

**Symposium on Participatory Approaches to Reservoir Fisheries Management:
Issues, Challenges and Policies**

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**Session I: Community-based fisheries management; experience in other
countries**

Presentation on STREAM Vietnam's Experience

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Abstract

Established in early 2002, STREAM Vietnam has so far attained a number of good experiences and lessons in using participatory approaches for its work. The Country Office has been able to link to a wide range of stakeholders, and is working hard to build close relationships amongst them, so that institutional entities can better support the livelihoods of poor aquatic resources users, and support disadvantaged groups of people to improve their living standards by themselves.

Reservoir fisheries and co-management are at early stage in Vietnam, but in certain places and industries co-management has brought about successful results by involving proactive participation of communities. Situated on the same continent and having many similarities, the interaction in agriculture and fisheries sector between Vietnam and Sri Lanka has brought the two countries closer. Being members of the STREAM *family*, there are great opportunities for exchange of experiences and lessons towards sustainable management of reservoir resources.

Key words: Participation, PRA, strategic planning, communication, institutions, M and E.

Participatory Approaches to Reservoir Fisheries Management

1. Introduction of STREAM Vietnam

STREAM Vietnam was established in early 2002. Besides the four themes of livelihoods, institutions, policy and communications, it has strong emphasis on supporting the Sustainable aquaculture for Poverty Alleviation (SAPA) strategy of the Ministry of Fisheries.

STREAM Vietnam's organizational structure is a collective one:

- The STREAM National Coordinator is member of SAPA Steering Committee.
- The STREAM Assistant National Coordinator is Vice Director of the National Aquaculture and Fisheries Extension Centre (NAFEC).
- The STREAM Communications Hub is a part of the Ministry of Fisheries.

2. Participation in strategic planning

STREAM Vietnam has highlighted the made concerted efforts towards better support for poor aquatic resource users. In the meantime, grassroots participation is emphasized as a core approach.

A Participatory Approach has been applied in the following ways:

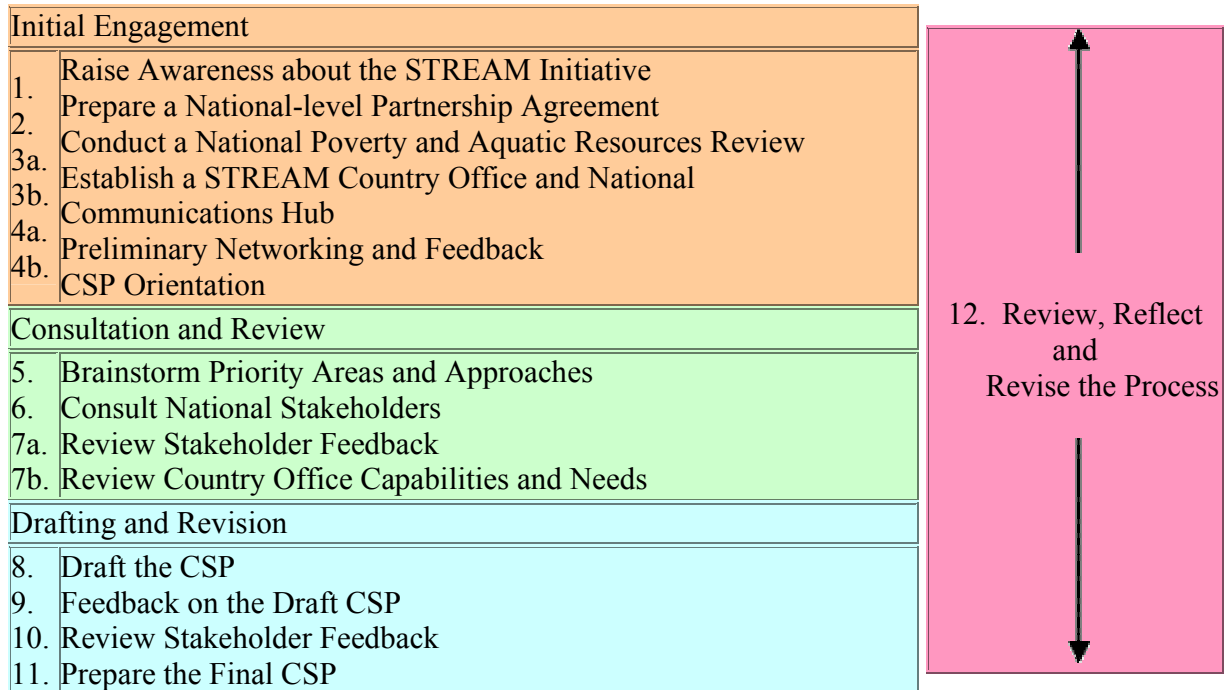
- Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques are used whilst conducting baseline surveys for communities and also to feed into the preparation of a National Poverty and Aquatic Resource Review (PARR), which help to clarify where people who are poor depend on aquatic resources management forms an important part of the Country Strategy Paper (CSP). (The PARR and CSP are prepared every three to four years by each STREAM Country Partner). The STREAM Initiative runs workshops to provide local officials with PRA techniques and tools (in Vietnam these were conducted in Quang Tri and Thai Nguyen Provinces), then shares experiences with other provinces, projects and NGOs (in Vietnam this was conducted in Long An Province).
- A participatory approach to strategic planning was use in the conduct of a National Stakeholder Workshop. Stakeholders were invited to discuss their work and asked to give their ideas on: Who STREAM should work with, the existence of similar interventions, any overlaps and difficulties; and link and solutions.
- After the CSP draft was finished, PRA was again harnessed for second round of consultation involving internal and external consultations on the draft strategy. In April 2004, the final version of CSP was published; this now guides STREAM Vietnam in its work in the three – four years before next revision.
- PRA is used for getting to understand communities through touch-base visits and associated with specific elements of STREAM work in Vietnam, such as developing strategies for APEC economies to combat destructive fishing practices, or assessing the role of people who are poor, in the production and trade in seafood products with Europe.

