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USAID Mekong Adaptation and Resilience to Climate Change

Work Plan Year Four

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USAID Mekong Adaptation and Resilience to Climate Change (USAID Mekong ARCC)

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Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| INTRODUCTION | 4 |
| Approach | 5 |
| Year Three Summary | 6 |
| USAID MEKONG ARCC TASKS | 8 |
| Task 1: Regional Knowledge Platform & Knowledge Center | 9 |
| Develop and disseminate project knowledge products | 9 |
| Website knowledge products and information linked to existing platforms..... | 9 |
| Strengthen engagement with media | 10 |
| Support national government and regional platform efforts to disseminate climate change adaptation information to relevant regional actors..... | 10 |
| Task 1 Key Results | 10 |
| Task 2: Climate Change Impact and Adaptation Study | 11 |
| Disseminate approved Climate Study and Theme Reports | 11 |
| Draft and submit articles on Study results to peer reviewed journals for publication and dissemination..... | 11 |
| Task 2 Key Results | 11 |
| Task 3: Ecosystem and Community-based Adaptation Initiatives | 12 |
| Undertake decision making phase of Community Adaptation Initiatives implementation in Cambodia | 13 |
| Set priorities for enhancing the climate resilience of community development plans | 14 |
| Implement Adaptation Activities | 15 |
| Management oversight to ensure implementation of field activities meets timetable and intended outcomes..... | 15 |
| Task 3 Key Results | 15 |
| Task 4: Valuing Ecosystem Services for the Lower Mekong River Basin | 15 |
| Approval of values at risk analysis report..... | 16 |
| Complete a set of four country-specific guidelines for valuing ecosystem services..... | 16 |
| Task 4 Key Results | 16 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Task 5: Scaling-up successful approaches | 16 |
| Support climate change initiatives of regional platform institutions..... | 17 |
| Collect and disseminate good practices, lessons and technical methods for scale-up to adaptation implementers, governments and regional platforms | 17 |
| Facilitate uptake of project's model and methods for community adaptation and successful technical solutions | 17 |
| Initiate development of pre-feasibility report for target countries | 18 |
| Task 5 Key Results | 18 |
| MANAGEMENT APPROACH | 18 |
| Monitoring and Evaluation | 20 |
| Annex 1 – USAID Mekong ARCC Log Frame..... | 22 |

MAPS AND GRAPHICS

| | |
|---|----|
| Graphic 1: Top-down Science meets Bottom-up Knowledge Adaptation Approach | 7 |
| Graphic 2: Community Adaptation Decision Making and Implementation Design | 8 |
| Map 1: USAID Mekong ARCC Community Adaptation Initiatives Sites | 12 |
| Graphic 4: USAID Mekong ARCC Org Chart—Year Four | 19 |

INTRODUCTION

The USAID Mekong Adaptation and Resilience to Climate Change (USAID Mekong ARCC) project is a five-year program (2011-2016) funded by the USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA) in Bangkok. The project is implemented by DAI in partnership with the International Centre for Environmental Management (ICEM), World Resources Institute (WRI), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Asian Management and Development Institute (AMDI), and the World Food Programme (WFP). The project focuses on identifying the environmental, economic and social effects of climate change in the Lower Mekong Basin (LMB), and on assisting highly exposed and vulnerable rural populations in ecologically sensitive areas increase their ability to adapt to climate change impacts on water resources, agricultural and aquatic systems, livestock, ecosystems, and livelihood options.

The impetus for USAID Mekong ARCC stems from the launching of the Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI). Announced by the US Secretary of State and foreign ministers from each of the LMB countries in 2009, the LMI emphasizes close cooperation between the United States and governments of Thailand, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam to support regionally sustainable and environmentally responsible growth.

Flowing from the upper watersheds of Lao to the delta in Vietnam, the LMB connects and provides ecosystem services critical to livelihoods, food security and welfare of the basin's more than 60 million inhabitants. Yet the connectivity of the basin also links Lao PDR, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam to transboundary climate and development threats. USAID Mekong ARCC works in each of the four LMB countries in recognition that each has its own national climate policies and economic and development priorities, and that communities are structured and function differently in each as a reflection of the respective nations' unique laws, history and culture. Lessons and experiences drawn from the community level are feed up to local and national governments, and regional actors working at the transboundary level to help ensure they are shared across the Basin.

The **primary goal** of USAID Mekong ARCC is: *Increase adaptation capacity and resilience of communities to the negative impacts of climate change.*

Objectives of the project include:

- Increase human and institutional capacity to develop and implement climate change adaptation plans and strategies
- Strengthen policies, tools, methodologies and practices for ecosystem services valuation and climate resiliency
- Demonstrate and scale-up model actions for integrated approaches to climate change adaptation
- Support and sustain regional learning networks to share and replicate best practices

USAID Mekong ARCC is comprised of five major tasks technical tasks in addition to overarching program management. These are:

1. Regional Platform Partner and Knowledge Center;
2. Climate Change Impact and Adaptation Study;
3. Ecosystem and Community-based Adaptation Initiatives;
4. Valuing Ecosystem Services in Economic Planning for the Lower Mekong River Basin, and;
5. Scaling-Up Successful Approaches.

USAID Mekong ARCC is headquartered in Bangkok with project activities carried out in Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Lao PDR.

Approach

The USAID Mekong ARCC project was designed to advance the first generation of climate adaptation programming by identifying and applying methods to incorporate the best available climate science into community level planning. Like any new frontier, the climate adaptation landscape is filled with experimental methods and models that together seek to clarify *how* people can address tension between the uncertainty of climate science and the need for action. At one end of the spectrum, scientists and researchers are generating downscaled climate models, while at the other end, development practitioners are building awareness of how weather variability impacts community assets and livelihoods.

While these approaches provide a jumping off point for adaptation programming, they do not generate a *cohesive and replicable adaptation program template* that incorporates weather and climate information in to community planning to address current vulnerability and future threats from climate change. USAID Mekong ARCC provides an *Integrated Adaptation Decision Making and Implementation* design (see graphic on page 8) contributes to filling this void; connecting cutting edge **climate science** research with community (and expert) derived technical solutions for strengthening livelihood resilience in the face of climate change. This **adaptation action** phase of the project targets the incorporation of current weather information and climate projections into community planning to address both near term vulnerability and future threats from climate change. We anticipate the next generation of adaptation programs will begin to converge around a subset of best practice design models, and that once the USAID Mekong ARCC *'proof of concept'* is fully field tested it will serve as one of these applicable models.

Prior to reaching the current field implementation stage of the project, the USAID Mekong ARCC project focused resources on the **scientific research**, which yielded a first-of-a-kind downscaled climate model that illustrates highly threatened and valuable agricultural crops, livestock, and fisheries, and natural systems (ecosystem and biodiversity) assets. The *Climate Change Adaptation and Impact Study for the Lower Mekong Basin* generated projections for a 2050 time slice of climate hazards – increases in temperature and rainfall, sea level rise – and the resultant impacts that are expected to pose to agricultural, livestock and fisheries production, ecosystems, and other community livelihoods.

The climate change impact information generated by the Climate Study is the most detailed of its kind produced to date in the LMB, and could become a seminal body of climate research for

decision makers in the region. Turning this leading ‘*climate adaptation thinking*’ in to practical on-the-ground ‘*climate adaptation doing*’ is the next level of value add the USAID Mekong ARCC program is contributing to climate adaptation in the region.

In addition to the assessment of climate impacts, an analysis of current day **values at risk** from climate change based on data identified by the Climate Study will engender increased understanding of the values of natural systems, crops and fisheries, and the potential monetary impacts climate change will have on these assets. **Country-specific guidelines** will also be generated so that policymakers and planners can better integrate these values into their national development planning.

The thought leadership generated by USAID Mekong ARCC represents the beginning of a blueprint for adaptation programming under which decision making and implementation of technical resilience strengthening solutions provide a replicable adaptation program design. In practice, the *Integrated Adaptation Decision Making and Implementation* design can provide a clear cohesive template for future USAID adaptation programming, as well as that of other donors and project implementers. While this approach will not be the only option for community adaptation in the LMB countries, it can serve as one of the **first generation field-tested and applied adaptation blueprints** for the region.

