Report of the Evaluation of

Southern Thailand Empowerment and Participation (Phase Two) Project

(STEP II)

UNDP Thailand

20 October 2017

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolutions
APR	Annual Project Report
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CSCD	Centre for Conflict Studies and Cultural Diversity
CIS	College of Islamic Studies
CSO	Civil Society Organization
IPS	Institute for Peace Studies
ISOC	Internal Security Operations Command
LOA	Letter of Agreement
MAC	Muslim Attorney Center Foundation
SDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PSU	Prince of Songkla University
RTG	The Royal Thai Government
SBPAC	Southern Border Provinces Administration Centre
STEP	Southern Thailand Empowerment and Participation Project
SAO	Sub-district Administrative Organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
ToR	Term of Reference
TPBS	Thai Public Broadcasting Service
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

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Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

The STEP Project Phase II (2015 – 2017) is an expansion of Phase I. The strategy for Phase II is more focused on promoting access to information and broadening public participation in peace process, improving access to justice of vulnerable populations at the community level, and strengthening social cohesion through sustainable livelihoods and development. Strategically, this project emphasizes on 1) a participatory approach to form a local agenda that moves towards a peaceful solution, 2) support services that pay attention to the grievances of vulnerable and marginalized groups, and 3) the creation of cohesiveness and inclusiveness among diverse groups in fragile areas. Gaining a greater understanding of how the project implementation in phase II can anchor these enhanced mechanisms for interaction is helping to build a more robust science of resilience.

This evaluation found that the STEP Project Phase II's strategy continues to be relevant and effective in the changing context of the southernmost provinces. However, in 2016 the Thai government shifted focus from the political and security aspects of the conflict to promote economic growth. The most significant change is to move to a more strategic approach which places the local communities at the center of thinking. Continuity can be seen in a number of areas, particularly peace dialogue. The military authorities are invited to exchange views. The evolving approach to community empowerment and human security encourage more engagement across partners but limited Knowledge Management (KM) platforms to reach the hard targets constrain deep engagement.

The STEP Project Phase II demonstrates very good implementation processes. Priorities are increasingly driven by local communities complementing focused donor priorities. Annual Progress Reports show good progress in achieving indicator targets for all focus areas with extensive achievements in the Deep South region. Most of this information is available within UNDP and could be collated. Indicators are that good progress is being achieved. Evidence from interviews and evaluation reports confirmed that good progress is being achieved.

UNDP's key contribution to achieving resilience-building is a global recognition. Local peace networks are a driver of development, and the number of indicators throughout the SDGs relate to resilience-building. The project succeeded in developing common responsibility among local community leaders. However, increasing complexity and turbulence requires enhancing leadership capacity. Mentoring initiatives were seen as a way of promoting inclusion particularly for NGOs and local leaders.

However, UNDP has not optimized this leading position by communicating achievements widely with an integrated strategic knowledge management function to support its very extensive and deep knowledge production capacity.

Community enterprises represent a new way of thinking about food production to locally sourced and produced food throughout the region. The government also realizes the increasing wave of interest in locally grown manufactured, produced goods, and community food-based entrepreneurs continue to emerge as an important part of local economy.

Key Recommendations

Target Groups and Target Areas

UNDP's STEP Project should extend its integrated support to more the vulnerable and low-income, and enable holistic support for the elderly, persons with the disabilities, and youth and target the hard targets. There are anonymous 10,000 victims hidden in the region. The STEP Project Phase III should offer an opportunity to enter into or glimpse areas that are usually hidden and/or restricted.

Partnership

The next phase of the project should further work towards institutionalizing of the function of trainers from all sectors including local communities, NGOs, and government who are working within the livelihood improvement and community development areas.

Issues and Activities

To empower communities across the region and promote models of development, it requires a special handing including 1) establishing deep and inclusive national ownership and 2) robust grounding of the research. The research direction includes 1) peace dialogues and follow-up actions, 2) people-centered, better and more comprehensive governance, and 3) prevention oriented responses as a means to tackle the root causes of conflicts.

UNDP's Presence in the Southernmost Provinces

For the ultimate long-term success and sustainability of UNDP's development works, it is essential to continue the STEP Project Phase II to maintain forward momentum with UNDP Office to ensure the presence in the southernmost provinces and increase financial base. The next phase should focus more on an integrated strategic knowledge management function of UNDP to support its very extensive and deep knowledge production capacity.

Chapter I Introduction

1.1 Synthesis of the STEP II Project's Strategy and Activities

1.1.1 Introduction

The violent conflicts in the three southernmost provinces including Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat and four districts of Songkla is increasingly recognized as constant threats to human security and development of its citizens[1]. This region representing 4.5 percent of total national Muslim population was the epicenter of the violent conflicts in the early 2000 in Thailand. Included in conflicts is a wide array of continual violent episodes that has claimed more than 6,000 lives and injured over 11,000 people since its reemergence in 2004[2]. In light of the scourge of violence against security forces and the unique populations[3], fragile communities are indirectly beleaguered and victimized by the impact of violence[4].

The causes of this longstanding conflict were rooted in historical and structural context mixed with ineffective responses to local grievances from the Thai authorities[5]. Obviously, the resentment of troops, economic distress, access justice and the distrust within different segments of the population play a role in the reproduction of violence. The insurgents began to lessen their targeting of civilians in mid-2013 with the advent of the peace process with the government[6], more open government policies and the stronger role of civil society organizations[7]. However, this situation stands out as backwards steps on the path to peace and security.