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The "CSP Process" is a three-phase process of 12 steps. The phases are:

- Initial Engagement
- Consultation and Review
- Drafting and Revision

The steps are:



A diagram describing the process is reproduced in Figure 1.

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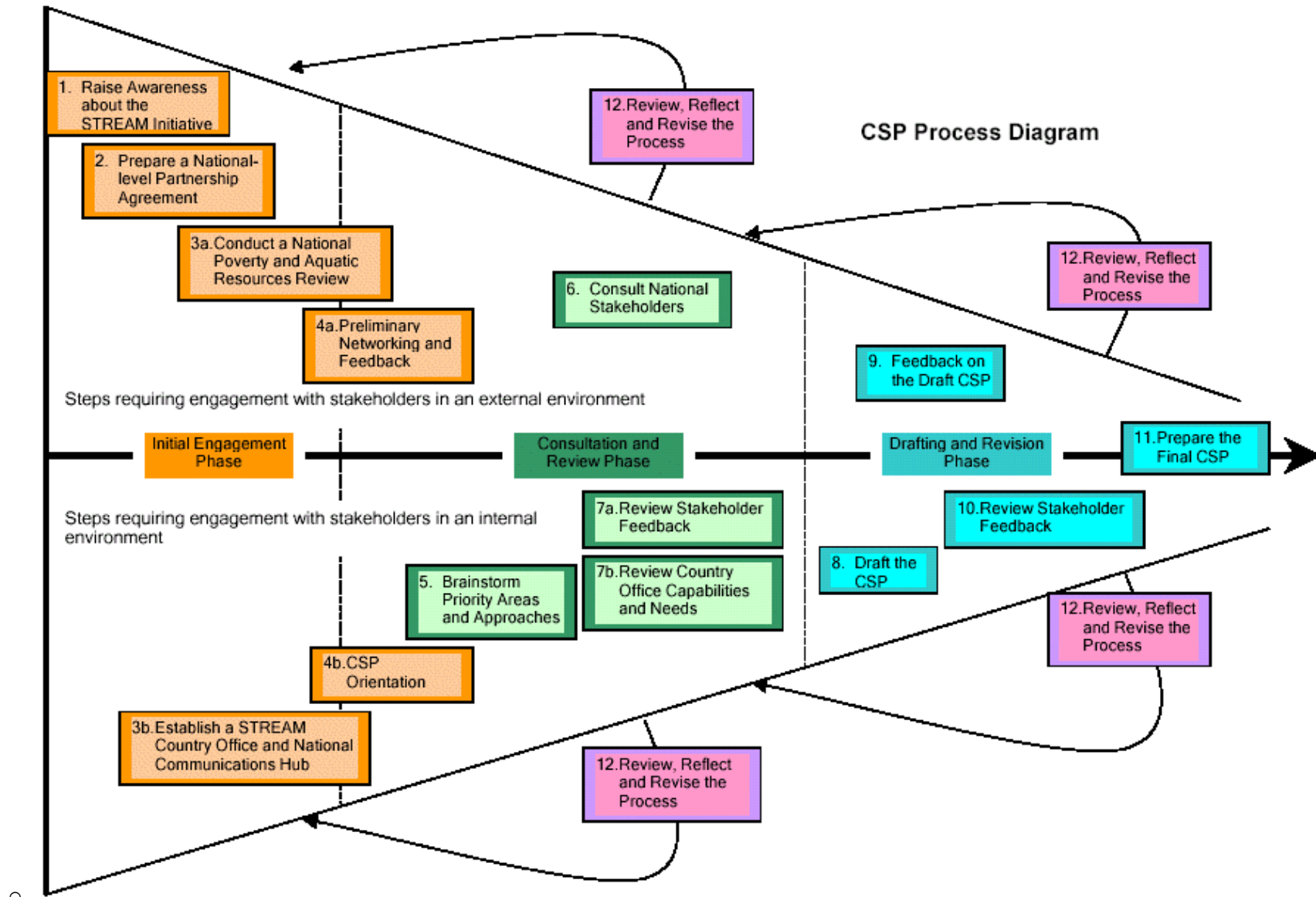