Year Three Summary

From the outset of the project, USAID Mekong ARCC’s objective has been to move beyond sweeping predictions found in most expert climate change studies to discover practical methods of applying those scientific findings at a community level. In practice, this means helping local leaders understand the nuances of a shifting climate – the grey area in between projections of crop failure in 2050 and the next typhoon. Understanding these subtle changes – such as how an increase in average maximum temperature reduces crop yields and reproductive rates of livestock – is critical for communities to monitor, internalize, and make smart adaptive decisions. When communities begin adding these projected climate impacts into their customary decision making processes they will move beyond simply coping with change when it arrives and into the realm of longer term adaptation.

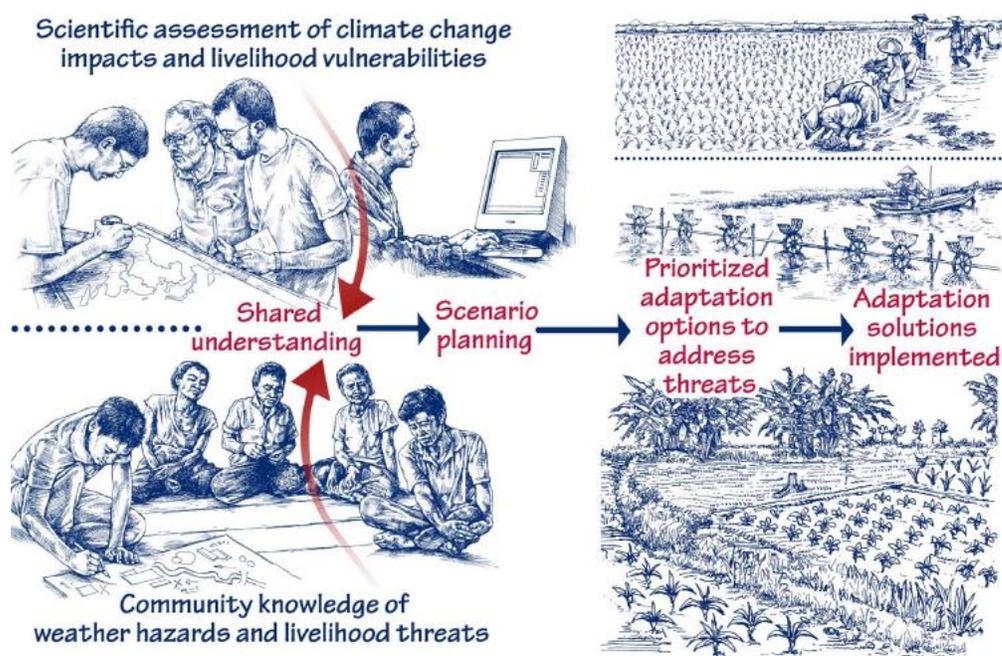
In year three the community engagement process began in earnest with the initiation of field work as part of the Ecosystem and Community-based Adaptation Initiatives. Two guiding principles are key to the USAID Mekong ARCC approach to community adaptation: 1) both top-down science and bottom-up community knowledge are critical inputs into the development of technical solutions that strengthen community resilience (see graphic below), and 2) the decision making process is equally important as the technical solutions to reducing climate vulnerability. With that in mind, the Mekong ARCC community engagement model is broken down into two phases, the first of which was mostly completed in year three of the project:

1) Adaptation Decision Making – USAID Mekong ARCC designed and implemented an adaptation decision making process with a total of 566 community-level beneficiaries in Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam to increase awareness and understanding of climate change impacts and the specific livelihood vulnerabilities that villagers could expect in their areas, as well as support

climate change resiliency in livelihoods. Participatory processes were utilized to assist the villagers self-identify weather threats, trends and vulnerabilities, better understand the meaning of climate change, and incorporate scientific projections of climate hazards and livelihood vulnerabilities into the development local adaptation actions. Scenario planning exercises helped generate a view of vulnerability that factored both near and longer term time horizons, a perspective key for communities' prioritization of adaptation options that will provide both immediate livelihood benefits and strengthen long-term resilience.

2) Activity Implementation/Monitoring – Activities such as improving aquaculture techniques or strengthening water management will be undertaken in the next phase of the community adaptation initiatives. These activities will illustrate tangible technical solutions to specific vulnerabilities and be monitored to evaluate the extent to which they reduce the exposure of local people and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change.

Graphic 1: Top-down Science meets Bottom-up Knowledge Adaptation Approach



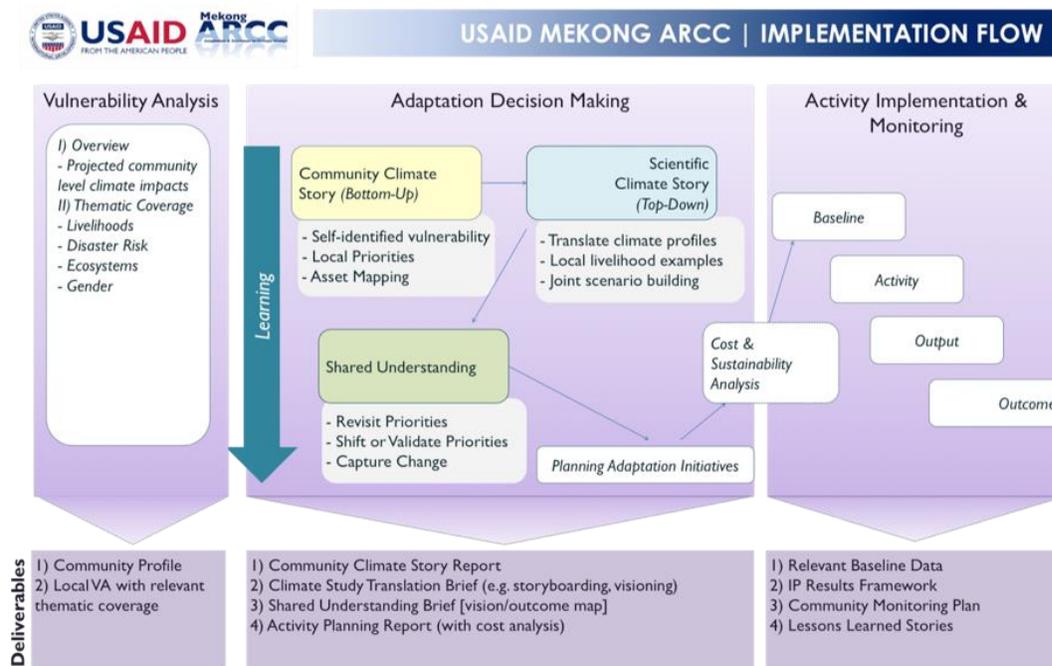
In the third year of implementation, the USAID Mekong ARCC project oversaw the initiation and final phases of the Adaptation Decision Making process, which generated important learning and lessons for the project team, implementing partners and target communities across the Lower Mekong. The results from this process, drawn with the participation and buy-in from community members, are integral to the development of activities aimed at reducing local level vulnerability to climate change. The completion of this process is not important just as a precursor to the development of resilience-strengthening activities, but is an important output in itself by increasing community understanding of climate change and the need to regularly assess vulnerability and plan adaptation strategies.

Also in year three, the USAID Mekong ARCC project made further headway in disseminating experiences, lessons and results from the project. As one of the few adaptation projects that generates both science-based technical analyses and hands-on implementation experience at the local level, the USAID Mekong ARCC project engendered considerable credibility and currency with regional and national organizations. Over the course of this year, the project was able to build relationships with regional platform partners, particularly the Asian Development Bank’s Environment Operations Centre (ADB EOC) and the ASEAN Secretariat. These and other partnerships are assisting the project in scaling project results for broader uptake by regional, national and local actors in the LMB.

