

**STREAM**



**Support to Regional Aquatic Resources Management**

# **STREAM Journal**

**Learning and communicating about the livelihoods of fishers and farmers**

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## Note

This number of the *STREAM Journal* is a special collection of articles about a series of Workshops on Livelihoods Approaches and Analysis that were conducted through an FAO-supported project called "Assistance in Poverty Alleviation through Improved Aquatic Resources Management in Asia-Pacific". The workshops were held in the Philippines (November 2003), India with Nepal (February 2004), Lao PDR (March 2004), Myanmar (May 2004) and Yunnan, China (September 2004).

The authors of the articles were asked to focus on any follow-up they experienced as a result of the workshop, or any notable outcomes they perceived. This collection of their recollections was published to coincide with the final workshop of the FAO Technical Cooperation Program (TCP) in Los Baños, Philippines, in March 2005. Called the "FAO/NACA-STREAM Workshop on Aquatic Resources and Livelihoods: Connecting Policy and People", its purpose was to review and share experiences of the STREAM Initiative under the FAO TCP and build consensus on the value of livelihoods approaches in aquatic resources management and poverty alleviation. In attendance were the member government representatives of the NACA Governing Council, STREAM Initiative National Coordinators and Communications Hub Managers, and FAO colleagues.

We are appreciative of FAO for recognizing the importance of livelihoods approaches by funding this work, and in particular, we are grateful to Rohana Subasinghe, FAO Senior Fishery Officer, and Simon Funge-Smith, FAO Aquaculture Officer, for everything they have contributed to the outcomes of our collaboration.

Happy reading!

Graham Haylor, STREAM Director  
William Savage, *STREAM Journal* Editor

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# What Do We Need to Learn about to Understand How People Live?

*Kath Copley and William Savage*

## **The Workshops and a Question**

The series of five NACA-STREAM/FAO Workshops on Livelihoods Approaches and Analysis were activities within an FAO<sup>1</sup>-funded Technical Cooperation Program (TCP) under the project entitled "Assistance in Poverty Alleviation through Improved Aquatic Resources Management in Asia-Pacific". The workshops took place from November 2003 through September 2004 in the Philippines, India (with Nepal), Lao PDR, Myanmar and Yunnan, China.

The purpose of the workshops was to develop and document mechanisms for training in livelihoods approaches and analysis, and to build national capacity to conduct livelihoods analysis. The workshop objectives were to:

- Understand issues of interest to people whose livelihoods include aquatic resources management, especially those with limited resources
- Build "livelihoods teams" to do livelihoods analyses and training, and share their experiences with communities and other stakeholders
- Share understandings of livelihoods approaches and analysis using participatory methods
- Review, adapt and supplement existing livelihoods approaches and analysis documentation
- Experience the use of participatory tools for livelihoods analysis
- Plan activities for carrying out livelihoods analyses

The design of the workshops included sessions on:

- Experiences and Expectations
- Sharing Understandings
- Teams and Stakeholders
- Learning about and Understanding Livelihoods – Livelihoods Frameworks and Approaches
- Livelihoods Analysis – Processes and Practices
- Community Visit Preparation – Roles and Tools for Learning and Communicating about Livelihoods
- Community Visit Reportback
- Language(s), Power and Relationships
- Planning Activities for Livelihoods Analysis

The workshops were spent exploring the complex nature of communities and groups, and sharing understandings about how best to learn about their livelihoods. The central question for the workshops was: "What do we need to learn about to understand how people live?" Regardless of prior experience with livelihoods analysis, participants explored this question with enthusiasm and a will to learn about new ways of working with communities. Moreover, many participants expressed the desire to go out and use what they were learning to improve the way they worked with communities.

## **Expectations and Materials**

Participants came to the workshops with a range of expectations: to learn about livelihoods approaches and methods for livelihoods analysis; to preserve indigenous cultures and beliefs,

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<sup>1</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

not just fish resources; to see a kind of network established to help us to communicate the expanded understanding of livelihoods; to communicate better about issues which concern us.

In many of the places where the workshops were held, the livelihoods concepts and techniques were new to participants. Thus key documents from the collection of STREAM materials from around the region were translated and used by participants to understand the concepts: two series of reports from livelihoods approaches workshops in Cambodia and Vietnam, a Cambodian handbook on using Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools, and numbers of the *STREAM Journal* with articles on livelihoods analysis.

