including:

- (1) Composting and Tree Nursery to sell and raise funds
- (2) Garbage Cleanup and Trash Separation
- (3) Creating handicrafts from recycled materials and selling to raise funds

This group was formed after a teacher from this school attended one of RMI’s trainings 2 years ago, and then returned to the school to set up this club. The group’s leader, Wardah, explained

that she joined this club, because she didn't want to only join a club for fun, she also wanted to do something useful and helpful for the school.

At the film screening, about 35 students from both the Sangarhijo and "Nature Lover's" Clubs attended. The film was written and directed by Youth with technical assistance and advice provided by a media/arts group based in Jakarta. It took nearly one year to complete this project and over 30 youth were involved. The goal of the film is for youth to be able to tell their version of what is happening in their communities.

The plot of the film is that a Jakarta-raised girl comes to the upstream area of the Cisdane River and meets a young boy there, who then explains to her about what life is like for the villagers here. He also takes her to a beautiful jungle waterfall and she is so impressed with everything she has seen and learned that she goes back to Jakarta and posts videos of her trip on Youtube. Issues that are presented over the course of the film include the effects of sand mining, the challenges children face to get an education, the debt that most farmers accrue after payments to middlemen for fertilizers and land rent, and skin rashes caused by bathing in the polluted river.

This film was screened at a film festival and the youth who were involved with this production plan to make another film. They will involve new youth with the production and will act as mentors so a new generation can learn video production skills. A short clip about the making of this video can be viewed at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4SIITGZ3J0> .

After the video screening, the viewers had many questions for the Youth representative and RMI staff, and they voiced their enthusiasm to participate in future film-making projects. At one point, Wardah- the leader of the Environment Club- challenged the Nature Lover's Group to do more than just go hiking in the mountains for pleasure and suggested they also take some of her Club's seedlings to plant in the forest the next time they go hiking. The leader of the Nature Lover's Group quickly responded that his group would be very happy to do just as she had suggested.

RMI shared their plan to conduct a "Green Camp" in October and will invite members of the Environment Club to join. Activities at the camp will include: Social mapping; DRR; ECR; land use systems and regulations; and agrarian politics. This camp will be coordinated with the Indonesian University Crisis Center and RMI will invite youth from other TDH-G supported projects to attend.

2. Lindalang (Environment for Recycling) River Watch Group's bio-monitoring of the Cisdane River activity

"Lindalang" can be translated as "Environment for recycling". This group consists of Jr. High School students (13 girls) who are very active in monitoring the ecological health of the Cisdane River. They collect water samples each month, use RMI-produced "Biomonitoring Kits" to identify organisms, and compile their results in a large notebook. They have been able to compare and observe changes in the bio-diversity levels of the Cisdane River over the last six months. Other activities of this group include:

- (1) Collecting garbage in hamlets on Sundays
- (2) Collecting, separating, and recycling garbage at school

- (3) Producing handicrafts from recycled materials and then use the profits from sales to fund other activities
- (4) Managing a 'mini-library' in their hamlets, that encourages youth to borrow books and discuss issues from their readings
- (5) Sewing skills trainings
- (6) Micro-credit loans for students

The Lindalang RWG plans to challenge students compose essays about the activities they do. They will select the best entry and the writer will win a trip to Jakarta along with the Lindalang group.

3. Meeting with RMI Staff

RMI provides support for Youth Groups through the following activities:

- (1) Capacity Building for youth leaders and RWG advisors
- (2) Providing Bio-monitoring tools and equipment for RWGs
- (3) Organizing competitions and coordination for RWG exchange meetings/ forums
- (4) Producing media: films, blogs, stickers, posters, t-shirts, pins, keychains, e-bulletins, and radio spots
- (5) Coordinating with local and national media to attend events and observe activities

RMI staff think the OROL campaign is a good program, but can expanded and strengthened. RMI should increase their Indonesian networks and make other Indonesian-based NGOs aware of their work and focus. Many of the NGOs working about the Environment do not target children and youth. Also, most indigenous people's organizations do not focus on youth.

RMI has worked with the International Land Coalition (ILC) for a number of years, and they feel their model for collaboration and networking is a good one. Within each country, ILC support organizations must collectively produce a three-year plan complete with objectives and indicators so all the partners can easily follow the progress within their country. In this way, the ILC can build consensus and support for partner organizations within countries.