USAID MEKONG ARCC TASKS

In year four USAID Mekong ARCC will further its evolution as a first generation Climate Change Adaptation program in which it continues learning alongside stakeholders and beneficiaries. The Community Adaptation Initiatives implementation flow graphic below shows the main tasks and outputs generated from the project’s Integrated Adaptation Decision Making and Implementation Design. In year four, with the Adaptation Decision Making phase approaching completion for most partners, the field projects will transition to implementation of technical solutions for community livelihood strengthening. Key lessons learned in driving cross-sectoral climate adaptation planning to priority ecosystems and diverse communities will be captured and uptake of successes actively sought. The following sections detail the USAID Mekong ARCC tasks in year four, each helping inform scalable strategies for the design of integrated adaptation programs.

Graphic 2: Community Adaptation Decision Making and Implementation Design



Task 1: Regional Knowledge Platform & Knowledge Center

The tasks under USAID Mekong ARCC encompass a spectrum of activities, the results of which require packaging into a variety of documents and resources of value to different target audiences. These tasks, each of which involves multiple steps and events, have differing requirements for the capture and dissemination of knowledge. Documenting and sharing results, successes, lessons and challenges are a key input to the "scaling up" efforts of the project. A variety of tools and techniques are required to do this in order to reach target stakeholders and desired impact.

Develop and disseminate project knowledge products

As has been the case in the past, the project website (<http://mekongarcc.net>) will remain a central repository – with links to social media sites and regional climate change adaptation platforms – for knowledge management and communication products tailored for the project's target audiences.

A key priority during the year will be to disseminate information about the Mekong ARCC top-down science meets bottom up community knowledge approach to local level adaptation and results from community pilots. Specific knowledge products will be developed to explain the model and processes utilized by the project to carry out Community Adaptation Initiatives. DAI will work with Implementing Partners (IPs) to develop a joint communications strategy that will engage all the partners in developing stories from the field, writing up successes, preparing blogs, capturing photos, etc. in order to generate awareness of USAID Mekong ARCC community work and to share experiences, lessons, and challenges from implementation. A two day communications meeting with partners will be organized in the second quarter to provide an overview and training on communications tools, and to develop the outline of the joint strategy for communicating results, stories, and lessons from community field sites.

Additionally, specific outcomes from technical solutions tested to strengthen livelihood resilience at the field sites will be captured through the development of guidelines and best practices and shared with targeted audiences from different levels government, practitioners, regional platforms and others. Publications, fact sheets, summaries, graphics, maps, and short briefs will be carefully designed to provide value as project outreach and disseminated via project web tools and at face-to-face events and meetings.

Results drawn from the completed Values at Risk (VAR) analysis report completed by WRI (See Task 4 below) will also serve as a means to communicate the monetary impacts of the climate projections of the USAID Mekong ARCC Climate Study. Information from the VAR analysis will be disseminated via the use of infographics, interviews, a summary key results brief, and a press release. Also during year four, efforts will continue to systematically disburse data and results from the *USAID Mekong ARCC Climate Change Impact and Adaptation Study for the Lower Mekong Basin* as detailed in Task Two below.

Website knowledge products and information linked to existing platforms

The project will continue employing a systematic outreach process to ensure that USAID Mekong ARCC's web-based materials – news, event announcements, blog posts, data and

knowledge products, and other resources – are shared with the broader climate change adaptation community by:

- Regular update of website banners and information;
- Sharing and tweeting links to the project website via dedicated USAID Mekong ARCC social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter and Flickr;
- Periodic preparation of USAID Mekong ARCC e-newsletter; and
- Sharing and posting links on the sites of regional adaptation platforms such as ADB, weADAPT, APAN, CKDN, IISD, etc.

Strengthen engagement with media

Support generated from increased media attention can play a role in influencing policies of government and regional actors to better address climate change impacts and community adaptation needs. USAID Mekong ARCC will continue to engage the media to get messages out that communicate the importance of action to strengthen community resilience to climate change. The project will develop and maintain relationships with the media through journalist site visits and information sessions, press releases and preparation of simple briefs describing USAID Mekong ARCC implementation results and analysis findings.

A team of communication consultants will be engaged to develop materials for a media outreach campaign that focuses attention on how the project is meeting community adaptation needs. Of particular focus in year four will be disseminating results from the VAR and community adaptation approach and results at site.

Support national government and regional platform efforts to disseminate climate change adaptation information to relevant regional actors

USAID Mekong ARCC will seek out support and collaboration with regional actors, such as the MRC, ADB, World Bank, and ASEAN as a means to scale project approaches and results in addressing climate change to decision-makers, national governments, and regional implementers. Particular emphasis will be placed on working with selected regional platforms to build results of climate scenarios from the Climate Study and VAR analysis, and approaches and lessons from community activities into the knowledge products and planning across the region.

Task 1 Key Results

1. Media outlets and journalists provided with press release and understanding of VAR analysis in order to prepare articles in newspapers and on-line;
2. Implementing partners are actively engaged in communicating results, successes, stories, and lessons learned from field sites;
3. Website populated with program knowledge products, blogs, stories from the field, photos, graphics, etc. which are ready for download and linked to other web-based platforms;
4. Support provided to regional platforms, knowledge centers, and other important forums as a means of providing target stakeholders with increased access to USAID Mekong

ARCC knowledge products, technical information and lessons, and models from implementation; and

5. Information related to the Climate Study, values-at-risk analysis report, and Community Adaptation Initiatives disseminated widely to target audiences in written and graphic form, via web-based media, and through face-to-face presentations and meetings.

Task 2: Climate Change Impact and Adaptation Study

The *USAID Mekong ARCC Climate Change Impact and Adaptation Study for the Lower Mekong Basin* has helped to bridge the gap between climate science and local decision making (see details in Task 3 below). A team of more than 20 scientists and livelihood sector experts undertook the most comprehensive climate change assessment conducted to date for the LMB. They generated and analyzed modeling data and presented new and important research on how a 2°C global temperature rise – which climate scientists generally agree is a critical threshold – will lead to future changes to the basin's hydroclimate. They further forecasted some of the likely impacts on growing conditions and yields for major crops, and productivity of livestock and aquatic systems. The spatial approach applied in the study not only highlights areas projected to experience major changes due to climate change, but also identifies priorities for adaptation responses.

Disseminate approved Climate Study and Theme Reports

While the main study has already been completed, approved by USAID, and widely disseminated, efforts will continue in year four to maximize awareness and use of Climate Study results through continued sharing. A particular focus will be placed on improving the layout of the livelihood theme reports and distributing them via relevant web platforms and other channels.

Draft and submit articles on Study results to peer reviewed journals for publication and dissemination

In order to increase the likelihood that results of the Climate Study are ready for uptake by the UN IPCC in their Climate Assessment reports, it's necessary that they move from grey literature and appear in peer reviewed journals. The project will continue its focus of preparing academic focused articles on scientifically relevant findings of the analysis that will be shared with academic and other peer reviewed journals.