### Contexts and Communities

Although the workshop program was nearly identical and the approach was the same in each country, each workshop developed according to the context. In the Philippines, for example, where participants were familiar with tools for livelihoods analysis, we focused less on the actual tools and more on aspects of communication. In other countries, where the PRA tools were 'new', we spent more time discussing how these might be most usefully and sensitively used. We were able to develop and improve the workshop design, learning from each country as we went along by drawing cumulatively on workshop evaluations.

During the course of the workshops, we visited five communities: Talokgangan in the Philippines, Jabarrah in India, Nam Houm in Lao PDR, Chaung Wa in Myanmar and Jinfuzhuangxiaozhai in Yunnan, China. These community visits allowed participants to try out some of the livelihoods analysis tools with members of the communities. In each place, people generously told us stories about their lives and participants learnt new ways to listen to them. In addition to getting information about the village community itself, participants also gained important insights into how best to learn and communicate about people's lives.

### A Note on Capacity-building

The purpose of the process [described in the articles in this *SJ* number] is the building of capacity in agencies and organizations to carry out livelihoods analysis using Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools. This can be understood in two ways, each derived from different meanings of *capacity*. The first relates to *capacity* as commonly understood as *capabilities* or *skills*, i.e., creating opportunities for participants to learn the skills necessary to do livelihoods analysis in a participatory way. The second comes from an understanding of *capacity* as *role*, i.e., the capacities in which a person works. The introduction of



*The authors with Lalita in Jabarrah, West Bengal, India*

a participatory livelihoods approach means that participants will have to fulfill new roles in their work context which may not have existed before. Examples include learning how to be a facilitator of groups, how to adapt materials and how to collaborate with new stakeholders.

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## Taking Steps to Making Livelihoods Work

*Erwin L Pador*

### **'Livelihoods' Strategies and Activities**

A strategy used by many development projects for alleviating poverty has been the “provision of livelihoods”. This is supposed to either supplement current livelihoods of poor aquatic resources users, or serve as alternatives to temporarily move people away from fisheries while giving the resource some time to regenerate. This strategy – no matter how noble or innovative – has not always been successful in addressing poverty, making livelihoods projects profitable or supporting people to achieve their livelihoods objectives. There must be some missing steps in the strategies being used if so-called ‘livelihoods’ activities have not always been sustainable. It was with this in mind that the STREAM Philippines Country Office – in the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) Region 6 – offered to host the first of the series of NACA-STREAM/FAO Workshops on Livelihoods Approaches and Analysis, in November 2003.

### **Initial Steps**

The workshop aimed to develop teams that would work with ‘livelihoods’ as an integral and sustainable development approach. The participants comprised a good mix of fishers (women and men), community organizers, bay management council leaders, fisheries officers from local government units, people from non-governmental organizations and BFAR staff. The workshop enabled participants to share meanings and understandings of livelihoods, livelihoods approaches and livelihoods analysis.

Getting to know the sustainable livelihoods framework brought participants to a realization that indeed many of their current livelihoods activities had been done by asking people what they wanted for a livelihoods project rather than what they really needed. The livelihoods approaches discussed and used during the community visit to Banate Bay helped participants better appreciate the usefulness of tools that were initially thought of as only for coastal resources management work. These tools helped in looking into the resources and capacities that people already have and use in making a living, and also at factors that influence people’s livelihoods.



*Taking steps toward a livelihoods approach in Talokgangan Village, Banate Bay*

The setting up of the livelihoods teams was most welcome as it recognizes the multi-disciplinary approach to development work in fisheries and aquatic resources communities. Many BFAR livelihoods projects are evaluated in terms of their technical viability. This is understandable as the bureau is a technical agency which works toward sustainable fisheries development. What is wanting in many of the livelihoods projects is a serious look into the socio-economic and cultural contexts in which the projects are implemented. Community organizers and fishers may be in better positions to know about their own situations.

Since taking a livelihoods approach and doing livelihoods analysis was not the usual way of doing things for most participants, it was realized that there must be a logical procedure which a

person or organization can follow to work out appropriate mechanisms to meet the needs of poor aquatic resources users. A format for a draft "Guide to Livelihoods Approaches and Analysis" was discussed. It was agreed that the Guide would be worked out by the livelihoods teams in coordination with the STREAM Philippines Country Office. The Guide would present a framework for livelihoods approaches and suggest tools for users and their specific purposes. It would present a way of doing livelihoods analysis yet leave room for creativity and consider the peculiarities of the area, the people and the community. The Guide would evolve from inputs from different livelihoods teams and be enriched by stakeholders' experiences. It could serve as a valuable tool for many livelihoods projects in the country.