For TDH-G, however, it seems that each year the number of partners within Indonesia is decreasing and partner organizations don't strategize together. The TDH-G Indonesia office provides logistics support for RMI, but it would very useful if they could provide more collaboration between and among partners in the future. RMI also would like to have more capacity-building activities and trainings on the national and regional levels.

Suggestions to improve effectiveness of OROL Regional level meetings:

- Better preparation for meetings by participants
- Improved English language skills of participants
- Stronger, more effective facilitation at meetings
- Conduct 'exhibitions' concurrently at meetings and invite public to attend
 - o Have youth representatives bring flags, photos, films, costumes, posters, and other visual media to share with partners and public
- Provide at least one day to visit local partner's working areas/ field/ study visit

- Bring youth with Organization leaders to Regional meetings to gain experience

RMI Key organizational strengths:

- Strong media: Films, Youtube, posters
- Impressive documentation (although a lot of it is in Bahasa Language)
- Coordination with Jakarta based media experts to assist the youth-led film production
- Holistic approach
- Deep knowledge and understanding of roots of problems by staff
- Strong English language from OROL Project leader
- Good gender balance among staff
- Good example of youth empowerment- RMI staff did not dominate or lead discussions among project beneficiaries

RMI Challenges/ Opportunities:

- Mountain streams are being siphoned for massive amounts of drinking water for Jakarta residents
- Urban sprawl from Jakarta has reached Bogor: Land and housing estates are being invested in by wealthy Jakartans in greater numbers
- Difficult and dangerous roads to reach target areas

RMI Office:

- The RMI Office contains a large amount of documents, pictures, posters and awards as examples of past work accomplishments
- Large target area map
- One staff member sleeps at office and there is one caretaker for the office
- RMI hired a local car and driver for our field visit

Other comments: RMI commented that the OROL logo does not have Indonesia on it

6. Philippines

Schedule: 28-30 September at GITIB Office, Davao and at PASAKK Office and Bunawan Commune Government Office, Bunawan, Agusan del Sur Province

Summary of meetings/ interviews:

1. GITIB overview meeting

GITIB OROL operates in four watershed areas on Mindanao Island:

- (1) Labo River Watershed- Activities implemented directly by GITIB out of GITIB main office located in Ozamiz City, Northern Mindanao
- (2) Davao Watershed River Basin- Activities implemented directly by GITIB out of GITIB OROL Project Office in Davao City
- (3) Agusan River Basin- Activities implemented by PASAKK, Inc., out of PASAKK Office in Bunawan Town, Agusan del Sur Province

- (4) Rio Grande (Mindano) River Basin - Activities implemented by Integrated Mindanaons Association for Natives (IMAN) out of IMAN Office in Kabacan Town

The two main target rivers for the OROL Project affect the lives of 8 million persons (1/3 of Mindanao population). Main threats to these 2 rivers' ecological health are:

- (1) Mining- both large and small-scale operations; especially gold and nickel
- (2) Logging- especially by a Filipino/Australian Company named Filstada Mining Co.
- (3) Plantations- mainly palm oil, bananas, pineapple, with some asparagus and rubber
 - Intensive chemical use pollutes rivers

Other issues in these areas include:

- Water pollution from domestic sources
- Increasing flooding
- Sedimentation in rivers
- Soil erosion and landslides
- Watershed Forest degradation
- Lack of/Weak River Basin organizations
- Illegal extraction of ground water for industrial purposes

Also, in the Rio Grande de Mindanao River Basin, there has been increasing pressure for a 'peace settlement' in order to open up natural resources access for outside investors.

Child specific issues/ concerns due to increasing flooding include:

- Sickness
- Diminished livelihood opportunities leading to malnourishment of children
- Inability to attend school
- Some schools are forced to closed down
- High illiteracy rates

Another huge issue is the lack of local governance to enforce/enact protection laws. Also there are divisions and disunity among IP leaders which affects protection of river/biodiversity. In many areas, the water supply sourced from rivers is no longer safe for cooking or drinking. Also, in some areas (Ligawasan Marsh) there's a lack of water for household and agricultural uses.