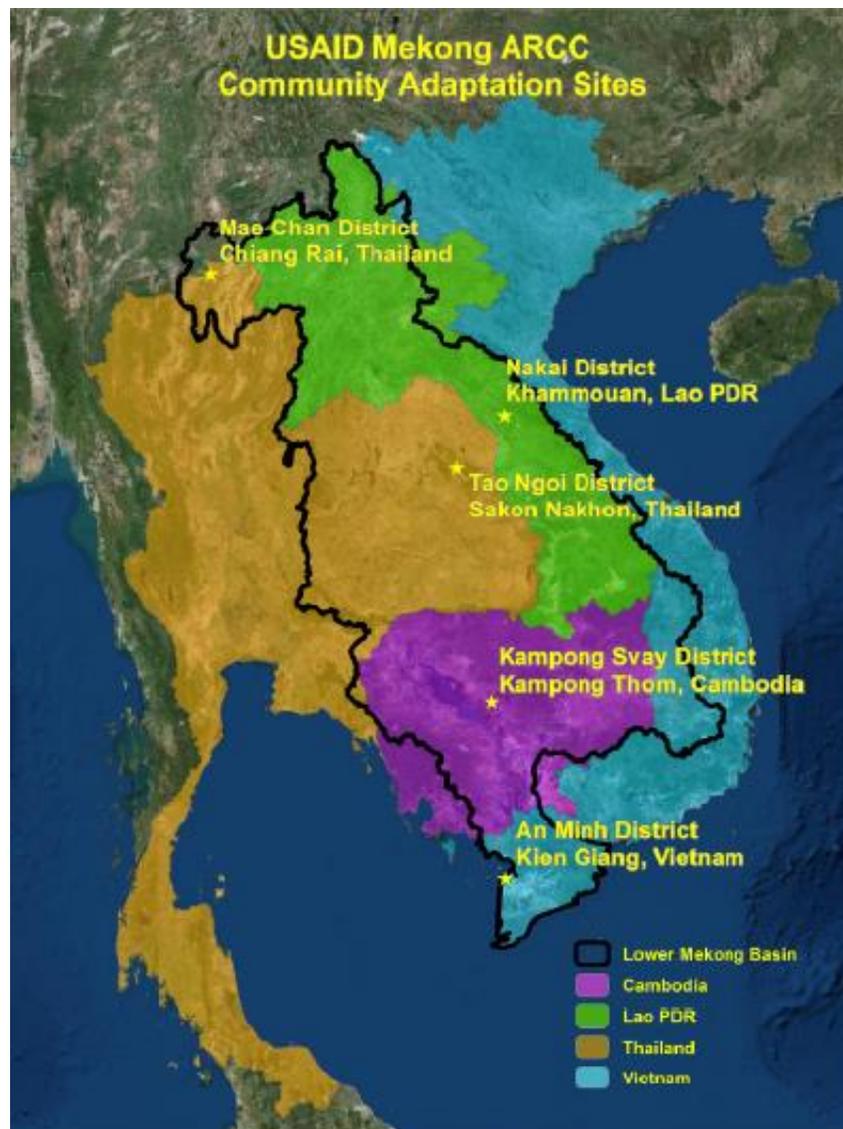
Task 2 Key Results

1. Results of the study, both the main report and the sector vulnerability reports, continue to be widely shared in order to increase knowledge and understanding of climate impacts in the LMB; and
2. Results of study appear in peer reviewed journal and are, therefore, ready for uptake by the UN IPCC for their next Climate Assessment report.

Task 3: Ecosystem and Community-based Adaptation Initiatives

Ecosystem and Community-based Adaptation initiatives are testing *how* scientific information can be translated and used at the community level. Except for the World Food Programme (WFP) in Cambodia, who was only identified as a partner in year three, most of the project's implementing partners have nearly completed activities to integrate weather and climate information into community adaptation plans that address current vulnerability and future threats from climate change. This has been accomplished through bottom and top down participatory visioning exercises that link historical and current weather patterns with the future climate scenarios projected by the Climate Study. This phase of the work will be wrapped up in year four and the focus of the field work will shift from adaptation decision making to implementation of specific solutions to strengthen community resilience.

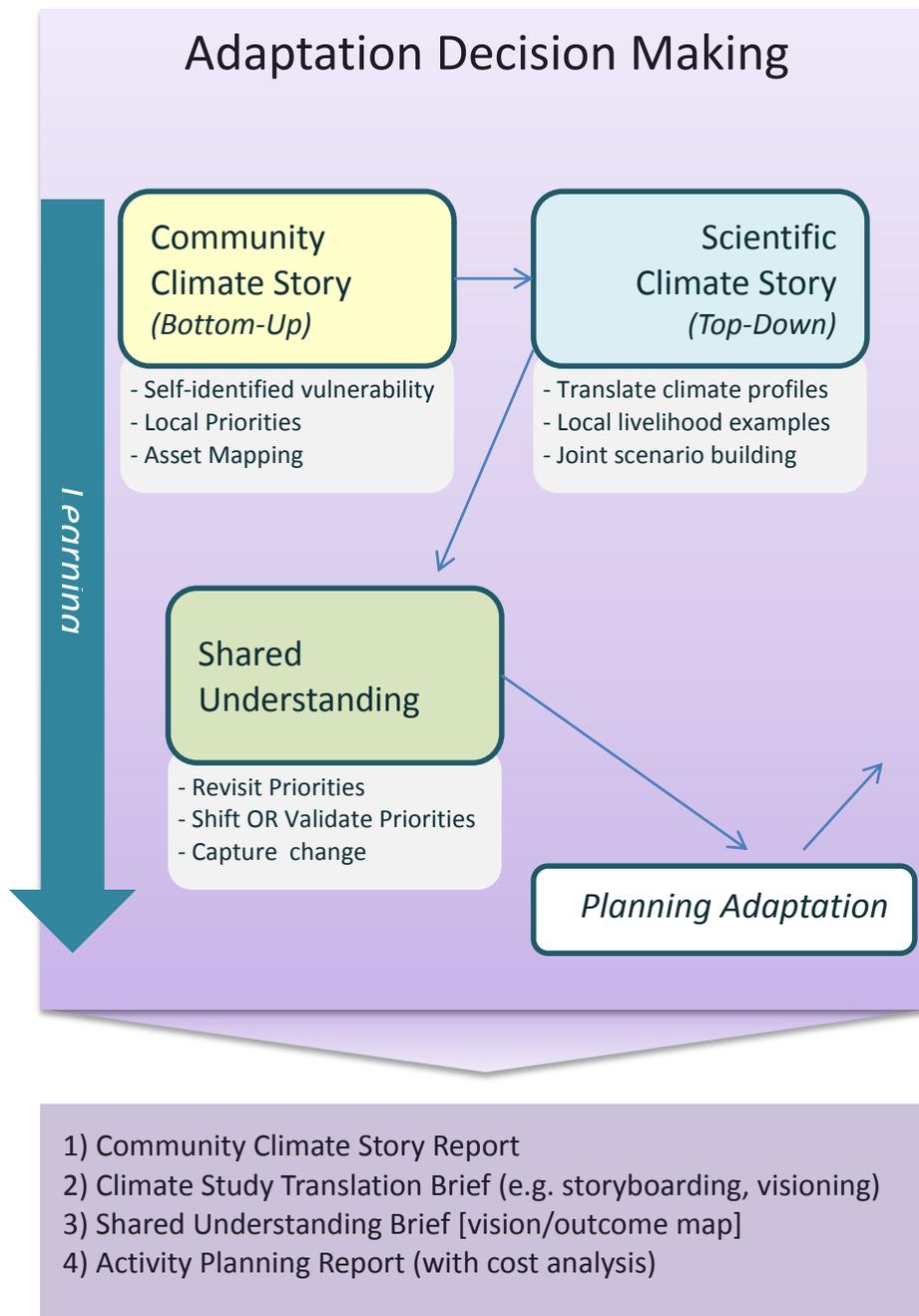
Map 1: USAID Mekong ARCC Community Adaptation Initiatives Sites



Undertake decision making phase of Community Adaptation Initiatives implementation in Cambodia

WFP will follow the same steps that other implementing partners have gone through to ensure community understanding and buy-in of adaptation options. DAI will support WFP in this process by sharing lessons learned and training on effective tools identified through the undertaking of the adaptation decision making phase by IPs working in Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. The steps involved in the Adaptation Decision Making segment of the community adaptation process that WFP will undertake are shown in graphic 3 and described below.

Graphic 3: Adaptation Decision Making Phase



1. Community Climate Story (Bottom-Up) – This step captures qualitative information while seeking to understand the local ‘climate story’, or what current level of knowledge on climate change exists in a community. The exercise includes identifying climate hazards (weather events such as floods/droughts, etc.) and other slow onset changes (shift in seasonality, decline in rice yields, etc.) that the community is experiencing. It also seeks to understand **if** and **how** the community uses **weather information** (like seasonal calendars or temperature data) in its planning processes, and how it informs decision making. WFP will also seek to understand priority initiatives of local leaders and national/local government. Further information will be gathered for use as a **baseline** for awareness and priority setting activities.