### **Steps Taken**

The livelihoods approach has somehow become the centerpiece of the STREAM Initiative with its other three themes – institutions, policy development and communications – lending support. An immediate outcome of the workshop was the engagement of one of the livelihoods teams to undertake a study on the marine ornamental fish trade and its impact on poor people's livelihoods. The STREAM Philippines Communications Hub Manager – in coordination with the STREAM Regional Office – also got involved in mentoring work during similar workshops in India, Lao PDR and Indonesia. The knowledge and skills shared during these exchanges, and the experiences gained, were rewarding in terms of meanings and understandings of livelihoods across the Asia-Pacific region.

In BFAR, awareness is slowly developing of the need to look more deeply into the livelihoods activities being undertaken. This awareness is being sustained through conversation groups with staff who could influence the direction of some of the livelihoods projects, especially in the Sapijan Bay area. Livelihoods activities are being actively implemented there through a project assisted by the Asian Development Bank. With community organizers collaborating in the livelihoods activities, it is hoped that needs are being properly identified and addressed following the livelihoods approaches introduced by STREAM.

Fisher participants in the workshop have also been sensitized to the livelihoods approaches and analysis tools they experienced, most importantly during the community visit. They have become more analytical about the state of the resources around their community, about policies that support their livelihoods, and about opportunities and threats that could affect their lives. They are also more aware now of what they want and what they really need. They are active partners in much of our fisheries development work.

### **More Steps Needed**

All participants were rather upbeat after the workshop. They had a fresh perspective on how to approach their livelihoods work. The Livelihoods Approaches and Analysis Workshop "put a face" on the sustainable livelihoods framework. Participants' excitement, however, did not last long since sustaining mechanisms such as the draft Guide were still being developed. The development and use of the Guide will be able to focus organizations and stakeholders on appropriate livelihoods support. Participants also realized that advocacy for such approaches needs to be conducted to effect changes in the ways of working of BFAR and other organizations.

Our continued engagement with coastal and other aquatic resources communities has helped us understand that sustainable development is not just focused on resources but is centered on people using the resources, building their capacities to become stewards of the resources. This is what really matters!

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## Reflections on the India-Nepal Workshop

*Rubu Mukherjee and Nilkanth Pokhrel*

### **Nepal Colleagues Visit Ranchi and Jabarrah**

The GVT<sup>2</sup>/NACA-STREAM/FAO International Workshop on Livelihoods Approaches and Analysis was held in Ranchi, India, in February 2004. There were nine participants from India representing the Departments of Fisheries in Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal states and the STREAM India Country Office. They were joined by nine colleagues from Nepal – who journeyed overland to Ranchi – representing district and central agriculture and fisheries offices.

During the workshop we made a community visit to a village named Jabarrah in West Bengal State. Through discussions with fishers and farmers, we learned how the livelihoods of people there changed after they became involved in aquaculture.



*A scene from the community visit to Jabarrah, West Bengal*

### **Before and after the Workshop**

Before attending the workshop we all had a generalized opinion about the term *livelihoods*. According to us, it only defined someone's "way of living". After attending the workshop, however, we understand the meaning of livelihoods more deeply. It is broader than a "way of living" because others are also linked with it, including the wider society, different groups and other individuals – all are linked with someone's livelihood.