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[1] UNDP Annual Progress Report of STEP Project Phase II January – December 2016.

[2] By November 2014, the southern border provinces of Thailand encountered 17,652 violent incidents, with 6,252 deaths and 11,400 injuries (A Summary of Southern Thailand Empowerment and Participation Project, Phase II (STEP II), 2014).

[3] Particularly government agents or those perceived to be the symbol of the Buddhist-dominated Thai state – namely, security forces, civil servants, government-hired village-defense forces, Buddhist monks and public school teachers – are prime targets for attacks in the past decade of the conflict (The Southern Thailand Empowerment and Participation Phase II (STEP II) Project Document, 2014).

[4] Among 3,680 dead victims in 2014, 59 per cent is Muslim and 58 per cent is Buddhist (A Summary of Southern Thailand Empowerment and Participation Project, Phase II (STEP II), 2014).

[5] UNDP Project Document (For the Japan-UNDP Partnership Fund), 2015.

[6] The signing of General Consensus on Peace Dialogue Process between the National Security Council (NSC) and the BRN on 28 February 2013 in Malaysia has paved the way towards a series of peace talks for the southern border provinces.

[7] The STEP Phase II Project Document, 2014.

In response, UNDP initiated a project entitled "The Southern Thailand Empowerment and Participation (STEP) Project Phase I (2010 – 2014)" in 2010, with support from Japan and Belgium and worked to enhance the capacity of local communities, civil society organizations (CSOs), and government agencies with the aim to address a wide range of challenges in the southern border provinces including preventing further escalation of the conflict situation and creating social cohesion in the region.

The STEP Project Phase II (2015 – 2017) is an expansion of Phase I. The strategy for Phase II is more focused on assisting broadening public participation in peace process, improving access to justice of vulnerable populations at the community level, and strengthening social cohesion through sustainable livelihoods and development. Strategically, this project emphasizes on 1) a participatory approach to form a local agenda that moves towards a peaceful solution, 2) support services that pay attention to the grievances of vulnerable and marginalized groups, and 3) the creation of cohesiveness and inclusiveness among diverse groups in fragile areas. Several peace initiatives are carried out through empowering people and civil society, promoting efficiency of the government operations, and enduring partnership with multilateral institutions[8].

Gaining a greater understanding of how the project implementation in phase II can anchor these enhanced mechanisms for interaction is helping to build a more robust science of resilience.

The overall objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Review the project performance and assess its achievement;
- Identify lesson learned and provide recommendations for the use of result and further replication by the Royal Thai Government and relevant stakeholders;
- Explore the possibility of the UNDP being involve in the future activities in the issue of peace building, social cohesion, livelihood improvement, and any other interesting issues.

Insight into the impact and sustainability of results of the STEP Project Phase II was gained through adopting multiple data collection methods that weave local insights with qualitative studies and consultation sessions.

Following an overview of the project in Chapter I[9], the evaluation criteria and questions are described. The summary of findings is then compared to the evaluation questions in Part III. This report also laid out the contribution of the project to capacity development and recommendations. The evaluation will contribute to the decision on the reallocation of the additional fund and support the project continuation for the upcoming new financial cycle (2018 – 2021). The evaluation's intended audience is the UNDP management and staff, and relevant stakeholders.

1.1.2 Vision for UNDP Human Security Strategy: recognizing the nexus of resilience-building between human security and human development

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[8] UNDP Micro Assessment Report, 2016.

[9] The presentation of Chapter I includes 1) the synthesis of the STEP II Project's strategy and activities, 2) vision for UNDP Human Security Strategy - recognizing the nexus of resilient-building between human security and human development, 3) STEP project description, and 4) the context of society resilience in the situations of violence.

The prevalence of violent conflict scenarios has led to a new focus and commitment by the international community. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012 along with the 2012 United Nations General Assembly on 25 October 2012[10] and the 2014 United Nations General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development stress the importance of both the human security and human development aspects of reinforcing social resilience[11]. Social resilience or an adaptive response to serious hardship is critical to the progress and prosperity of any society. Ultimately, Human Security Framework was widely adopted as a new set of global objectives. Human Security Framework suggests theoretically a more people-centered and flexible approach to increase the resilience of the society with an added value to the post-2015 development agenda[12].

The vision for UNDP Human Security Strategy on resilience-building is often utilized and serves as the conceptual framework for this project focusing on human security and human development. The concept of human security has evolved from country's security to human security with the assumption that individuals are capable of making changes. Human Security Strategy is relevant across UNDP's work – from that on poverty reduction and food security, to rule of law, citizen security, human rights, conflict prevention, gender, youth, and climate change and the environment. Human Security Strategy shares the same core principles as the concept of human development – the paradigm in which UNDP has worked since 1990. Despite exposure to a continuum of violence and high levels of current life stress as well as social inequalities over the past decade, communities survive and thrive despite adversity.

Realizing strong connections between democratic governance, inclusive and sustainable development and resilient society, the STEP Project Phase II, on the one hand, enhances policies and capacities for more effective governance to bring greater development benefits to local people and increase their confidence and trust in public institutions. On the other hand, the project helps build resilience through greater employment and livelihoods, more equitable access to resources, peaceful settlement of disputes and community participation in budgeting and planning[13]. These elements help bridge the gaps between humanitarian works, peacebuilding and longer term development efforts, with the aim to reduce the risks of crisis, lessen development setbacks, and promote human security[14].