2. Scientific Climate Story (Top-Down) – Following the initial stocktaking exercise, WFP will undertake this step, which is intended to add a scientific lens to community level planning. WFP will use the climate profiles included in their localized vulnerability assessment and present examples of how projected changes in climate will impact the livelihoods, ecosystems, and disaster risk of the community. Through the use of graphic tools, maps, cartoons, posters, etc., WFP will help translate the scientific information into practical information that will help local leaders envision how projected changes will impact community assets and priorities. Best practice demonstrated by other IPs showed that finding ways to link **present** weather threats/impacts **with future** projections was a highly effective way to communicate climate projections and generate understanding of future impacts.

3. Shared Understanding – This step is combined to the scientific climate story and serves to revisit the threat prioritization results from step 1 (Community Climate Story), and facilitate a visioning and outcome mapping exercise with the community. WFP will identify if understanding gained in the step 2 Scientific Climate Story helped to **a) validate existing community priorities**, if they **b) contributed to shifting those priorities**, or if **c) new priorities arose** during the process. This understanding will be utilized by communities in an outcome mapping scenario building exercise that will help them to develop a vision and draw up a range of adaptation options to assist them to mitigate risks from climate hazards.

Note that it is critical for WFP and all IPs to understand local planning and decision making processes, as success in ‘adaptation planning’ will largely be a qualitative measure of how local decision making processes are being informed by weather and climate information at the close of the project.

Set priorities for enhancing the climate resilience of community development plans

This final decision-making step is one that all IPs will complete in year four, which includes selection of adaptation activities to implement in the field. IPs will work during year four to bring together adaptation measures identified by the communities with other pertinent information (e.g. scientific information, government plans, best management practices for development) in order to prepare adaptation plans that are sound and effective from community interest, climate resilience, and good development perspectives. This activity will also include a rough costing exercise to map out costs and likely benefits of the activity. DAI will assist in ensuring rigor of these plans by engaging livelihood experts to review the plans prior to

their approval and by utilizing consultants highly knowledgeable in specific sectors to undertake feasibility assessments at the sites to ascertain suitable options.

Implement Adaptation Activities

DAI will work with the IPs in year four to provide training to communities necessary to carry out the activities. IPs will purchase inputs such as seeds, livestock, water piping and other materials and DAI and partners will undertake efforts to mitigate environmental impacts of adaptation initiatives. Communities will produce M&E plans with guidance from DAI and IPs in which they will develop 'indicators' to track and monitor progress of activities in order to ascertain how they have reduced vulnerability and increased their capacity to address climate change impacts. IPs will adjust activities and document successes and failures during implementation. Finally, local government participation in the implementation of the activities will be sought in order to gain buy-in necessary for scaling and sustainability of initiatives post project completion.

Management oversight to ensure implementation of field activities meets timetable and intended outcomes

DAI will continue in its role of supporting the development of adaptation initiatives by providing framework approaches for partners to utilize in implementation, review and input into deliverables, oversight and contribution to field of activities, and training and technical expertise to help carry out aspects of implementation as requested and needed.

In year three the project held a successful partners meeting at initiation of Task 3 field implementation. This meeting will again be held in year four in order gain a common understanding of lessons from the decision-making phase of the project and identify needs in the implementation phase.

Task 3 Key Results

1. Adaptation decision-making process completed by all implementing partners in which local understanding of whether trends and scientific climate projections are brought together for the development of activity plans.
2. Community Adaptation Plans are implemented across Mekong ARCC sites that engage community members in strategies to enhance their livelihood resilience and better manage emerging stresses resulting from climate change
3. Community M&E plan developed in partnership with the IP to track and monitor adaptation success indicators
4. Adaptation initiatives successfully implemented that strengthen communities' resilience to climate change and adaptation capacity.

Task 4: Valuing Ecosystem Services for the Lower Mekong River Basin

The majority of the communities in the LMB earn much of their livelihood from fishing and farming, and as such their economies are directly dependent on the services provided by terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. However, government policies often underestimate or

completely fail to value the economic contribution that ecosystem services provide for the overall health of an economy. USAID Mekong ARCC is pursuing efforts to internalize the true values of ecosystem services as economic assets in development planning.

Approval of values at risk analysis report

Under the guidance of WRI, a Values at Risk analysis (VAR) has been undertaken to help quantify the likely economic impacts of climate change in the LMB demonstrated by the Climate Study. Year three saw the completion of this report with only USAID approval pending for year four. In year four a focus on the VAR will include disseminating results widely through the media and web platforms (see Task 1 above).

Complete a set of four country-specific guidelines for valuing ecosystem services

The core of Task 4 effort in the current year is to prepare a set of four country-specific ecosystem service valuation guidelines to help Lower MRB governments incorporate such values into decision-making. Completed drafts were submitted to DAI by WRI during year three. The set of four country-specific guidelines for valuing ecosystem services will be completed in year four and submitted to USAID for approval. Once approved, a workshop will be held with government and practitioners to increase understanding of the guidelines and ascertain if there is interest in policy follow-up.

Task 4 Key Results

1. Values at risk analysis and summary for decision makers approved;
2. Set of four country-specific guidelines for valuing ecosystem services completed and approved;
3. Workshop conducted with government and practitioner representatives of four LMB countries to explain guidelines and ascertain interest in policy follow-up.

Task 5: Scaling-up successful approaches

Leveraging and scale-up allows for the broadening and deepening of the effects from adaptation activities in the LMB by generating increased buy-in from local, national and regional stakeholders, raising the visibility of the project, creating a positive feedback loop for information sharing and knowledge transfer, and increasing the prospects for long-term sustainability for USAID Mekong ARCC initiated activities. In year four, DAI will work closely with partners to find paths for scaling up both the adaptation decision making approach and successful activities that make communities more resilient to climate threats. DAI will look for opportunities for uptake of models and successful technical solutions to Mekong Delta communities operating in a similar context to that of the USAID Mekong ARCC Community Pilot, and to local/national government agencies and regional policy platforms interested to apply and investing in good practices. Efforts will also be undertaken to document lessons learned to ensure successful approaches can be replicated by adaptation practitioners elsewhere in the region.

Support climate change initiatives of regional platform institutions

The project will continue to actively seek out opportunities for collaboration with regional institutions in order to share results, lessons and scale impact from the Climate Study, implementation of the Community Adaptation Initiatives, VAR analysis, and other approaches of the project. In addition to continuing to build relationships based on demand and interest of regional platform partners, the project will focus specific effort on strengthening linkages and collaboration with partners whom traction was gained in the past years; namely the ADB and ASEAN.

Collect and disseminate good practices, lessons and technical methods for scale-up to adaptation implementers, governments and regional platforms

A key objective under Task 5 is to scale good adaptation practice. In year four, WRI will investigate the possibility of scaling both the approach Mekong ARCC has used to co-design and implement adaptation plans, and good practices that have been adopted by communities that implement the adaptation plans. WRI will conduct a literature review to develop a framework for scaling, as well as an interview protocol to identify good practices in the Mekong region that can be scaled horizontally and vertically. The interview protocol will be applied in late 2015 once the adaptation plans have been implemented to identify good practices that can be scaled.

WRI will undertake a review of each IP project proposal and implementation work plan under Task 3 and interview partners in order to develop capture lessons learned on the process of integrating community climate stories and scientific climate studies that lead co-developing adaptation plans through “shared understanding” of scientific and community climate knowledge. This includes investigating the challenges and enabling factors that IPs and community members faced when integrating top down and bottom up knowledge sets. WRI will interview IPs just before they implement adaptation plans. WRI will conduct interviews with IPs during the annual Implementing Partners’ Meeting in November 2014. *A report, blog and presentation* will be completed based on interview results.