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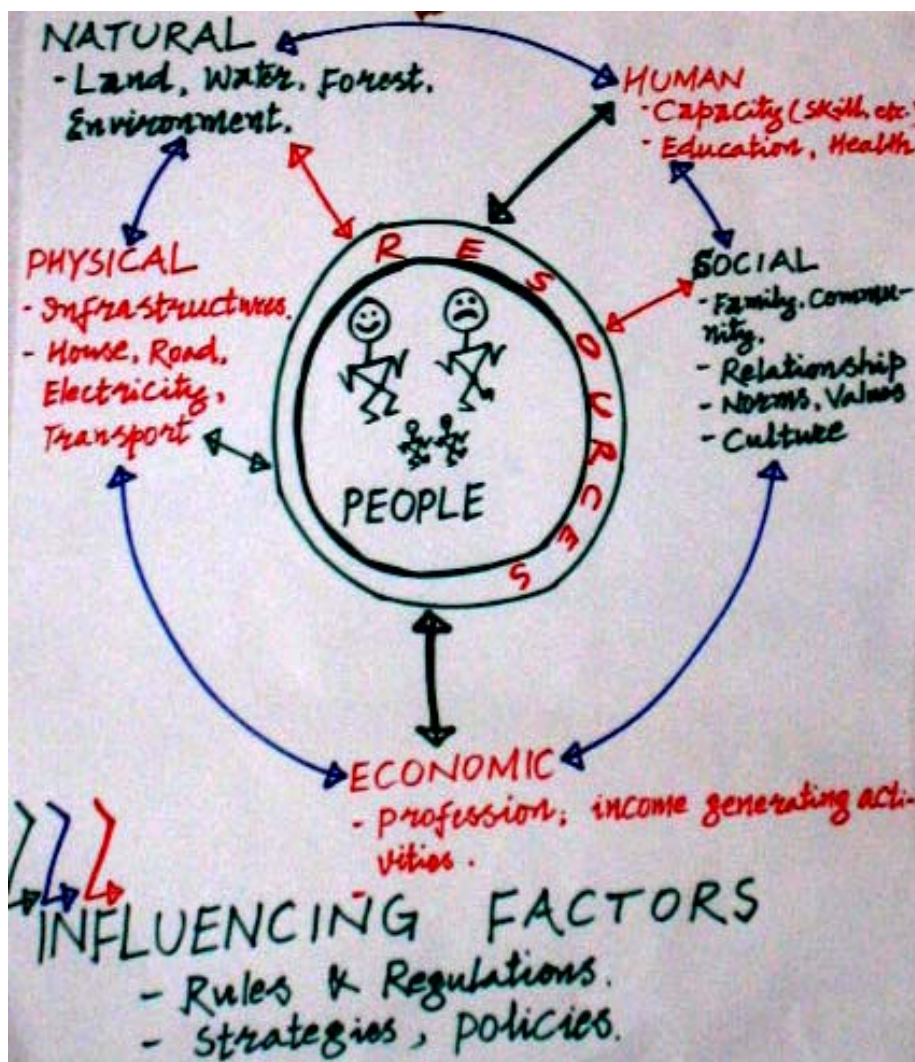
<sup>2</sup> Gramin Vikas Trust, an NGO partner of STREAM in India



When we returned to our workplaces, we began disseminating the learning from the workshop among our associates. In India, officials with the Jharkhand State Fisheries Department have continued learning about the livelihoods of rural poor people involved in aquatic resources management. They have also been collecting stories of “significant change” from fishers and farmers and sharing these with people in other areas.

As stated by Mr Ravi Shankar, the District Fisheries Officer from Ranchi, Jharkhand, “After attending the workshop our approaches have changed. The workshop has influenced us a lot, particularly when we interacted with our counterparts from Nepal. We learned so many things about livelihoods approaches.”

For their part, the Nepal team indicated their intentions to share the ideas they had gained with colleagues at home, and with rural communities through broadcasts over the radio programs of the Agriculture Information and Communication Center. They expressed an interest in making ‘livelihoods’ a regular program of the Department of Fisheries over the following year and to conduct at least one pilot livelihoods study.



What do we need to learn about to understand how people live?  
(from the Eastern Nepal working group)

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# Reflections on the Role of Livelihoods Approaches and Analysis in Lao PDR<sup>3</sup>

*Phanthavong Vongsamphanh and Graham Haylor*

## **A STREAM First in Lao PDR**

In March 2004, the Lao PDR Government's Department of Livestock and Fisheries, the NACA-STREAM Initiative and FAO organized a Workshop on Livelihoods Approaches and Analysis in Vientiane. The workshop was the first STREAM event in Lao PDR, with colleagues coming to participate from Vientiane and many provinces throughout the country. The week was spent exploring the complex nature of communities and groups with whom we work and sharing understandings about how best to learn about their livelihoods.

A central element of the workshop was a visit to Nam Houm, where participants carried out activities to learn about that community's livelihoods. In addition to gaining information about Nam Houm itself, participants also had important insights into how best to conduct livelihoods analyses. Outputs from workshops in the Philippines and India (with Nepal) included a draft outline of a "Guide for Livelihoods Analysis", which was modified for Lao PDR following the workshop. The Guide outline incorporated lessons learnt from the community visit to Nam Houm and would continue to evolve through the series of further Workshops on Livelihoods Approaches and Analysis.