1.1.3 STEP Project

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[10] The UN General Assembly, the 66th Session "Follow-up to paragraph 143 on human security of the 2005 World Summit Outcome" (A/RES/66/290) on 25 October 2012.

[11] This report endorses the view of resilience of as a social process resulting from the ability of the individual to survive, and the presence of a social environment that allows for the exercise of this ability.

[12] Human Security at the United Nations Newsletter, 2014. Human Security Unit, United Nations. Newsletter Issue 11 (Summer 2014). Retrieved the information from Website at https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/HSU/Newsletter%2011th%20edition.pdf.

[13] UNDP Project Document (For the Japan-UNDP Partnership Fund), 2015.

[14] Helen Clark, 2013. UNDP Human Security. Speech to Symposium on Human Security at Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) V during 1 – 3 June 2013 at Yokohama, Japan. Retrieved the information from UNDP Website at http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/speeches/2013/06/02/helen-clark-speech-to-symposium-on-hunan-security-at-ticad-v.html.

In response to the spread of more frequent and severe conflicts in the southernmost provinces of Thailand and in the prospect of future peace process, UNDP has implemented the practices of peace and conflict prevention through the implementation of the Southern Thailand Empowerment and Participation (STEP) Project in 2010 in collaboration with RTG through Prince of Songkhla University, SBPAC, NGOs, CSOs, academic institutes, local leaders and local volunteers, other UN agencies and donors.

The Southern Thailand Empowerment and Participation Phase I (2010 - 2014) project enjoyed access to decision makers, facilitated crucial dialogues with a wider range of influential actors such as civil society representatives, national and community leaders, as well as other vulnerable groups, and drew on a global network of experts to support dialogue processes[15].

After 4 years of scientific and field works, the STEP I project has demonstrated impact on a larger scale to develop a rich network of partnerships with governmental and intergovernmental organizations as well as CSOs and reaches larger populations including implementing partners cooperating with UNDP in providing resources and capacity, diverse victims, trained practitioners while building integrated holistic systems, helping create greater visibility and leveraging in attracting additional support for the intervention[16].

In the wake of the 10th anniversary of the reemergence of the violent conflict in the southern border provinces of Thailand in 2014[17], the Southern Thailand Empowerment and Participation (STEP II) Project (January 2015 – December 2017) was created to foster a resilient society in the southern border provinces of Thailand through expanding participatory planning and sustainable livelihood activities, a holistic approach to justice, and progress towards (a) peaceful society.

The STEP Phase II project takes a two-pronged implementation approach of a) expanding horizontal peace building and b) anchoring project activities in the national stabilization process. It integrates knowledge, best practices and lessons learned from the first phase of the project from 2010 – 2014 (horizontal peace building) in the context of the evolving situation in the south and fills development gaps that have not been addressed by local actors such as NGOs or local authorities[18].

In the opinion of expert advisors, CSOs, local authorities, government agencies and relevant stakeholders who have helped formulated the project, the second phase seeks to

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[15] For example, the organization of three-day international conference on "Political Transition, Non-violence and Communication in Conflict Transformation" in Pattani province.

[16] For example, JAPAN-UNDP Partnership Fund for Conflict Prevention and Recovery.

[17] The impact of violence falls upon women, particularly those 3,000 women who have lost their husbands and prone to security risks as well as social stigma (A Summary of Southern Thailand Empowerment and Participation Project, Phase II (STEP II), 2014). The World Bank report on "Unheard Voices: Men and Youth in Thailand's Conflict-Affected Deep South" revealed that the plight of men and young men affected by the violence are often unheard. Approximately 63 per cent of men are psychologically affected by the conflict (The World Bank, published on 21 September 2016 at http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2016/09/21/men-and-youth-in-thailands-conflict-affected-deep-south).

[18] STEP Phase II (2015 – 2017) Project Executive Committee Terms of Reference.

integrate peace building and conflict prevention elements[19] in order to achieve the following specific objectives:

- To broaden peace processes with inclusive participation of all peace networks and local stakeholders gain knowledge about the peace building process through constructive dialogues and other peaceful resolution mechanisms.
- To enable the vulnerable groups to access effective legal services and receive quality legal protection from the key duty bearers.
- To empower communities and populations in need with skills and resources to successfully establish and manage community development initiatives based on locally appropriate and sustainable practices that contribute to improved human security and social cohesion.

1.2 Context: Society resilience in the situations of violent conflicts

The root causes of conflicts, particularly structural causes are major challenges[20], linking to governance issues, the distribution of resources, unequal opportunities to access to economic activities and poor education, fueled by strong population growth.

The Thai government has designated insurgents in the three southernmost provinces a national security priority, deploying over thousands military personnel to the southern border provinces in an effort to contain the violence. Despite enormous progress in 2014, the challenges remain in responding to the actual needs of local people and in effectively planning for budget allocation. Some of development initiatives of the government are seen as discriminatory by both sides of Muslims and Buddhists. Local people still suffered from miserable living conditions of insecurity, disrupted education, and fears generated by the operations of both the insurgents and security forces on a regular basis.

UNDP Annual Progress Report of STEP Project Phase II[21] pointed out that the impacts include 1) a low level of community security and perpetual threats to personal safety, 2) economic hardship from difficulty securing sustainable livelihoods, particularly for vulnerable groups such as women, youth, and those with disabilities, 3) the social exclusion of marginalized groups as a result of distrust and tension in communities, 4) less space for participation in public affairs and democratic governance processes due to the tightening of security measures, and 5) deprived access to government services and justice.