Facilitate uptake of project’s model and methods for community adaptation and successful technical solutions

As shown above in Task 3, USAID Mekong ARCC has developed a set of adaptation strategies that could also benefit communities elsewhere in the region. Additionally, research for development in the climate adaptation space could benefit from the experiences made with the engagement process and the various frameworks and methods tested by USAID Mekong ARCC IPs. Realizing such benefits requires the up-scaling of action plans or process designs or methods. Up-scaling of actions requires the identification of communities that face similar climate change challenges in combination with having similar conditions. Conditions in this context are mainly characterized by land use and household attitudes towards adaptation options.

In year four, a focus will be placed on creating a similarity index based on household or commune typology in Vietnam in order to identify spatial up-scaling potential of USAID Mekong

ARCC's efforts in Kien Giang. Project efforts in Kien Giang will be the first focus of this activity as the selection of this area allows for the consolidation of existing survey data from three projects – Mekong ARCC, Exploring Mekong region Futures, and the IRRI Climate Change Affecting Land Use in the Mekong Delta (CLUES) project. These will provide a robust database for identifying communities similar to the ones that are currently benefiting from the USAID Mekong ARCC implementation phase. For those communities that are sufficiently statistically similar, successful actions from the pilot communities can be recommended for replication. These recommendations will then be presented for action to village, commune and district decision-makers.

Initiate development of pre-feasibility report for target countries

DAI and WRI will analyze climate finance opportunities for each of the target countries. A *desk review* will be completed covering the key international and bilateral adaptation finance sources that will enable scaling of good practices. This will help to identify scaling pathways that matches adaptation finance opportunities, which will be presented in 2016.

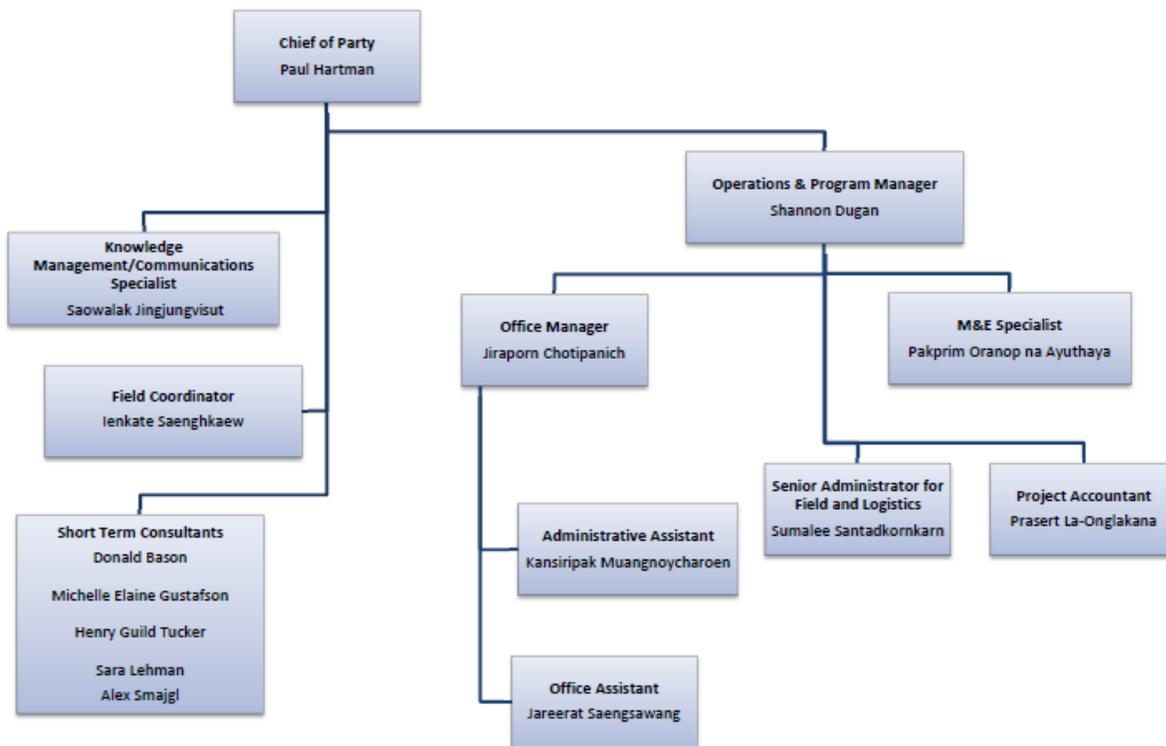
Task 5 Key Results

1. Support provided to regional platforms to strengthen their outcomes and scale impact of USAID Mekong ARCC results;
2. Approach of each field adaptation initiative reviewed, a protocol to track key “scale-up factors” developed and initial interviews undertaken;
3. An similarity index developed showing areas where Mekong ARCC's technical solutions tested in Kien Giang might be applied elsewhere in the Delta and recommendations made to decision-makers;
4. Desk review completed covering key international and bilateral adaptation finance sources

MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Staffing and Office Management

DAI will continue to phase in technical assistance as required to support each major task, and use a core team to provide overarching technical leadership, management, and coordination. Some important staff changes were made in FY2014. Due to a family emergency, the DCOP was unable to return to post after a scheduled R&R in August of 2013. With USAID approval, DAI decided to create an Operations Manager position rather than replace the DCOP. Subsequently, DAI recruited and hired an Operations Manager who mobilized in November of 2013. Our revised organizational structure is shown in Graphic 3.

Graphic 4: USAID Mekong ARCC Org Chart—Year Four**USAID Mekong ARCC Project Organization Chart FY 2015****Preparation of Regular Progress and Planning Reports**

Thematic reporting, such as success stories, content for the RKP, and external communications to be used for RDMA public events, will be developed by the Mekong ARCC

Communications/KM Specialist and overseen by Mr. Hartman, in close consultation with the COR. All external communications and outreach materials will be submitted to USAID COR for approval prior to publication. Written materials and other media will continue to adhere to the USAID-approved branding and marking plan and the project Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy.

Communication and Coordination

Mr. Hartman will continue to serve as the USAID Mekong ARCC point of contact with USAID, other U.S. Government partners, and the donor community at large. Following USAID/Asia protocols, Mr. Hartman will visit and continue to establish formal relationships with each of the missions and national government counterparts. With COTR approval, USAID Mekong ARCC will distribute project reports to these contacts and ensure that each mission and the Embassy in Vientiane are up to date on project activities in their respective countries.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The third version of the PMP was approved by USAID in September 2014. In year three, Mekong ARCC focused on producing data collection tools and manuals and developing the M&E capacity of the field implementing partners (IPs) to pave the way for monitoring community-based adaptation initiatives. For year four, main M&E activities of the project include:

- Midterm data collection and reporting
- Assisting IPs to design data collection tools for required indicators under the PMP
- Assisting IPs to set up the M&E system for each adaptation initiative
- Routine monitoring of field activities
- Conducting a data quality assessment
- Preparing for USAID DQA

Midterm data collection and reporting

In follow up to the baseline survey conducted in year three to assess knowledge, attitudes and practice (KAP) related to climate change adaptation of project participants; Mekong ARCC will manage the collection of midterm data to learn whether the project has contributed to improvements in community KAP. The project M&E Specialist will train the IPs on how to collect midterm data. Data from all sites will be merged, analyzed and reported centrally by DAI.

Assisting IPs to design data collection tools for required indicators under the PMP

The main focus of community adaptation initiatives in year three was on the bottom-up and top-down community decision-making process. Main outputs from the process were reported under Indicator 1.1 'Number of laws, policies, strategies, plans, agreements, or regulations addressing climate change adaptation' and Indicator 3.1 'Number of climate adaptation tools, technologies and methodologies'. Once adaptation activities are implemented in year four, the IPs will additionally report on the other required indicators such as Indicator 2.1 'Number of stakeholders with increased capacity to adapt...' and Indicator 3.2 'Number of hectares of biological significance and/or natural resources under improved natural resource management'. For these indicators, the project will work closely with the IPs to develop field data collection tools in line with indicator definitions, units of measurement and how data are disaggregated.