*Social mapping during livelihoods analysis discussions in Nam Houm, near Vientiane*

## **Understanding and Reflecting on Livelihoods in the Lao PDR Context**

In Lao PDR – especially at the district level – many people working with the Department of Livestock and Fisheries are also members of the farming and fishing communities in which they operate as government officials. This gives them clear insights into the lives and livelihoods of people they aim to support. The concept of putting people at the center of development efforts is intuitively correct to many. For them, it is already the way that they work. The livelihoods analysis framework discussed in the workshop simply helped to give structure and rigor to their existing work processes.

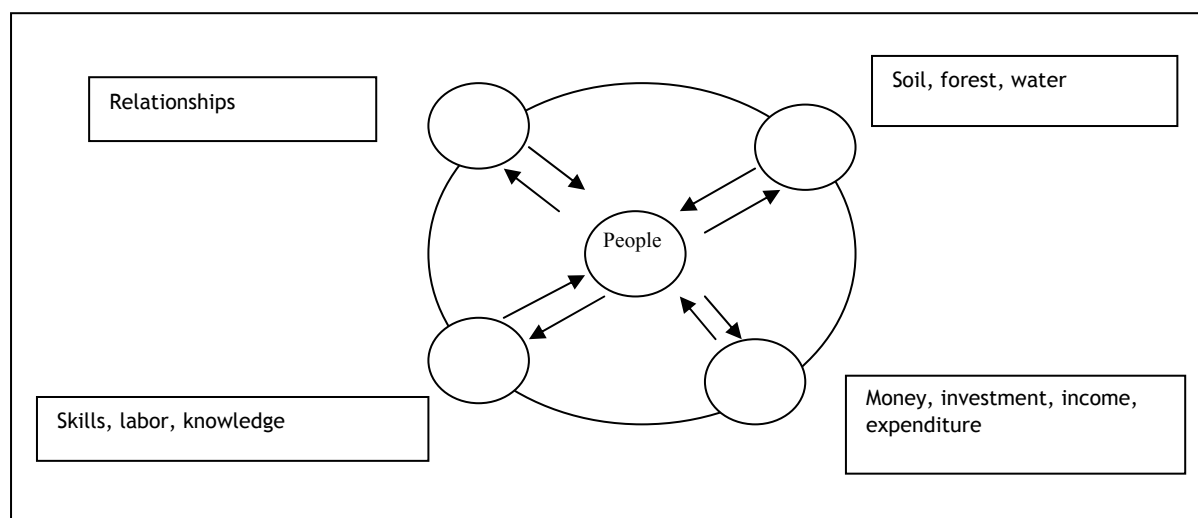
Dr Singkham Phonvisay, the Fisheries Director, underlined the importance of fisheries in Lao people's livelihoods and some of the changes driving the need to support sustainable management:

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<sup>3</sup> People's Democratic Republic

The history of Lao people's livelihoods almost belongs to aquatic resources. But now that the population is increasing, modern fishing gears are being introduced and finding a wide range of uses. At the same time, aquatic animals in nature are decreasing and are already scarce. People's livelihoods systems have not improved yet; they still belong to natural resources. So we should have guidelines on aquatic resources management to direct people toward sustainability in their livelihoods.

Reflecting on approaches and analysis in the Lao context, people felt that it would take time to gain knowledge of livelihoods tools and understand the ways to ask questions, how to observe better and how to analyze the information. In particular, many people wished to improve their ability to report back, making use of the flexible ways that are possible with livelihoods analysis and interpretation, which was somewhat new. Another exciting aspect of the approach was the scope to find ways to encourage people in communities to talk for a long time, to become friends and build good relationships and to be able to really find out about people's lives.



*One working group's description of livelihoods*

Ms Nouhak Liabvixay, Project Coordinator with the Aquaculture Improvement and Extension Project in Vientiane City, said:

One of the great things about PRA tools is that if you explain the tool to a group they can use it and they will be in control, not a questioner. Questionnaires seem formal and people can be intimidated. When people become involved in a task, it becomes more informal. So the information might be more detailed and more comprehensive. Also questionnaires are rigid and PRA tools sometimes allow us to get new information we had not anticipated.

Mr Somphanh Champengxay, the STREAM National Coordinator in Lao PDR, said:

Livelihoods analysis is not easy. Specifically for the staff working in remote areas, and working with rural people, it's difficult to understand their livelihoods. A clear understanding of how to analyze the livelihoods of people in different areas is key to the strategy of the Government of Lao PDR, which would like to improve the livelihoods of poor people.

