



Photo: J. Blaser/Intercooperation

PROJECT SNAPSHOT >

NAME > Livelihoods and Climate Change

PARTNERS > IUCN – The World Conservation Union; Stockholm Environment Institute – Boston Center (SEI-B); and the Swiss Organisation for Development and Cooperation (Intercooperation)

FUNDER > Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

DURATION > Phase 1: 2001-2003; Phase 2: 2004-2006; Phase 3 (pending): 2006-2008

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS > Developing countries worldwide

BACKGROUND >

Today's climate-related disasters foreshadow the likely adverse future impacts of climate change, signalling an urgent need to minimize current vulnerabilities in order to adapt to future conditions. For poor communities living on fragile and degraded lands, actions to reduce vulnerability must address the deteriorating environmental conditions that undermine their livelihoods and capacity to cope with disasters. Ecosystem management and restoration (EM&R) or sustainable livelihoods (SL) interventions can therefore play an important role in local adaptation strategies. By protecting and enhancing the natural services that support livelihoods, vulnerable communities can maintain local safety nets and expand the range of options for coping with disruptive shocks and trends.

Recognizing this urgent need to develop adaptation strategies based on current

vulnerabilities and peoples' livelihoods, IISD, IUCN, SEI-B and Intercooperation have been working together on an international research and policy initiative – Livelihoods and Climate Change. The project was originally conceived as a non-governmental response to the emergence of adaptation as a leading issue in the global climate change debate. The aim was to inform and influence how the international community invests in adaptation by promoting an integrated approach that draws from four communities that have long been tackling the issues of vulnerability reduction: disaster risk reduction; environmental management; poverty reduction; and climate change.

The first phase of the project focused on formalizing the multi-disciplinary approach to adaptation through the establishment

of a **Task Force on Climate Change, Vulnerable Communities and Adaptation**. The Task Force endorsed a work program to establish the conceptual foundations of the project, gather supporting evidence for its approach to adaptation and communicate the findings to broader constituencies. Following this, project partners decided to develop a second phase of activity focusing on the development of **practical tools** or guidelines to facilitate risk reduction and adaptation, using EM&R or SL projects as an entry-point at the local level. Experiences with developing and testing these tools will be built upon for a third phase of work, which will focus on capacity building, implementation and monitoring of local-level adaptation strategies.

www.iisd.org/natres/security/ccvca.asp

OVERALL GOAL > To strengthen the use of ecosystem management and restoration (EM&R) activities in reducing the vulnerability of communities to climate-related hazards and climate change.

OBJECTIVES >

1. Identify successful natural resource and ecosystem management and restoration actions that reduce the vulnerability of communities to climate-related disasters and climate change;
2. Enhance the role of these activities, identifying barriers to action, conditions for success and policy options;
3. Mobilize and expand constituencies and operational capacities for adopting and implementing this approach; and
4. Promote the integration of this approach into emerging policy frameworks and strategies on disaster reduction, climate change action, biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation.

KEY ACTIVITIES TO DATE >

PHASE ONE: RESEARCH AND COMMUNICATIONS ON LIVELIHOODS APPROACH TO ADAPTATION

- a) Established multi-disciplinary Task Force on Climate Change, Vulnerable Communities and Adaptation.
- b) Produced conceptual framework on Livelihoods and Climate Change.
- c) Conducted field and desk-based research examining changes to community resilience to climate stress after an EM&R intervention.
- d) Published Information Papers highlighting EM&R interventions that have successfully reduced vulnerability to climate stress.
- e) Undertook outreach and communication activities (i.e., project brochure, Web site, participation at key international meetings and conferences).

PHASE TWO: DEVELOPMENT OF TOOLS TO SUPPORT ADAPTATION

- a) Development of project management tool CRISTAL (Community-based Risk Screening Tool – Adaptation and Livelihoods) that enables project planners and manager to (i) assess an intervention's impact on local capacity to cope with climate stress; and (ii) think about how to adjust project activities so that, at the very least, they don't undermine local coping capacity and, where possible, further enhance coping capacity.
- b) Field testing of CRISTAL on conservation and sustainable livelihoods projects in Africa, Asia and Central America to assess the usability and utility of the tool among project planners and managers.
- c) Development of portfolio screening tool or guidelines that help agencies to systematically assess the relevance of climate change and adaptation to their ongoing and planned development projects.
- d) Continued outreach and communications activities: Information Paper on vulnerable coastal communities; continued participation in key international meetings and workshops.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES >

- a) Finalization of CRISTAL: translation into Spanish and French; continued incorporation of feedback from field staff; and monitoring of tool uptake.
- b) Capacity Building: development of Training Module for CRISTAL; and regional "Training of Trainers" workshops in the use of CRISTAL.
- c) Field implementation: selection of field sites; vulnerability / resilience assessments; application of CRISTAL; implementation of project adjustments identified through the use of CRISTAL; and monitoring changes in vulnerability / resilience.
- d) Outreach to key constituencies: dissemination and awareness-raising of outcomes and lessons-learned to humanitarian groups, development organizations, UN and donor agencies.