Assisting IPs to set up community M&E systems

Upon the near completion of the community decision-making process at the end of year three, the IPs are currently facilitating adaptation planning with the communities. A part of the planning process is to establish how the communities will systematically monitor and evaluate their progress. An M&E system at the local level is crucial in fostering community adaptive capacity. Managing adaptation activities around uncertainties requires a learning-by-doing approach where communities are able to monitor, learn and adjust their efforts amidst changing contexts.

In year three, the project developed a training presentation on community M&E planning which has been adapted from the CARE Participatory Monitoring, Evaluation, Reflection and Learning

for Community-based Adaptation Manual. Main training contents include how to develop indicators, design data collection tools, assemble a community M&E plan, collect, analyze and use the data. The training will be conducted with all the IPs in the beginning of year four, followed by regular technical assistance.

Routine monitoring of field activities

In collaboration with the Field Coordinator, the Mekong ARCC M&E Specialist will use monitoring templates to track the IPs' progress and regularly check their submitted data. Field visits will be conducted to obtain field information, collect success stories, and ensure data quality. On a quarterly basis, IPs will submit to Mekong ARCC progress reports which will provide progress against targets and assessments of why targets were or were not met.

Conducting data quality assessments

The field visits will also determine whether data reported accurately reflect field activities. A data quality assessment was planned for the end of year three, but did not take place due to implementation delay. In the middle of year four, Mekong ARCC will conduct a data quality assessment with all the IPs, in compliance with USAID's ADS 200 series.

Preparation for USAID Data Quality Assessment

In year three, USAID conveyed to Mekong ARCC that they intend to complete a DQA in FY2015. To prepare for the DQA, Mekong ARCC will work with the IPs, whose data feed into overall Mekong ARCC indicators, through the following steps:

1. Train the M&E and relevant staff of the IPs on how a DQA is conducted and the steps they need to take to prepare for a third-party DQA or a routine data quality assessment conducted within the project.
2. Work with each IP to prepare for a DQA on all of the required indicators especially on ensuring that all source documents necessary for indicator verification are in place and systematically organized and that all data are up-to-date.
3. Conduct an internal data quality assessment with the IPs to identify areas of weakness in data management and reporting work with the IPs to improve them.

M&E Key Results

1. The midterm data collection of Mekong ARCC performance indicators conducted and results reported;
2. All data collection tools for required indicators under the PMP developed and used at the field level;
3. IPs trained on how to develop and implement community M&E systems;
4. IPs' field-specific indicators and community M&E plans developed;
5. Field success stories produced; and
6. IPs trained on DQA steps and an internal DQA conducted.

Annex 1 – USAID Mekong ARCC Log Frame

| | A | S | TASKS, ACTIVITIES, SUBACTIVITIES | Year Four | | | | | | | | | | | | RESOURCE | OUTPUT |
|---|---|---|--|-----------|---|---|----|---|---|----|---|---|----|---|---|----------|--------|
| | | | | Q1 | | | Q2 | | | Q3 | | | Q4 | | | | |
| | | | | O | N | D | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | | |
| 1 | | | Regional Platform Partner and Knowledge Center | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 1 | | Develop and disseminate project knowledge products | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | Document field implementation process and technical adaptation approaches | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI | |
| 1 | 1 | 2 | Develop and disseminate knowledge products on results of the Economic Values at Risk analysis | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI | |
| 1 | 1 | 3 | Develop joint communications strategy with Implementing partners to promote and support community adaptation efforts | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI/IPs | |
| 1 | 1 | 4 | Capture stories from community field sites and adaptation implementation approaches and successes | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI/IPs | |
| 1 | 1 | 5 | Develop outreach materials to assist communities in understanding climate hazards and approaches to adapt to them | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI/IPs | |
| 1 | 2 | | Website knowledge products and information linked to existing platforms | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | A | S | TASKS, ACTIVITIES, SUBACTIVITIES | Year Four | | | | | | | | | | | | RESOURCE | OUTPUT | |
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| 1 | 2 | 1 | Regularly update project website/social media feeds to syndicate project information and create inbound links | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | DAI | Regular updates Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, etc. that are linked to the/from the website |
| 1 | 2 | 2 | Disseminate knowledge products on Climate Study, Community Adaptation Initiatives, Economic Values at Risk Analysis, etc. via relevant climate change web platforms | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | DAI | Mekong ARCC linked to and sharing news with climate web platforms. | |
| 1 | 3 | | Strengthen engagement with media | | █ | █ | █ | | | | █ | | | █ | | | | |
| 1 | 3 | 1 | Develop a media outreach materials for release of Economic Values at Risk from Climate Change report | | | █ | █ | | | | | | | | | DAI | Press release, report and summary document for dissemination to media | |
| 1 | 3 | 2 | Target media coverage of project analysis, activities & events, and Community Adaptation Initiatives | | █ | | | | | | █ | | | █ | | DAI | Journalists briefed on project research/analysis and site work. Field trips arranged to sites | |
| 1 | 4 | | Support national government and regional platform efforts through partnership and dissemination of climate change adaptation information and approaches | █ | █ | | | █ | | | █ | | | █ | | | | |

| | A | S | TASKS, ACTIVITIES, SUBACTIVITIES | Year Four | | | | | | | | | | | | RESOURCE | OUTPUT | | |
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| 1 | 4 | 1 | Collaborate with regional platforms to share project research results and analysis, models, best practice and lessons from community activities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI/IPs | Collaboration with regional bodies on development of materials and events, and presentation of results from Climate Study, VAR, and Community Adaptation Initiatives at workshops, seminars and meetings of regional institutions |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | Climate Change Impact and Adaptation Study | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | 1 | | Disseminate approved Climate Study and Theme Reports | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI | Six theme reports are laid out in design and disseminated via web platforms. Report and data sets disseminated via regional adaptation web platforms and project website | |
| 2 | 2 | | Draft and submit articles on Study results and application at field sites to peer reviewed journals for publication and dissemination | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI/IPs | Article(s) appearing in peer reviewed scientific journal | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | A | S | TASKS, ACTIVITIES, SUBACTIVITIES | Year Four | | | | | | | | | | | | RESOURCE | OUTPUT | |
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| 3 | | | Integrated Community and Ecosystem-based Adaptation Activities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | 1 | | Undertake decision making phase of Community Adaptation Initiatives implementation in Cambodia | | | | | | | | | | | | | | WFP | |
| 3 | 1 | 1 | Compile baseline data on Cambodia community livelihood systems, social structures and gender, key actors an initiatives in the local context, and climate change awareness | | | | | | | | | | | | | | WFP | Data collected for indicator tracking and on projects ongoing in community, and current development plans of target communities, and awareness collected |
| 3 | 1 | 2 | Undertake Community Profile identifying key climate vulnerabilities of livelihood systems and assets in Cambodia commune | | | | | | | | | | | | | | WFP | Completed Community Profile |
| 3 | 1 | 3 | Undertaking Community Climate Story Brief (bottom-up) for commune to self-identified climate vulnerability in Cambodia commune | | | | | | | | | | | | | | WFP/Community | Community Climate Story Brief |
| 3 | 1 | 4 | Carry out Scientific Climate Story (top down) to building climate projections into community planning in Cambodia Commune | | | | | | | | | | | | | | WFP/Community | Shared understanding brief |

| | A | S | TASKS, ACTIVITIES, SUBACTIVITIES | Year Four | | | | | | | | | | | | RESOURCE | OUTPUT |
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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | 2 | | Set priorities for enhancing the climate resilience of community development plans | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | 2 | 1 | Carry out practical scenario planning exercises to enhance Cambodia community understanding of how climate change is linked to current and future climate threats | | | | | | | | | | | | | WFP/Community | Community Vision Statement |
| 3 | 2 | 2 | With communities identify priority adaptation options | | | | | | | | | | | | | All IPs/Community | Outcome Map |
| 3 | 2 | 3 | Undertake feasibility assessments of options, as needed | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI/STTA | Feasibility reports that lay out suitable technical options to be applied to strengthen community resilience |
| 3 | 2 | 4 | Develop adaptation plan based on input of community, assessment of costs, benefits and sustainability post project. | | | | | | | | | | | | | All IPs | Activity Implementation Plan containing recommendations for adaptation options to be implemented based on assessment of costs, climate/development benefits and sustainability post project |