Figure 1: The STREAM Country Strategy Paper Planning Process

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3. Participatory approaches in an institutional context

The STREAM Initiative is not a donor entity though it builds links with donors, including uniting different countries in common approaches for which donor support can be sought. For example, Vietnam links with the Philippines and Indonesia in work which supports fishers around coral reef environments, which are common to all three countries. Similarly, through the STREAM Initiative, Vietnam links with institutional stakeholders in ten other countries, to participate in discussion and joint working, sharing approaches and jointly developing new ones. Not as a separate project but as a communication hub located right in the heart of the most relevant institution in each countries. STREAM links to as many stakeholders as possible (see figure 2).

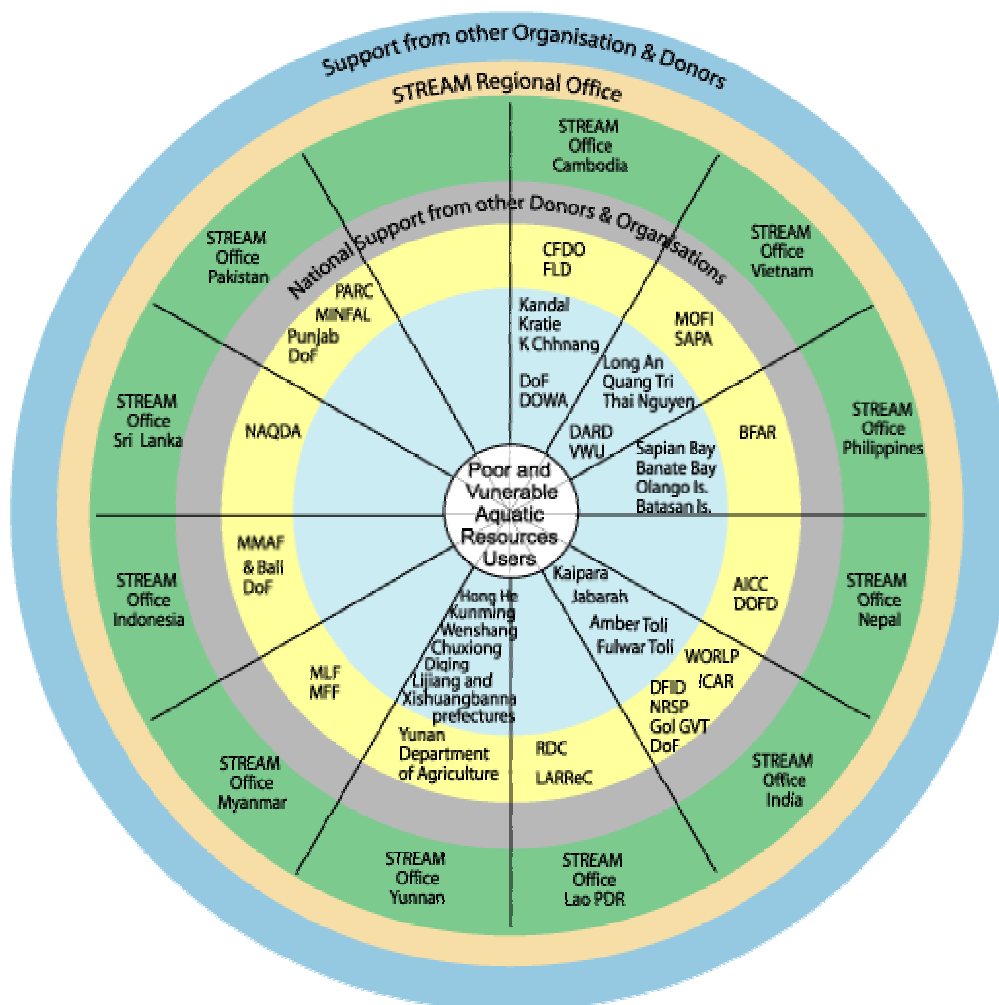


Figure 2: The STREAM Initiative stakeholder diagram

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In Vietnam, STREAM:

- Links with NGOs' and their vast experience in rural development – a vision sometimes neglected by government institutions in Vietnam.
- Aims to build solidarity among government agencies, private sector organizations, NGOs and the international community
- Builds different working groups involving the most competent and suitable stakeholders for specific programs/projects. (E.g. A four country policy planning project commissioned by Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC), a European Union funded project, headed by Stirling University, Scotland called PAPUSSA. A project implemented by Poseidon Aquatic Resource Management Ltd (UK), the Network of Aquaculture Centers in Asia-Pacific (NACA) and the STREAM Initiative in partnership with stakeholders in the seafood and marine ornamental fish trade in Asia and Europe supported by the European Community's Poverty Reduction Effectiveness Program (EC-PREP)).

As one of the first Countries Partners of the regional STREAM Initiative, STREAM Vietnam has been mentoring Communications Hub Managers in Nepal, Indonesia, India and the Philippines in strategic planning at dawn of STREAM presence in those countries.