There has been a great effort to sustain reconciliation for a future peace settlement and to make a real difference in the lives of people. The policy has largely adhered to the principles of economic approach to solving problems and develops the southern border provinces in order to improve the quality of life and create sustainable peace.

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[19] Primary activities of this project are workshop arrangements, small grant programme for community development, collection and analysis of data on situation in conflict-prone areas and affected people, research study and report preparation to enhance understanding and build a pool of technical expertise (UNDP Micro Assessment Report, 2016).

[20] A report submitted to the Government by the Truth and Reconciliation Committee in 2006 suggests that the grievances are rooted in the historical context but have also been brought on by structural causes, especially in a cultural and religious setting that sets this area apart from the rest of Thailand (A Summary of Southern Thailand Empowerment and Participation Project, Phase II (STEP II), 2014).

[21] UNDP Annual Progress Report of STEP Project Phase II January – December 2016.

1.3 Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation examined the STEP Project Phase II against the five evaluation criteria including relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, scalability and impact, adopted in 2005 by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). The report on Norms and Standards for Evaluation of UNEG has served as a landmark document for the United Nations[22].

The broader goal of the evaluation is to providing a forward looking analysis to understand the continued relevance and efficacy of the project in a changing environment of the three southernmost region. The evaluation sought to analyze the extent of the STEP II project's overall relevance in relation to the objectives of third area of UNDP's work on resilience-building; and more broadly, how the project can best contribute towards the strategic goal of UNDP as a whole, and finally, how UNDP can add maximum possible value in a national and regional context.

The review also sought to verify, analyse and assess the impact of cross cutting issues in the project, with a particular emphasis on human security and human development aspects. The consultant also investigated the extent to which the STEP Project Phase II adheres to the UNDP strategic and policy framework, particularly the project's alignment to the UNDP Human Security Strategy, and all three pillars of the UN Charter including development, human rights, and peace and security.

1.4 Evaluation Questions

Ten key evaluation questions were developed based upon the TOR and the preliminary round of consultation with the Management Team in Bangkok and with the Project Manager. They were designed to contribute to both the specific and the strategic objectives of the evaluation by breaking the interview and group discussion into a number of core components.

The review questions were designed to elicit information on the logical framework on the STEP II project implemented in the three southernmost provinces from 2015 onward. The question sought to relate the project design and evolution of the project implementation environment that led to changes in the project's direction in 2016. The evaluation questions sought to solicit the perspectives of implementing partners and beneficiaries as to their view on how the STEP project could be best add value in the future.

Review questions were as follows:

- Is the project relevant and appropriate to the current governance, conflict situation and development situation in Thailand?
- Is this project able to broaden participation of local peace networks in peace process, and provide them with multiple access to information?
- Is this project able to build capacity of local community leaders and religious leaders to provide gender sensitivity alternative dispute resolutions?
- Is it able to empower the vulnerable groups to access to justice and did it raise any critical issues on justice system considered important by vulnerable groups to be improved by the government?

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[22] United Nations Evaluation Group, 2016. Norms and Standards for Evaluation. New York: UNEG.

- Did it strengthen cooperation between Muslims and Buddhists?
- Did it contribute to conditions for social cohesion and trust building between local communities and local authorities?
- Did it strengthen the role of women in peace process and economic well-being?
- Did it address any livelihood issues?
- Has it initiated any pilot activities that can be replicated in the future?
- Did it provide due emphasis to gender in the context of initiatives it supported?

The table below indicates linkages between the evaluation questions and the evaluation criteria established by the United Nations Evaluation Group[23].

Figure 1 Linkages between Evaluation Questions and Evaluation Criteria

	EQ1	EQ2	EQ3	EQ4	EQ5	EQ6	EQ7	EQ8	EQ9	EQ10
Relevance	X	X	X			X				
Effectiveness		X	X	X	X	X	X			
Efficiency				X						
Impact					X	X	X	X		X
Scalability						X			X	

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[23] United Nations Evaluation Group, 2016. Norms and Standards for Evaluation. New York: UNEG.

Chapter II Methodology

2.1 Judgement criteria and indicators

The evaluation report has been prepared to respond to all the evaluation Terms of Reference (TOR) requests including evaluation objectives, scope and a set of guide questions complied by UNDP. It is based on evaluation criteria and also, in line with the guidance from UNDP's Project Management Team, to be concise and clear in presenting its findings. The evaluation relies heavily on internal documentation with some cross-verification through interviews and through the stakeholder survey.

2.2 Data and information collection

The evaluation is designed to be an integrated activity so that reflection become more systematic. The scope of work includes

1. Review of the project design, implementation and its achievement.

   The evaluation focuses on
   - Identifying and analyzing the results and impacts of the project on the capacity of local peace networks including CBOs, CSOs, and NGOs in Songkhla, Yala, and Narathiwat Province through better access to peace information and broader participation in peace process.
   - Assessing if and how the project contributes to empowering vulnerable groups to access to justice.
   - Assessing if and how the project contributes to social cohesion and trust building in community level.
   - Analyzing if and how the project is able to sustain social cohesion and community resilience through livelihood improvement, and whether or not further upscaling/replication took place.