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## After the Workshop on Livelihoods Approaches and Analysis

*Khin Maung Soe, Aye Aye Zaw, Nilar Kyawe and Myant Thar Htun*

### **The Workshop, Understandings and Follow-up Activities**

The DoF/NACA-STREAM/FAO Workshop on Livelihood Approaches and Analysis was conducted in Yangon in May 2004. The eighteen participants were from Yangon, Mandalay, Saging, Ayarwaddy and Bago Divisions and Southern Shan State. The workshop helped people to build common understandings of livelihoods, livelihoods approaches and livelihoods analysis. In the beginning, participants interpreted livelihoods in several ways:

- Means of satisfying daily needs including food, clothes and shelter
- People work in different ways to earn income for the fulfillment of such needs
- Solving problems and constraints for the requirements of daily life in terms of food, shelter, clothes, education and other social affairs. Happiness and sadness that we experience are part of livelihoods
- The struggling of people to fulfill their daily needs

By the end of the workshop, there were significant changes in understandings of livelihoods, for example, from two participants:

In the beginning, I thought that livelihoods in general is the daily life of people. Now I understand that it is an outcome of the interrelations among people, resources and policy. Also I realize that understanding the real livelihoods of people could lead to proper planning for further development of a community.

I thought that livelihoods was only related to wealth, education and ability to achieve business opportunities. Through the lessons learnt from the workshop and community visit, my understanding has changed into the concept that livelihoods are different in accordance with the interactions of many factors including desire, work opportunities and availability of resources.

In an effort to improve livelihoods through aquatic resources management, the workshop decided on several follow-up activities relating to capacity-building and information:

1. Form a livelihoods study team
2. Identify priority study areas with communities engaged with fisheries
3. Collect data, acquire information and record fish landings focusing on fishing place, time, species catch, fishing gears and implements used, and processing and marketing
4. Analyze the data and information to understand the livelihoods of people involved in fisheries and related activities
5. Analyze how fisheries activities provide livelihoods in different areas of the country
6. Evaluate fisheries resources and their sustainable capacity to support people's livelihoods, especially in areas with limited resources

### **An Effort at Livelihoods Analysis**

The livelihoods study team – called the Ayarwaddy Team – initiated a study of leasable fisheries in Ayarwaddy Division (lower Myanmar). The team's five members were from the Department of Fisheries (head office and provincial) and the Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF). The team went to Duya Inn leasable fisheries to learn about resources capacity and use, how resources support the livelihoods of local village people, and fisheries management issues in the sustainability of the leasable fisheries.

Duya Inn is in Hinthada, Ayarwaddy Division, adjacent to the Ayarwaddy River and connected with streams and creeks. Ayarwaddy Dam also serves as a pathway for fish to migrate through

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the fishery site and the river. The water surface area is about 808 acres. At the center of the site, there is an emerging piece of land of about 259 acres which creates a streamline and upwelling, supporting primary production in the fishery.

The auction value of this leasable fisheries increased 38.2% over five years, from 187,200 Kyats (about US\$ 187) in 1999-2000 to 711,600 Kyats (about US\$ 711) in 2004-05. The total catch record declined by 39%, from about 300 metric tons in 1999-2000 to about 117 metric tons in 2003-04.

The township fisheries officer said that before 1991 there were about 23 local species including three major carps, three snakeheads, five catfish, four minor carps, and others such as climbing perch, spiny eel, glass fish, feather back, barb, loaches, garfish and eel. However, after 2000, most of the catches are carp species. The fisheries lessee is responsible for replenishing carp seed into the fisheries water, worth 1-5% of the lease value every year. The records of annual fish seed replenished varied from 1.87 million in 2001-02, to 2.49 million in 2002-03, and 1.06 million in 2003-04.

Fishing is conducted with drift nets, dredge nets, cast nets and long lines. The fishery area is managed with 33 permanent employees. Fishing is also done in cooperation with 22 local fishing partners from the local villages. The lessee buys back their catch at 40 Kyats per viss (US\$ 0.25 per 10 kilograms). Local fisher partners earn 800 to 1,000 Kyats (US\$ 0.80-1.00) and even up to 2,000 Kyats (US\$ 2.00) per day. The leasable fishery provides fish protein for about 22,000 people in seven local villages. It also provides water for growing crops on about 764 acres in summer.