Interventions to address the problems discussed above include:

- (1) Awareness-raising on ECR as well as the protection of the rivers and biodiversity.
- (2) Media Work
- (3) Lobbying with Decision makers
- (4) Establish and strengthening River Watch groups
- (5) Educating students and the general public about the need for environmental protection and biodiversity
- (6) Network Building
- (7) Strengthening coordination among OROL partners and Bio Working Group

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Main activities include:

- Community-based Forums
- Establishing River Watch Taskforces
- River Watch Leaders' Training
- Press Releases and Press Conferences
- Film Viewing
- Children's Workshops
- Fact Finding Missions
- Network Building
- Lobbying and Community Actions

Main outputs for GITIB during OROL Project include:

- Seven municipal river watch groups were established and consolidated in Ozamiz City and Davao City, the municipalities of Bunawan in Agusan Sur, and Datu Montawal in Maguindanao.
- 41 community level river watch groups were established.
- Women represent around 52% of the river watch members.
- Children's presence and participation have increased from 10% to 15%.
- 1,637 adults and 612 children have undergone a series of awareness raising activities and joined in Ecological Child Rights and River and Biodiversity Protection advocacy along with 184 Filipino young leaders and environmental activists.
- A youth for climate justice organization was also formed showing the links between climate change on rivers and water bodies.
- In 2014 a new initiative- the Development Roundtable Discussion Series (DRTS)- was introduced.
- A Documentary Film about the communities and schools working for River conservation is in the final editing and production stage now. All the raw footage has been shot, but GITIB is currently coordinating with the contracted film production team in order to ensure that the message and content of the final edit correctly reflect the views of GITIB.

Ecological Child Rights (ECR) can be a useful instrument to expand on the limitations that exist in the more widely recognized and cited Convention of the Rights of Children (CRC). For example any act that contributes to or increase the risk for flooding or water pollution, could be viewed as a violation of ECRs. Furthermore, ECR addresses intergenerational issues which are not usually thought of when using the CRC. Also, if ecology is defined as our 'home' and not just the 'natural environment', then ECR will cover social issues as well. Children are usually the most vulnerable to flooding, droughts, contaminated water and other harmful events that occur along water ways, so ECR are especially important to address these vulnerabilities and provide pro-active protections.

Unexpected outcomes included:

- During the recently begun Development Roundtable Discussion Series (DRTS), community representatives have been much more forthcoming and confident in their comments and discussion points than was previously expected by GITIB staff. Usually, when community members are in the presence of government officials, they are meek and afraid to truly

speak their minds and voice their concerns. However, at these discussions, the community members have been very open and frank when presenting, and have not been afraid to challenge unfair or incorrect statements from government officials.

- Local governments are closely watching, listening to, and in some cases, even supporting community based river watch groups. This could be in part due to the fact that Disaster Risk Reduction has become such a buzzword in the Philippines, and local governments see river protection and conservation as a tool to contribute to DRR (and an activity that would make local gov't leaders look more proactive).
- The quick formation and great enthusiasm of the Youth 4 Climate Justice (Y4CJ) was unexpected and welcomed by the GITIB staff. Even though they have only been formed for ½ year, they have already conducted many activities and accomplished much. Originally, this was only supposed to be an 'awareness-raising activity', but it has grown into much more.
- Originally, GITIB set a goal to establish 4 new River watch groups during this phase of OROL implementation, but they have assisted in establishing 41 new community level river watch groups due to great interest and support from local communities in this activity.

Examples of significant victories/ successes during OROL Campaign:

- The prohibiting of mechanical equipment use to mine the Labo River
- The government's enforcement of the Calina River watch group's (Davao) demands to repair dykes that were damaged and destroyed by recent floods.

Improvements/ Suggestions for future OROL work include:

- Need to improve Regional unity and strengthen our Regional voice
- Find more ways to integrate ECR into our activities and mainstream it into our working vocabulary.
- Scale up River networks from the existing Mindanao level to more of a National level network/ forum

2. Youth 4 Climate Justice (Y4CJ) Group

This group contains 25-50 members and is based out of the University of SE Philippines (USEP) in Davao City. There were 5 women and 1 man at this presentation, including the President and other leaders. The origins of the Y4CJ Group can be traced to when a former USEP student had an internship at the GITIB OROL Office. This student gave a presentation at the USEP and this sparked an interest among some of the USEP Community Development students. The interested students then had a follow-up meeting and decided to start the Y4CJ Group. An initial awareness raising event was held and 150 signed up to apply for group membership. Candidates were then screened and interviewed by the core group. In order to be selected for group membership, the candidates needed to demonstrate the follow characteristics:

- (1) Must be students and/or youth
- (2) Must love nature
- (3) Must have guts
- (4) Must be dedicated/ committed

The Y4CJ Group have already designed a logo and printed t-shirts for group members. Activities that the Y4CJ Group has conducted to date include:

- (1) Campus Forum on Climate Change and Climate Justice
- (2) Photo Exhibits on Climate Change and the State of our Rivers in Mindanao

Future plans for activities include:

- (1) Fundraising events, possibly a concert or selling t-shirts
- (2) River trekking
- (3) Research on River Ecological Health and Biodiversity

3. PASAKK, Inc.

PASAKK is an indigenous people's organization based in Bunawan Town, Agusan del Sur province. The staff are all members of the Monobo tribe, which has a distinct language and culture from the main Filipino majority. It was established in 1986, but became fully independent in 1990. Its five main programs include: Sustainable Agriculture and Socio-economic Development, Literacy, Health, Community Building, and Advocacy & Networking. 11 PASAKK and River watch group members (5 women, 6 men) attended the meeting, including the Mrs. Becky Barrios, the General Secretary of PASAKK, Inc.

PASAKK's target area includes communities along the Agusan River, its tributaries, and the Agusan Swamp.

The word "Pasakk" means "land" in the local dialect. GITIB and PASAKK have had a close working relationship for many years, and both are members of the Philippine Working Group on Biodiversity.

There are 10 community River watch groups in the target area. A representative from each of these groups joins the Municipal River watch group. Main activities for the River watch groups include:

- Planting indigenous trees and bamboo along river banks to stop erosion and reduce the effects from flooding.
- Establishing and monitoring regulations to stop illegal fishing practices, including using electricity to kill fish.
- Monitoring illegal small scale mining and logging activities.
- Water sampling to measure river health and biodiversity levels: This activity is very useful for community members, however it requires a large budget to hire technical staff based in Davao (Ateneo de Davao University) to do the testing in their laboratories. GITIB would like to support University technicians to conduct a training so villagers will be able to do sampling and testing by themselves, but they do not have enough budget for this.

Biggest Challenges:

- **Mining** has caused many problems in our community. Heavy machinery is destroying our roads. Tailing ponds have overflowed into the river and killed fish. Our white clothes become colored when we wash them in the river. Many small scale mining operations are supported by outside investors, but they employ local people to run the machinery, so they won't be held responsible. Many local people have no other options for livelihoods, so they work on

these small scale mines. During the typhoon two years ago, many landslides occurred, which woke many people up to the effects of intensive mining.

- **Logging** remains a huge problem, despite an official ban on logging activities. Part of the reason it continues is because a Senator owns 2 logging companies that have received official concessions to cut trees. These companies hire locals to cut trees outside of official plantation lands and then put the company stamp on the felled trees. Also, after the typhoon, the Government allowed trees to be cut in order to rebuild destroyed houses. However, many of the trees which are supposed to be used for houses are sold and/or exported.
- **Empowering villagers to gain income and livelihoods** outside of illegal logging or fishing, mining (both large and small scale), or as laborers for corporate plantations remains a huge challenge for the members of PASAKK and the RWGs.

Youth are involved with PASAKK activities, but only one was able to attend the meeting, because the meeting was held during school hours. Youth are especially eager to assist with tree plantings, river cleaning, and garbage collection and separation activities. However, some youth are not able to participate in activities because they must work to earn income, go to study at high school/ university, and some get married and begin families after finishing primary school.

4. Bunawan Municipal River Watch Group Meeting with Commune Captain

A discussion was held between the Bunawan Municipal River watch group and the Commune Captain at the Bunawan Commune office. The Captain was recently elected and said he would like to learn more about the RWG's activities so that he could find ways to cooperate and support their activities. The RWG mentioned that they would be receiving a 1.5M Peso grant from the Central Government to conduct tree planting along the river next year, and they needed the Captain to assist them to ensure that the funds will reach the RWG as promised.

The Captain expressed concern about activities to stop small scale mining in the Agusan River, because if these miners could no longer work, they would not be able to gain income to support their families.

He also suggested that it would be beneficial for the community if Del Monte would be granted a concession to set up a 2,000hA commercial plantation operation in this commune, as it would provide many jobs for local persons. A RWG member replied that, to the best of his knowledge, in other areas that had new plantations, few local people were employed and the employment was erratic and low-paid.