2. Identification of lessons learned and recommendations.

   Lessons learned (both positive and negative) and tools/instruments used to achieve the expected results, especially which have been used for capacity building, access to justice, and livelihood improvemnet activities, should be documented. In collecting the lessons learned, the evaluator should look into the innovative and catalytic

aspects of the project and relate them to recommendations for future practices for social cohesion in the Deep South region.

3. Exploration of the possiblity for UNDP future participation in peace building in the Deep South. Based on lessons learned, the recomemndations sould also be made to UNDP for future programme participation in peace building and social cohesion in the southernmost provinces of Thailand.

Data collection bases primarily on multiple data collection methods. The evaluation considered the strategic context, the results frameowrk and the validity of key guiding statements (vision, mission, goal,and result). The evaluation briefly looked at the focus areas and an overview of focus area performance was extracted from Annual Progress Reports and other reports. The evaluation considers strategy implementation, whether the proposed mechanisms are in place and are effective for delivery of the strategy.

The evaluation included a broad document review and interviews with key stakeholders: UNDP staff, members, and relevant STEP Project Phase II members. Interviews were conducted both face-to-face in Bangkok, Hat Yai, Pattani and remotely via telephone. Feedback sessions on draft findings were held with senior management and a workshop was held with key staff to validate and deepen findings.

Key methodologies includes

1) Process documentation strategies

The documentation will apply process documentation methodology which is a method of concisely capturing and sharing critical concepts and information as they are developed. Systematic desk review, in-depth interviews with local authorities, communities and vulnerable groups, focus group discussions with implementing parties, field notetaking, an array of skype interviews.

Process documentation will validate the approach and consequent implementation, particularly coordination process. The local background should be taken into account. The process documentation will describe the context of the initiative for change/background information on how the implementation processes in order to learn from the STEP II project implementation experiences.

2) Content analysis and triangulation techniques

The evaluation follows methodological triangulation approach, including investigator triangulation, data triangulation, and methodological triangulation, and consultation session, to explore tangible results with the identification of the specific instruments for scalability. In this regards, 5 experts are consulted and interviewed with respect to providing fully project implementation. Reports from different monitoring assessment will be collected for the proposed recommendations for the continuation of the STEP II project in the Deep South Thailand.

The STEP II Project Evaluation uses empirical methods to consult, represent, and support implementing parties, communities and survivors, and consultants including peace experts and academics. The consultations fill the gap between peacebuilding work as it is

envisioned by policy-makers, and its implementation, reception and perception on the ground.

The assessment strategies will address the needs of communities, and vulnerable people affected by violence. Particularly, group discussions offer insights about people's state of mind and identify undergrounded perceptions.

The field surveys will split into 2 time-slots:

1) 20 – 22 September 2017, and
2) 25 – 29 September 2017.

Key informants would be representatives from these 3 groups including

- Implementing Parties (IPs): a) College of Education in Pattani and b) Institute for Peace Studies with c) their local network of CSOs,
- Beneficiaries from 13 villages or relatives from 5 selected villages, and
- Team of Consultants.

A total of approximately 15 - 20 key informants will be selected on the basis of their roles and involvement in the project as suggested by Project Manager.

2.3 Methods of analysis

Main tasks	Methodologies	Expected outputs	Verifications
I. Project planning			
1. Prepare and agree on methodology and approach of the project • Documents and approaches to be applied. • Documents reviewed. • Selected informants and stakeholders involved in the project to be interviewed. • Plan and conduct interviews.	• Seminar observation • Meetings	Submission of an Inception report on methodology and work plan submitted to UNDP.	Final methodology and work plan for the assignment.
II. Documentation and Field surveys			
2. Review existing materials and documentation on the STEP II project • Project Documents and Summary Reports • Progress Reports • Minute of the Meetings • Workshop materials	• Documentary survey – Manuals – Working papers – Workshop materials – Minutes of the meetings – Articles, video and audio recordings • Consultation process • Methodological Triangulation	Existing materials and reports from the workshops reviewed and documented.	
3. Participate in key events	• Observations. • Structured interviews with 5 - 13 key informants/stakeholders.	Reports from the field trips.	Findings incorporated in the progress report
4. Participate in the field work visits and document key issues/findings stemming from the visit.	• Purposive sampling • Case narratives. • Case comparison.	Trip reports.	Findings incorporated in the progress report
III. Report Writing			

5. Draft the report demonstrating • Results and key lessons learned. • Recommendations of the future.	• Content analysis • Tri-angulation	Delivery of a draft final report	A draft report with the completion of interviewing the selected target informants.
Main tasks	**Methodologies**	**Expected outputs**	**Verifications**
6. Revise and edit the documentation based on feedback from UNDP, and other stakeholders.	• Consultation	Submission of the final report	A final report based on feedback from UNDP and other stakeholders

Chapter III Main Findings and Analysis

3.1 Main findings and analysis

The project progress reports are well documented. The STEP Project Phase II offers an opportunity to enter into or glimpse areas that are usually hidden and/or restricted.

The three year, USD 800,063.43 project sought to establish and manage community development initiatives that contribute to improved human security and social cohesion. The STEP Phase II project is a co-signed project between UNDP and Government of Thailand through Prince of Songkla University, as the appointed Implementing Partner, working in partnership with other national collaborating agencies, including Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, and Southern Border Provinces Administrative Center[24].

Prince of Songkla University comes with unique ability to work with academic faculty and practitioner faculty to create knowledge that leads to practical skills for beneficiaries.