*Throwing a cast net*

Before 2000, dense aquatic plants, weeds and reeds were in the area.

Only a few or none of these plants have been seen recently. Jute plants grow and dip their stems in water along the perimeter for some weeks every year. Inorganic fertilizers and pesticides used in agriculture in the surroundings flow into fisheries areas. Recorded fish deaths were 200,000 in 2002 and 250,000 in 2004. It was learned that water quality degradation associated with fish death usually occurs in September and October every year.

To compensate for the decline in the catch, the practice of replenishing carp seed into the fishery water seems to increase production. However, this cannot substitute for the loss of indigenous species.

Duya Inn leasable fishery provides fish protein and supports the livelihoods of fishers and farmers. However, it is being challenged by water quality, increased integration of resources users and a decline of the fisheries resource itself. There is an urgent need to understand the relationship of the local environment and its fisheries resources and to assess the benefit of annual carp seeding in the fishery.

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## The Relevance of Livelihoods Approaches in Yunnan, China

*Susan Li and William Savage*

### **In Mengzi and Jinfuzhuangxiaozhai**

The fifth and last of the series of NACA-STREAM/FAO Workshops on Livelihoods Approaches and Analysis took place in Mengzi, Yunnan, in September 2004. There were 30 participants from seven prefectures. One of the highlights of the week was the community visit to Jinfuzhuangxiaozhai Village, a community of the Ha Ni ethnic group.

#### **Participant Perspectives**

This particular workshop ended with each participant responding to a question about how they saw the relevance of livelihoods approaches to their work. In their own words (with their home prefecture indicated) ...

Before developing a project for fisheries or aquaculture we should look at the overall community resources and take aquaculture as an integral part of the overall development. The strategy should look at natural and human resources, and compare if these can match together. If they do not, we could have a special extension program to develop human resources in tune with the natural resources. (Hong He)



*Members of a Ha Ni household in Jinfuzhuangxiaozhai Village*

Before when we provided assistance to farmers we would just listen to their requests. This framework and tools gives us (and them) a method to understand their real situation. It will take time to make use of these tools part of the routine work of the government. (Gejiu)

These tools help us to understand the situation, and also to understand the priority needs for development. I come from Xishuangbanna where the aquatic resources are rich. We have not done systematic analysis like this, and hope we can incorporate this into our work. (Xishuangbanna)

Before, our survey method was based on the objectives of the agency that decided what we need to know about the local community. These tools give us the opportunity to understand the real situation. We hope we can make use of these tools and have more opportunities to learn about these methods and share experiences. (Diqing)

Before, I have done some rural livelihoods surveys, but now I realize what we have done was shallow, and not organized. There are a lot of things to be improved, e.g., the indicators and parameters, and the information we collect needs to be further expanded. (Lijiang)

In China, we should use the livelihoods framework and analysis to have a holistic approach. Right now our fisheries contribution to agriculture is about 5%. Before, our main target was to increase the share of fish in the overall income of the farmers. Now after this workshop, we understand that a 'livelihood' is a whole thing and we need to look at things in a different way, not just from the perspective of fisheries. The approach is systematic and this was previously neglected. Our method has been broken into pieces and scattered here and there and we could not "see the wood for the trees". (Hong He)



*Catching carp in the high rice terraces of Jinfuzhuangxiaozhai*

If we make use of this method in surveys, this could provide a basis for government agencies to do better planning, to help the agencies to do better for local communities. We hope that our county will be part of a network for information and experience sharing, and we will look into the possibility for different types of assistance. (Gejiu)

I used to think about livelihood in a narrow way and now my thinking is much broader and more

comprehensive. Together with the tools, I have a better understanding and capacity to understand the rural situation. We just learnt as students the natural sciences, but this holistic approach also incorporates social science, which is good and will help me to work better in rural areas. In future, I will purposely look into the livelihoods framework concept and prepare myself to do things. It's a foreign experience to be utilized for Chinese conditions. I look forward to be part of this network and share experiences with others. (Hong He)

Through the livelihoods approach and analysis we would have a better understanding, and could better formulate programs to help poor people living in rural areas. This is good training for our fisheries staff in the province. It will give us the opportunity to prepare ourselves to deal with rural poor communities better and more efficiently. The workshop also makes us feel more responsibility to help our rural poor people. Definitely, we often have to conduct feasibility studies in grassroots situations and conduct evaluations. These methods will help us to do that kind of job much better and give us the chance to develop farmer-centered projects, the proposals for which would allow policy-makers to understand the real situation better. (Kunming)