The Captain next suggested they accept illegal loggers to become members of their RWG, so they would 'change their minds' about cutting trees. He also suggested that persons involved with illegal logging could be employed by the British Palm Oil Plantation that would soon be operating in this area.

Next, the Captain asked the RWG to assist him in monitoring other activities besides illegal fishing, mining and logging. For example, he asked the group to help him to watch for illegal drug trafficking and Muslim groups moving into this area.

Finally, the Captain thanked the RWG for their efforts to keep the rivers and environment clean and healthy; however they must also be careful, because the enemy they are up against is very powerful. A RWG member retorted that they would not be intimidated or stop their activities, because they were sure that the other side would never relent in the pursuit of their goals.

The exchanges between the Government officials and members of the RWG seemed to be good-spirited and open. Even when there were clear disagreements, it appeared that both sides were at least listening and allowing each other to express their opinions.

5. GITIB Wrap up meeting

When asked why our field trip was hurried and we had to spend so much time traveling to reach Agusan del Sur Province, the GITIB staff explained that it was because it would have not been advisable (or allowable) to sleep in the province. This part of Mindanao is still under close watch from the Philippine Army and Government due to the insurgencies, as well as the extensive mining and logging that is being conducted.

Gitib key organizational strengths:

- Supports strong and effective indigenous and local CBOs for some project activity implementation
- Encourages youth and local CBOs to speak for themselves during presentations
- Gitib director allows a lot of space for other Gitib staff to share opinions and experiences
- Strong documentation for OROL project activities- a very thick yellow book filled with project details was prepared for both evaluation team members
- Clear and easy-to-follow accounts
- Very open and transparent about sharing work issues

Gitib Challenges/ Opportunities:

- Some parts of target area are in conflict zones
- In some areas, villagers are contributing to environmentally destructive activities (small-scale mining, agro-industry, logging, etc.) because of lack of other income generating activities
- Only 3 staff are trying to oversee a project spread out over 4 distant areas
- Could improve media production in some areas (website, short documentaries)

Gitib/OROL Philippines Office:

- Rural location provides peaceful and secure area for meetings and discussions, but it may be difficult to reach it at night without personal transportation
- Men and women dorm rooms provide visitors from far away with a place to stay
- The Gitib/OROL office does not have a vehicle
- Simple, yet effective photo essays in office to portray the issues facing project beneficiaries

7. Laos

Schedule: 3rd-5th September at ACD Office in Salavan Town; and at Ta-Oy District, Salavan Province (68 kms from Salavan town)

Summary of meetings/ interviews:

1. ACD Orientation and overview:

Met with Director and key staff members. ACD is working in 4 districts in Salavan Province: Salavan, Ta-Oy, Sa-moei, and Lao-Ngam Districts. They have two main projects: Child Rights Promotion (CRP) and OROL. Most ACD staff are local persons and their main target group is ethnic minorities in Salavan Province.

Their main activities include:

- (1) Building schools with support from private Japanese donors
- (2) Providing training/ awareness raising about Child Rights Protection in Primary and Secondary Schools
- (3) Providing nutritional supplements for under 5 children
- (4) OROL

Main challenges include:

- (1) Government bureaucracy: ACD must fill out a lot of paperwork and wait for a long time when coordinating with the government. Also, the government wants to be informed in detail about all project activities.
- (2) ACD Staff Capacity: Staff need more training to improve their ability to work effectively. Especially about ECR- Staff themselves are unsure exactly what this term means, so they are not able to explain it well to target group.
- (3) Lack of available time to meet / work with students: During the long breaks, most students go far away back home or go to find work. That leaves ACD with only during weekends to do activities with students.
- (4) Cultural barriers: In Laos culture, the teachers do not give students much room to think and act for themselves.

Main opportunities:

- (1) Students are very interested in the activities and have a lot of enthusiasm.
- (2) Due to Government rules and regulations, we have a close working relationship with Government staff which we can use to ensure the project's sustainability.