Prince of Songkla University offered project leadership to the more robust and stronger leaders in peace promotion, i.e., Institute for Peace Studies located at the main campus in Hat Yai and College of Islamic Studies in Pattani Campus[25], including the technical network of 7 consultants from 5 faculties/institutes among the leadership. The Institute for Peace Studies is responsible for handling project's first outputthat was successfully implemented during 2015 - 2016 and College of Islamic Studies is tasking of the second and third outputs , , of making justice accessible to all and alternative dispute resolutions available at community level, helping people rebuild their shattered lives, and helping communities live together again.

The Project Executive Committee played a largely figurehead role in making management decisions for a project when guidance and recommendations are required by UNDP/Implementing Partner[26] to ensure management for development results, effective resource mobilization, fairness, integrity and transparency. The project established deep

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[24] UNDP Micro Assessment Report, 2016.

[25] Who has taken the responsibility of managing project activities and monitoring small grant programme for community development (UNDP Micro Assessment Report, 2016).

[26] Terms of Reference of the STEP Phase II (2015 – 2017) Project Executive Committee.

and inclusive national ownership by inviting the Director of College of Islamic Studies of Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus to act as the Chairperson of the Project Executive Committee.

The final responsibility for monitoring the project progress rests with Project Monitoring Committee. In July 2015, Project Monitoring Committee was set up by appointing representatives from the government and civil society in the areas of the southern border provinces.

The STEP Project Phase II has been built on the support of the majority of the population to avoid further catastrophe and return local communities to growth. By keeping collaboration and partnership into focus, the project improved collaboration across UN agencies, promoted more unified interaction with governments and achieved better results at the community level.

3.2 Relevance

The STEP Project Phase II sits at the core of UNDP's priorities as it supports two strategic areas of UNDP works, i.e., promoting inclusive and effective democratic governance, and building the society's resilience. These two distinct strategic areas are integrated under the implementation of this project, in order to achieve the overall goal of sustained peace building.

The project is a critical element to reinforce the UNDP Human Security Strategy[27] and facilitates the implementation of the UNDP's new Strategic Plan 2014 – 2017[28] as its objectives aim to eradicate poverty and reduce inequalities and exclusion[29] as well as contributes positively to the new global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, to provide access to justice for all and to building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels, and to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

The STEP Project Phase II was the first active intervention of the UNDP in the realm of human security implemented by UN member countries globally. Applying UNDP Human Security Strategy had strengthen citizen participation and community engagement by perceiving citizens as co-producers of security[30] and resulted in a surge in strategic peace building alliances and partnerships among organizations engaged in conflict prevention in the three southernmost provinces. As such the objectives for the project go beyond those immediately stated in the eventual project document. More broadly, the project has a

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[27] The 2012 UN General Assembly clearly defined that people have "the right to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential".

[28] The project contributes to 3 out of 7 outcomes of the UNDP Strategic Plan 2014 – 2017, which are intertwined: 1st Outcome including growth and development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded, 2nd Outcome including citizen expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance; and 3rd Outcome including countries are able to reduce the likelihood of conflict and lower the risk of natural disaster, including from climate change.

[29] The STEP Phase II Project Document, 2014.

[30] OSCAR A. GÓMEZ AND DES GASPER, 2013. Human Security. UNDP Human Development Report Office.

pivotal role to play in positioning UNDP as a credible and valuable actor as part of a coordinated approach in addressing this growing threat.

More importantly, the STEP Project Phase II also supports the development strategies of the RTG, particularly the Southern Border Province Administrative Center (SBPAC) [31]. The government also started several initiatives, witnessed by the enactment of the Southern Border Province Administrative Center (SBPAC) law[32] to decentralize administrative power, respect for human rights and the rule of law, and introduce a better model of cooperation and integration. The peace agenda of SBPAC has put renewed attention on security and development strategies as a central priority and goal to enhance local peace and security through peaceful means.

The STEP Project Phase II was built on the UNDP's comparative advantage and expertise in enhancing the resilience of fragile communities, in line with its commitment to resilience-building[33]. It was designed through a highly participatory process, and thus included multiple multi-stakeholder assessment missions and a number of project reviews through the STEP Project Phase II monitoring committee and national experts to ensure broad-based engagement and effective project design[34].

It is clear from interviews with those involved that rate the project relevant. Significant efforts were made throughout the assessment and inception phase of the project by the Project Management Team involved in the process. This was in part to ensure a proper understanding of the environment, to ensure stakeholders by-in and to ensure local and national ownership and alignment with national priorities.

Figure 2 Assessment and feasibility studies undertaken for the STEP Project Phase II

2014	The Initial Risk Analysis
2015	Baseline Survey
2015	Micro Assessment on the Financial Management Capacity of the Implementing Partners of the STEP Project Phase II
2015 - 2016	Quarterly project reporting
2015	Project Working Group Meetings
2015 - 2016	Monthly meetings
2015	Establishing the Small Grants Committee and administrative mechanism[35]
2016	SWOT analysis

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[31] SBPAC is mandated to oversee the implementation of development strategies in the southern border provinces, and has the authority to bypass some of regular public administrative mechanisms.

[32] The enactment of the Southern Border Province Administrative Center (SBPAC) law provides framework for the implementation of the Southern Border Provinces Administration and Development 2012 – 2014 Policy, comprising both security and development strategies to strengthen the hand of the government in dealing with the violence. The aim of the policy is to eliminate all negative conditions that might be used by perpetrators as a pretext to initiate acts of violence, it seeks to deal effectively with southern unrest through peaceful means, decentralization of administrative power, respect for human rights, and the rule of law, and calls on all members of society to join hands in handling the southern situation and all relevant agencies to work on southern problems in an integrated manner.