4. Participatory approach in communication

The Government of Vietnam has recently placed particular emphasis on the importance of effective aquatic resources management for poverty alleviation. A great number of national and international activities, projects and organizations currently operate within the aquatic resources management sector in Vietnam. In a country with limited resources, the importance of efficient and effective information exchange among stakeholders within the sector, and between sectors and with aquatic resources users, is increasingly being recognized.

In support of information exchange, in November 2003, an Information Access Survey was conducted to provide a basis for STREAM Vietnam's communications strategy. This is part of a series of surveys supporting national and regional communications, which will eventually cover all eleven STREAM Partner Countries. The survey results look at how remote communities receive information, and how they wish to receive information, as well as assessing communications mechanisms which are currently in place. The results have been published widely shared.

STREAM publications are translated at the Communication Hubs by trained Hub Managers, with the requisite skills and background in communications, aquatic resource management, and development contexts to make them useful and understandable to as many stakeholders as possible.

As well as publishing its own STREAM Journal in English and local languages (ISSN 1685-4012) the initiative works hand in hand with publishers and mass-media agencies, in Vietnam this includes: the Fisheries Magazine, FICEN, Fisheries Extension Bulletin, NAFEC and the Agriculture Extension Bulletin, of the Youth Union.

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Based on its findings and recommendations from the IAS survey, STREAM have been requested, and strongly supported by IFEP and the DANIDA FSPS Program, to take the lead role in setting up a database of stakeholders. The database will be shared nationally, regionally and internationally through internet. A web-site is being jointly developed together with a discussion forum function to facilitate discussions among stakeholders.

5. Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (M and E) system

Following two regional workshops and considerable planning a self-evaluation approach has been introduced widely to STREAM stakeholders. STREAM Country Offices and the Regional Office evaluate effectiveness and efficiency against an indicator based M and E system focusing on process related indicators of outcomes and impacts. This is complemented by a system of collection and evaluation of Significant Change Stories from all parts of the initiative, which capture expected as well as unanticipated changes along with other feedback and responses from stakeholders (by word-of-mouth, telephone, e-mail, letter, etc).

Experience sharing is often carried out with Communications Hub Manager of STREAM in other countries and twice yearly the system is formally interrogated to inform decisions regarding stakeholders and activities.

6. How does our work relate to reservoir management

Freshwater reservoirs cover a large total area of Vietnam, especially in Thac Ba and Hoa Binh in the North and Lak in Central Highlands. In Vietnam, reservoir fisheries have not been developed until recent years. There is currently limited awareness of reservoir fisheries management in Vietnam. However, there are great interest and potential to build people's capacity in aquatic resource management in reservoirs

At the same time, co-management is a new approach, which has been introduced recently and successfully applied in shrimp sector.

7. Potential for co-operation between Vietnam and Sri Lanka

The two countries both belong to the developing world community in Asia on almost the same latitude, where the incidence of poverty is rather high. They each have rich technical and resource potential for fisheries development. There used to be much interaction between agriculture and fisheries experts of the two countries: through UNDP VIE/98/009 Mountainous Aquaculture Project, Mr Amaratine Yakaputiagi – the Sri Lankan AIT fisheries expert.

GTZ is working actively in Vietnam, under its Social Forestry Project along Hoa Binh reservoir and Vietnam and Sri Lanka have now become country partners within the regional initiative of STREAM, which is a good channel for information sharing. For example I am already working closely with Atula Senaratine of NAQDA and six other Communications

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Hub Manager to enhance the development impact of process tools piloted already in Eastern India. Through the STREAM Initiative lessons, are already be jointly and regularly documented and exchanged.

In Appendix 1 is a selection of recent STREAM Vietnam publications available at www.streaminitiative.org.

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Appendix 1: Selected STREAM Vietnam Publications

Country Strategy Paper

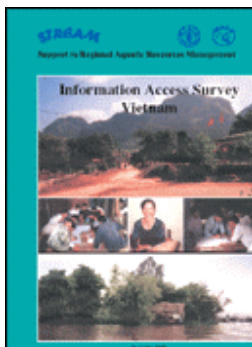


[205 KB]

Prepared in consultation with a range of national stakeholders, a CSP identifies relevant national poverty and aquatic resources issues, examines policy and institutional environments, establishes key objectives, proposes implementation approaches and highlights partnerships with national and regional stakeholders.

Country Strategy Paper (CSP), STREAM Vietnam, April 2004.

Information Access Survey



[787 KB]

Felsing M and Nguyen S H (2003) Information Access Survey: Vietnam.

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The STREAM Initiative. Support to Regional Aquatic Resources Management. Learning Workshop on Livelihoods Analysis Report. Long An, Vietnam, 19-20 November 2002.

English [455 KB]

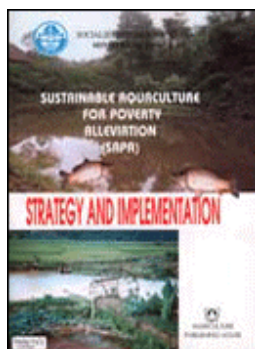
Vietnamese [1.42 MB]



Aquatic Resources Management Program (2000) Poverty and Aquatic Resources in Vietnam: An Assessment of the Role and Potential of Aquatic Resource Management in Poor People's Livelihoods. DFID-SEA ARMP: Bangkok.

English [207 KB]

Vietnamese [950 KB]



[2.94 MB] * Caution: Large file size *

Ministry of Fisheries (2001) Sustainable Aquaculture for Poverty Alleviation (SAPA) Strategy and Implementation. Ministry of Fisheries: Hanoi.



[5.35 MB] * Caution: Large file size *

Ministry of Fisheries (2001) Sustainable Aquaculture for Poverty Alleviation (SAPA) Strategy and Implementation. (In Vietnamese). Available from the Ministry of Fisheries: Hanoi.