OROL overview:

Main Activities include:

- (1) River Conservation Clubs (RCC)
 - Divided into Planting Natural Trees (PNT) and River Survey (RS) Groups
- (2) Raising Awareness among students

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- Giant Posters
- Parades (sometimes when we march in a parade, the Government thinks we are protesting because they don't read our message, they only see us with signs and wearing the same colors)
- (3) Distributing River Conservation Regulations Booklets in schools and communities
- (4) Conducting River Health Surveys (Sampling for bio-diversity)
- (5) Youth Camps
 - Three days, bringing students together from 4 schools
- (6) Peer Educator Activities- teaching about the environment, playing 'eat and clean' game, playing garbage separation game
- (7) Conducting Dramas/ Theater performances at schools
- (8) Planting trees along riverbanks
 - ACD/ students must provide their own seedlings, but in the future, they would like to coordinate this activity with the Forestry Department

Unexpected Outcomes: The River Conservation Regulations Booklet was originally only meant to be used for students, but Local Government officials requested ACD to distribute these booklets to over 100 communities and give trainings. ACD wants to assist, but they are limited by budget. ACD also has received from OROL partners that this Regulation Booklet should be more 'child-friendly' than its current form.

Other notes: The OROL slogan doesn't translate well into Laotian.

Future Plans:

- Use the school Public Radio to spread knowledge about River Conservation Regulations
- Encourage students to design and implement activities by themselves
- Focus more on Ta-Oy District/ Selanong River because it has less resources and support than Salavan/ Sedone River.

2. Salavan Secondary School RCC Volunteer Group

The teacher advisor and 9 students (6 girls/ 3 boys) attended meeting (one member was absent). The students are in grades 9-11. The reasons they gave for joining this club included:

- To take care of the environment/ecology
- To share knowledge with others
- The environment is an important topic for our village
- To have a more sustainable life

This group meets about once/month, or sometimes once/2 or 3 months, depending on the school schedule and other activities. The teacher advisor (Rasamee) was happy that this club has helped clean up the school and taught others students how to separate garbage. The student leader (Sakda, a boy) is very interested in using new technologies to spread their message and generate interest and support for their activities.

After our discussion, the group planned activities for the upcoming Boat Racing Festival on the Sedone River (September 9-10). The students led this discussion and also wrote down their plans

on a flipchart by themselves. ACD Staff and Advisor gave limited input and mostly allowed the students to decide things for themselves. Planned activities included:

- (1) Parade with campaign signs and chanting slogans
- (2) Public Forum for Raising Awareness
- (3) Recycled Costumes Contest
- (4) Q/A Game Contest
- (5) Games that teach about the importance of forest and water conservation
- (6) Teach about Garbage Separation and play “Eat and Clean” game

3. Ta-Oy Secondary School Volunteer Group

The evaluator and ACD staff traveled 68 kms. (1.5 hours) to Ta-Oy District to meet with 12 students (7 girls, 5 boys- 1 girl and 1 boy absent) from the Ta-Oy River Conservation Volunteer Club. Activities that this group enjoyed most included environment games, dramas, Q/A games, and the Youth Camp. They also highlighted the River Survey activity that they conducted in April this year. The survey results were that the Selanong River has good ecological health. They plan to do a follow-up survey in October this year. Other upcoming planned activities include: September- Tree planting; November- Dissemination of River Conservation Regulations Booklets in Khun Village; December- activities during the Annual Boat Racing Festival.

The students especially enjoy the environment games. They wrote the questions for the Q/A game and gave shirts and books to students with correct answers.

For the dramas, students wrote the scripts, prepared costumes, and then rehearsed together before presenting the performance at the schools.

The Youth Camp was a very fun and successful activity. They exchanged experiences, and learned a lot from new friends who study in Salavan and Serm Moei Districts.

One challenge has been trying to explain River Conservation Regulations to local communities. This booklet is written in Laotian, and sometimes it is difficult to translate some of the words and phrases into the local dialect (Ta-Oy) that many villagers understand better.

4. ACD Wrap Up meeting

ACD was disappointed that the evaluator was not able to meet with any government officials due to the fact that there was no official permission received to visit as an OROL evaluator. Previously for OROL visits, applications could be processed in one month, but now the process takes longer (up to 3 months), so ACD requested that for future visits, details for visit be sent 3 months in advance (the evaluator entered Laos on a tourist visa, which technically does not allow any meetings/discussions about ACD’s work).