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## About the STREAM Journal

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### Editorial Team

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### Purpose

The *STREAM Journal* is published quarterly to promote participation, communication and policies that support the livelihoods of poor aquatic resources users in Asia-Pacific, and to build links within the aquatic resources management and other sectors across the region. The *STREAM Journal* covers issues related to people whose livelihoods involve aquatic resources management, especially people with limited resources, and government, non-governmental and international practitioners who work with them in communities. Such issues include learning, conflict management, information and communications technologies, aquatic resources management, legislation, livelihoods, gender, participation, stakeholders, policy and communications.

Another equally important purpose of the *STREAM Journal* is to provide an opportunity for seldom-raised voices to be heard and represented in a professional publication that is practical yet somewhat academic. The contents of the *STREAM Journal* should not be taken as reflecting the views of any particular organization or agency, but as statements by individuals based on their own experience. While authors are responsible for the contents of their articles, STREAM recognizes and takes responsibility for any editorial bias and oversights.

### Distribution

The *STREAM Journal* is available in three formats:

- An electronic PDF version which is printed and distributed by the STREAM Communications Hubs in each country
- A version which can be accessed and downloaded in PDF format from the Virtual Library on the STREAM Website at [www.streaminitiative.org](http://www.streaminitiative.org), and
- A printed version which is distributed by the NACA Secretariat.

### Contribution

The *STREAM Journal* encourages the contribution of articles of interest to aquatic resources users and people who work with them. The *STREAM Journal* also supports community-level colleagues to document their own experiences in these pages.

Articles should be written in plain English and no more than 1,000 words long (about two A4 pages of single-spaced text).

Contributions can be made to William Savage, *STREAM Journal* Editor, at <[savage@loxinfo.co.th](mailto:savage@loxinfo.co.th)>. For more information, contact Graham Haylor, STREAM Director, at <[ghaylor@loxinfo.co.th](mailto:ghaylor@loxinfo.co.th)>.



## About STREAM

Support to Regional Aquatic Resources Management (STREAM) is an Initiative designed within the five-year Work Program cycle of the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA). It aims to support agencies and institutions to:

- Utilize existing and emerging information more effectively
- Better understand poor people's livelihoods, and
- Enable poor people to exert greater influence over policies and processes that impact on their lives.

STREAM will do this by supporting the development of policies and processes of mediating institutions, and building capacity to:

- Identify aquatic resources management issues impacting on the livelihoods of poor people
- Monitor and evaluate different management approaches
- Extend information, and
- Network within and between sectors and countries.

The STREAM Initiative is based around partnerships, involving at the outset a coalition of founding partners (AusAID, DFID, FAO and VSO) supporting NACA. It has adopted an inclusive approach, reaching out to link stakeholders engaged in aquatic resources management and supporting them to influence the Initiative's design, implementation and management.

The partnerships' work is coordinated in each Country Office through a National Coordinator (a senior national colleague agreed with the government) and a Communications Hub Manager (a full-time national colleague supported in the first two years by STREAM), and linking a range of national stakeholders. The Communications Hub is provided with hardware, software, training, information-technology support, and networking and human resources support, and links national stakeholders through an internet-based virtual regional network.

National coordination is guided by an annually-reviewed Country Strategy Paper (CSP) drawn up by the Coordinator and Hub Manager in consultation with stakeholders with whom they regularly network. A CSP identifies key issues, highlights regional linkages, proposes and prioritizes key actions, and seeks funding for these from STREAM and elsewhere (with STREAM support).

The STREAM Regional Office (at the NACA Secretariat in Bangkok) directs the Initiative, provides a regional coordination function, and funds and manages cross-cutting activities dealing with livelihoods, institutions, policy development and communications, the four outcomes-based STREAM themes.

STREAM implementation is an iterative process, initially operating in Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Yunnan, China, and expanding within Asia-Pacific where opportunities exist to tackle poverty and promote good governance, as experience is gained, lessons are learned, impact is demonstrated and additional funding is secured. STREAM's communications strategy aims to increase impact by ensuring that existing knowledge and expertise inform ongoing change processes around the region, and that the lessons learned are disseminated throughout Asia-Pacific. The *STREAM Journal* and the STREAM website are components of this strategy.

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