[33] The STEP Phase II Project Document, 2014.

[34] UNDP Annual Progress Report of STEP Project Phase II January – December 2015.

[35] To monitor small grants disbursement and identify key target areas and beneficiaries.

A clear exit strategy of the STEP Project Phase II will be agreed up on from the beginning by project responsible parties and will be discussed and accepted by all project counterparts[36].

A few of the highlights include changing context of governance, conflict situation and development situation in Thailand strengthens the STEP Project Phase II. Civil society has now a unique chance to become really important force in the three southernmost provinces. The project's key counterparts remain the same as in Phase I and will include civil society organizations (CSOs), local networks including woman and youth groups, local leaders and volunteers (many of whom have been directly and indirectly affected by the violence), as well as UN agencies, but was implemented in closer collaboration with local partners, including Royal Thai Government (RTG) agencies, NGOs and academic institutes.

The STEP II Project is designed to respond to the current development of the situation and realigned with the current RTG development strategies and aims to support the implementation of UNDP strategic plan 2014 – 2017[37]. The STEP Project embraces Human Security Strategy elements in the design and use human security approach to link actors working in all three pillars of the UN Charter including development, human rights, and peace and security.

The project also aligns its implementation strategy with international practices of peace building and conflict prevention with an emphasis that all activities would need to be more coherent and working in a more active manner in order for the UNDP to achieve its full potential impact to promote the rule of law, human rights and human dignity. In conclusion, the STEP Project Phase II has wide-reaching relevance, shedding light on power of civil societies.

3.3 Effectiveness

Effectiveness is a measure by which the project is seen to have achieved its objectives. The project began implementation with the three following expected outputs:

Output 1

Dialogue program designed to increase open-mindedness. More importantly, the models of governance are inclusive and accountable to ordinary people.

The Institute of Peace Studies (IPS) and its partners achieved key goals which included (1) development of local media for broadened communication on peace in the Deep South through various activities to promote three components of knowledge (i.e. peace process, Melayu language, and communication) (2) promotion and dissemination of alternative media to enhance communication networks and encourage access to information by extending more accessible spaces for information sharing about the Deep South vis-à-vis discourse on the existing peace process (3) establishment of Academic Learning Centers on Community Peace in three provinces (Safety Net: Kampong Damai) which aims to open political, democratic, and safety space for people to participate in peace building in potential communities in the three southernmost provinces (4) building the

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[36] The STEP Phase II Project Document, 2014.

[37] The Southern Thailand Empowerment and Participation Phase II (STEP II) Project Document, 2014.

capacity of local leaders to exercise a firm command on positive peace components (i.e. justice, equality, and autonomy) with the expectation that local leaders will recognize the importance of participating in the peace-building process and feel empowered to do so (5) conducting trainings and workshops under the auspices of various organizations on the peace process for local communities and fleshing out peace networks (6) promotion of Insider Peacebuilders' Platform (IPP), which for years has been a platform for NGOs/CSOs to meet on a regular basis and discuss peace and conflict in the Deep South in order to develop a joint roadmap to settle the conflict peacefully. IPP also encourages all parties to establish a safety zone for the fragile peace through close collaboration with academic institutions and civil society organizations in the region. The project addresses major grievances such as the economic marginalization of vulnerable groups, limited access to justice, and the distrust within different segments of the population.

Output 2

Benefitting from being part of a larger network, the STEP II Project has supported to build spaces and platforms at local level in order to build the capacities of local communities and government authorities to address the wide range of violent conflict[38]. It combines both conflict prevention elements and peace building activities in all deliverables, focusing on societal resilience and human rights.

The STEP Project Phase II of UNDP work was immensely influential in the sense that it was looking at micro-level dynamics and conflict way before anyone else was. As a result, local civil societies have had the most decisive role. The mapping of civil society and community-based organizations in 2011 and the mapping of legal aid organizations in 2012[39] show that CSOs in the southern border provinces are particularly strong in 3 areas: 1) human rights and access to justice, 2) human security and support groups, and 3) sustainable development and environmental conservation.

Output 3 Local communities become resilient with strong social cohesion through the improvement of livelihoods

Output 3 has 4 interlinked components (See the Table below).

Main planned activities	Indicators
• Goods and services to be produced for income generating activities are identified and prioritized in local community plans with the market assessment conducted. • Eight target groups such as female household heads and youths identified from both Muslim and Buddhist communities are assessed on their needs and capacity gaps to receive initial training for the necessary skills to start up activities. • Community-based micro and small enterprises are established and operated with support from experts and small financial contributions provided.	1. Number of vulnerable individuals and communities benefit from small grants with at least 20% increase in income generation. 2. Ratio of women groups participating in community initiatives. 3. Number of community initiatives on social cohesion.

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[38] Quarterly Progress Report, Southern Thailand Empowerment and Participation Project Phase II January-March 2017.

[39] Conducted by Prince of Songkla University with support of UNDP under the STEP Project Phase I.

Community-based business/livelihood operational scheme coordinated, monitored and evaluated by small grant steering committee and scaled-up plan developed with the support of local authorities.	4. Number of local authority participating in and taking on community initiatives.