Children in Laos are limited in their ability to think/analyze independently, due to educational and political structures. Therefore, ACD is trying to find ways to encourage more child centered participation. In the case of the upcoming Sedone River Boat Racing Festival, ACD is allowing the Youth Group to directly coordinate their planned activities with local authorities, so that they

can learn about how to work effectively in the Laos systems. Students have already done some self-organizing and have learned that it is more effective to present their activities as a group, instead of only having 1-2 leaders ask permission from local authorities.

ACD has limited capacity to complete reports and document their activities in a timely fashion. During discussions, ACD mentioned that they did not 'even bother' to apply for reserve funds, despite their need for more funding to implement important activities, because of the necessary paperwork that would have involved.

One suggestion from ACD regarding Regional Meetings/ Coordination was that OROL Administrative meetings should be conducted using Skype instead of having each partner send representatives to another country. ACD believes that the time and money could be used more effectively than to attend such meetings. However, ACD supports sending staff for specific Capacity Building skills trainings, as well as sending youth to regional level meetings.

ACD key organizational strengths:

- Dedicated and sincere staff: Family atmosphere
- Deep knowledge and extensive experience working in target area: ACD director able to speak local dialect of ethnic minority group
- Gender and youth well represented on ACD staffing
- Close working relationship with Government officials
- Strongly encourage child and youth empowerment and critical thinking skills
- Large photo database demonstrating activities

ACD Challenges/ Opportunities:

- Difficult to implement activities due to close oversight of Laos Government, and lengthy bureaucratic procedures and regulations.
- Staff feel that they have low understanding of the term "ECR".
- Communication obstacles: Poor internet connection
- Remote target areas and rural-based target population
- Laos children are not traditionally taught critical thinking skills
- Good posters/ brochures, but room for improvement for media production (especially website and social media)

ACD Office:

- Simple unmarked building in middle of Salavan town. Pigs and chickens are raised and vegetables grown in office compound.
- Home-cooked meals are prepared on charcoal stoves
- 2 vehicles available for project staff

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Appendix 6: Selected Photographs from Evaluation and Best Practices
(in order of the evaluation visits)

1. Burma Myanmar



Project Plan on Office Wall in Rangoon; March 14 Salween Dam Protest; Children Drawing “Dream Future”

2. Thailand



Kaew Wua Dam Meeting; Youth Conservation Group on Kok River; Karen Community at Conservation Zone

3. Cambodia



Poster Sets at SS Office; Students recording voices Community Radio Station; BCA Committee in Kday Romdul

4. Vietnam



2 RWG groups at La Nga Secondary School; Floating Houses on Dong Nai River; Saigon RWG learns about fish

5. Indonesia



Recycled Art by Environment Club; Make-up during movie production; Lindalang RWG members show kits

6. Philippines



Samples for testing on Agusan River; Youth 4 Climate Justice Group; Meeting with Local Gov't Reps in Bunawan

7. Laos



Biodiversity Sampling by Ta-Oy RWG; RWG Planning for Boat Festival in Salavan; Dangerous Bridge in Ta-Oy

Appendix 7: Evaluation Team Profiles

Mr. Jason Lubanski (M.A. Sustainable Development)- Evaluation Team Lead

Independent Consultant and Researcher- Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Jason has worked about human rights issues (migrant labor, refugees, HIV/AIDS, human trafficking, stateless persons, hill-tribe ethnic groups) in Thailand and Burma since arriving in 1993 as a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer. He has experienced working for many different types of development organizations ranging from international NGOs (including TBC and ADRA Thailand) to grassroots level CBOs (including the Hill Area Development Foundation and the Stateless Children's Protection Project). Most recently has been focusing on land rights issues in Northern Thailand through his involvement with the Northern Development Foundation (NDF) and the Northern Peasants' Federation (NPF).

Mr. Kunakorn (Yai) Boonsai (M.S. Environmental Risk Assessment for Tropical Ecosystems)- Evaluation Team Assistant Lead

Researcher/Workshop Facilitator, Triple-E Consulting- Chiang Mai, Thailand

Originally from Southern Thailand, Kunakorn has lived and worked in Chiang Mai for over 20 years with a wide range of organizations and donors including ADRA Thailand, the Plant-a-Tree-Today Foundation, the Forest Restoration Research Unit of Chiang Mai University, and the Green World Foundation. He has worked on a wide range of environmental and human rights issues in Thailand and his current interests include community-based natural resource management, environmental education and climate change adaptation.