| | A | S | TASKS, ACTIVITIES, SUBACTIVITIES | Year Four | | | | | | | | | | | | RESOURCE | OUTPUT | | | |
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| 3 | 2 | 5 | Conduct technical review of adaptation options to ensure development and climate resilience soundness, and provide feedback and approval | █ | █ | █ | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI/STTA | Expert technical input into adaptation plans provided and incorporated into approved plans |
| 3 | 2 | 5 | Present adaptation plans to communities for endorsement | | █ | █ | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | IPs/Community | Community acceptance of proposed adaptation options |
| 3 | 3 | | Implement Adaptation Activities | | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | | | |
| 3 | 3 | 1 | Conduct annual meeting with implementing partners to gain common understanding on implementation phase of Community Adaptation Initiatives and to identify gaps and needs | | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI/IPs/STTA | IP Meeting completed |
| 3 | 3 | 2 | Prepare inputs and provide training on implementation of adaptation options | | | █ | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | IP/DAI/Consultant | Commodities that are selected are approved by USAID (where required) and purchased. Training provided |
| 3 | 3 | 3 | Develop Environmental Management and Mitigation Plan for selected adaptation options at sites | | | █ | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI/STTA | EMMPs for each site completed |
| 3 | 2 | 4 | Develop field indicators to measure success of adaptation measures | | | █ | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | | List of indicators that indicate impact of activities on improved resilience, strengthened adaptive capacity and reduced vulnerability of communities |

| | A | S | TASKS, ACTIVITIES, SUBACTIVITIES | Year Four | | | | | | | | | | | | RESOURCE | OUTPUT |
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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | 3 | 5 | Carry out adaptation activities with communities | | | | | | | | | | | | | IPs | Activities piloted with communities |
| 3 | 3 | 6 | Engage with local government partners to seek buy-in into adaptation options | | | | | | | | | | | | | IPs | Sustainability of adaptation initiatives maintained post project |
| 3 | 4 | | Management oversight to ensure implementation of field activities meets timetable and intended outcomes | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | 4 | 1 | Conduct annual meeting with implementing partners to gain common understanding on implementation phase of Community Adaptation Initiatives and to identify gaps and needs | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI/IPs/ STTA | IP Meeting completed |
| 3 | 4 | 2 | Regular reporting to capture adaptation activity successes, challenges and lessons learned | | | | | | | | | | | | | IPs | Quarterly and final progress reports. Indicator roll up and reporting |
| 3 | 4 | 3 | Field visits, regular meetings, and input into deliverables to ensure quality | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI | Delivery of outputs meets subcontract terms and are of sufficiently high standard |
| 4 | Valuing Ecosystem Services in Economic Planning for the Lower Mekong River Basin | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | 1 | | Approval of values at risk analysis report | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | 2 | | Draft a set of four country-specific guidelines for valuing ecosystem services | | | | | | | | | | | | | WRI | |

| | A | S | TASKS, ACTIVITIES, SUBACTIVITIES | Year Four | | | | | | | | | | | | RESOURCE | OUTPUT | | |
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| 4 | 2 | 1 | Complete first draft of ecosystem valuation guidelines | █ | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | | WRI | First draft of valuation guidelines section for four country reports |
| 4 | 2 | 2 | Complete first draft of executive summary and recommendations for keeping the guidelines up to date | | █ | █ | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | First draft of executive summary and recommendations sections for each report |
| 4 | 2 | 3 | Finalization and submission for approval of report | | | | | █ | █ | █ | | | | | | | | WRI | Reports submitted to USAID and approved |
| 4 | 2 | 4 | Workshop to discuss first complete draft of each country-specific guideline document | | | | | | | | | | | | | █ | | DAI/WRI | Workshop with representatives of four countries |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Scaling-Up Successful Approaches | | | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | 1 | | Support climate change initiatives of regional platform institutions | | █ | | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | | |
| 5 | 1 | 1 | Coordinate/collaborate with regional institutional mechanisms to facilitate uptake of project analysis, models and approaches into planning and project implementation across the region | | █ | | | █ | | | █ | | | | | █ | | DAI | Results of research and analysis shared and incorporated into planning. Support provided to platform events, knowledge products, training, etc. |
| 5 | 2 | | Collect and disseminate good practices, lessons and technical methods to adaptation practitioners, governments and regional platforms | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | | | | | | | |

| A | S | TASKS, ACTIVITIES, SUBACTIVITIES | Year Four | | | | | | | | | | | | RESOURCE | OUTPUT | | |
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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | 2 | 1 | Interview IPs to capture lessons learned on the process of merging scientific climate studies and community climate stories | | | | | | | | | | | | | | WRI | Report capturing lessons and technical methods to co-design adaptation plans. A blog linked to the report published and presentation made. |
| 5 | 2 | 2 | Develop a framework to assess good practices that can be scaled horizontally and vertically and an interview protocol to track scaling factors | | | | | | | | | | | | | | WRI | A framework and interview protocol on scaling good adaptation practices based on a literature review |
| 5 | 3 | | Facilitate uptake of project's model and methods for community adaptation and successful technical solutions | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | 3 | 1 | Engage in meetings, workshops and information sharing within and nearby current pilot communities, and with provincial and central governments | | | | | | | | | | | | | | IPs | Observation and understanding of community approach and solutions by broader range of stakeholders |
| 5 | 3 | 2 | Develop a similarity index based on household/commune typology to identify spatial up-scaling potential in Vietnam | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI/STTA | List of villages/communes/districts that are sufficient similar to IP target communities that they could benefit from the pilot work |

| | A | S | TASKS, ACTIVITIES, SUBACTIVITIES | Year Four | | | | | | | | | | | | RESOURCE | OUTPUT | | |
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| 5 | 3 | 3 | Results from similarity index presented to district/province/central government leaders at workshop and meetings | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI/STTA | Recommendations presented for actions in areas of Vietnam sufficiently similar to the pilot communities |
| 5 | 4 | | Initiate development of pre-feasibility report for target countries | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | 4 | 1 | Undertake analysis of climate finance opportunities for each of the countries | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | WRI | Desk review covering key international and bilateral adaptation finance sources for community adaptation and barriers to entry |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | Overarching Program Management and Coordination | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | 1 | | Submit regular progress and financial reports to USAID | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI | |
| 6 | 1 | 1 | Amended annual workplan submitted | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI | Workplan |
| 6 | 1 | 2 | Submit quarterly reports | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI | Report |

| | A | S | TASKS, ACTIVITIES, SUBACTIVITIES | Year Four | | | | | | | | | | | | RESOURCE | OUTPUT | | |
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| 6 | 1 | 3 | Submit financial reports | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI | Report |
| 6 | 2 | | Design and implement systems to report on monitoring and evaluation of project | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI | |
| 6 | 2 | 1 | Conduct regular monitoring and evaluate results against the PMP | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI | Updated M&E reports from DAI IPs as appropriate |
| 6 | 2 | 2 | Train IPs on how to set up and manage community M&E systems | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI/IPs | IPs trained on M&E system for communities |
| 6 | 2 | 3 | Provide regular M&E technical assistance to IPs | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI | Regular calls, meetings and field trips to sites |
| 6 | 2 | 4 | Conduct a data quality assessment (DQA) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI | DQA conducted |
| 6 | 3 | | Coordinate with USAID, USG partners and Donor community on opportunities to promote Mekong ARCC best practices and lessons learned | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI | |
| 6 | 3 | 1 | Foster exchange and partnership opportunities with USAID and other development donors to showcase Mekong ARCC outputs and best practices | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DAI | Invitations to speak/present, provision of resources, co-host events |