The progress in the improvement of livelihoods output has been extensive and rapid until it is fast becoming a significant part of the project portfolios. All four indicator targets were met or exceeded by the end of 2017 and progress has been made toward all four expected accomplishments. The number of community initiative on social cohesion is higher than planned[40].

Working with pilot community enterprises in the STEP Project Phase I served as learning sites and trainers for new local community groups[41] has improved targeting mechanism. The selection followed a revised broader approach which [42] allowed broader potential recipients including NGOs, CSOs, and individuals to be involved. Therefore, the target was reached. Progress reports provide many examples of community level achievements with increasing ration of women groups participating in community initiatives.

The College of Islamic Sciences of Prince Songkla University served as implementing partners. Subsequently, the Small Grants Committee was formed and over the last two years, the project brought together faculty, staff, and students from across PSU to work on the project. Consultant teams working with local and regional stakeholders developed locally-responsive proposals. Following need-based approach allow the project to enhance and broaden assistance to project beneficiaries on many fronts including training course, supervision, exchange visit programs, the introduction to new marketspaces.

In short, key achievements include 1) small grants provided to potential local community groups have built a relationship between Buddhist and Muslim families, 2) running with a spirit and practice of collaboration, it provided linkages between communities and local governance, 3) income generating activities initiatives has increased capacity across multiple communities, and 4) the project has enhanced recognition of women as it clearly mentioned in 2016 UNDP Annual Progress Report that vulnerable groups of people, including conflict-affected female-headed households and their families, are beneficiaries of sustainable livelihood improvement.

All income generation activities have emphasized on improving stakeholder involvement and partnerships, particularly increased numbers of local authority participating in and taking on community initiatives. Success is evident when local people participate more in community development programs of the government. They increased demand for working space, tools and specialized equipment which the majority of group leaders require further capacity development. Key capacities to be built include the ability

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[40] After the end of selection process through the Small Grants Committee, 12 local community groups in Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat, were selected for small grants. Eight local community groups were selected in the 3rd quarter of 2015 and officially started their projects in October 2015 whereas 4 more groups were selected in the last quarter of 2015 and start their projects in 2016.

[41] UNDP Annual Progress Report of STEP Project Phase II January – December 2015.

[42] From the Needs Assessment Report prepared by Ms. Rungrawee Chalermsripinyorat, an independent consultant initially targeted local community groups as the main potential recipients for small grants.

to plan, monitor, marketing and adapt to changing circumstances that enable them to respond to adversity and to thrive.

In a short period of sub-project implementation, the building social cohesion was more evident than any profit making but after 1 year implementation, almost all income generating groups exhibited attractive benefit-cost ratios in varying degrees. The improvement of livelihoods activities have been identified as potential sources of alternative income.

Due to restricted regulations of the government agencies, the consultants insist that the government authorities unable to take over this role and deal with economic marginalization of vulnerable groups.

The twelve local community groups, comprising of groups of women, the elderly, people with disabilities, and vulnerable youth in the 3 southernmost provinces were selected by the Small Grant Committee. The selection criteria are based primarily on group potentiality and a needs-assessment report conducted by independent researchers.

They can be categorized into 4 categories as follows:

Empowerment of women, youth and vulnerable group of people

The violent conflict in the three southernmost provinces during the nearly 13 years left thousands of women widowed and numbers of children orphaned in their wake. Female heads of households increased continuously after the reemergence in 2004 and in the years of violence that followed. In hard-hit communities, violence against widowed appears to be increasing, particularly when many adult men have been causalities of the conflicts, some are in prison or migrate to other parts of Thailand or even to Malaysia. Leaving women, children, and the elderly alone in the family, their needs have come to exceed available help. The widespread unemployment led many desperate youth to join illicit drug activities.

The seven projects have helped women and youth as beneficiaries of income generating activities to live in dignity. The activities' goal was to provide distinct neighborhoods for women and vulnerable people to do different types of wok and enable the conversations, team work, conflict experience sharing and learning exchange necessary for promoting community engagement.

The grieving widows emerge with new skills, identities, and social networks. By learning the value of team, these groups has reinstituted a type of neighborhood watch, complementing community-level security practices and will play a pivotal role in the continued growth of entrepreneurship in the coming decades.

The group is organized into small units of 10 – 20 people. They received a hands-on experience from other leading communities.

The STEP II Project Phase II has made local authorities and NGOs who play a decisive role in the development of communities more representative when stressing the goal to establish strong relationships with government authorities.

The mentorship, guidance, and technical support that members receive from Prince of Songkla University, along with the many other resources, provide members with an environment to learn how to quickly and effectively start new ventures that positively

change the situation. A group of consultants have overseen the activity and helped with training, mentoring, and workshops in different fields of expertise.

The expansion signaled the progress in an effort to attract more members and new partners. Enlarging space will enable new and expanded collaboration across community, with more widows and women developing entrepreneurial skills in a dynamic environment.

1. The Production of Kolae Boat Model[43] Project

The production of Kolae Boat Model project was met with mixed responses. The activation of certain identities of the community, particularly historical and economical identities have powerfully achieved and brought social ties and responsibilities to the youth group. This project was not performing as well as others, with performance in indicators relating to income generation and community initiatives on social cohesion lagging behind. In those indicators currently not on track, performance stopped after 2016. According to the SWOT analysis presented by Dr. Hamdia Mudor and Ms. Jareeya Arttanuchit[44] in the First Project Executive Committee (PEC) Meeting in 2016[45], this project was identified as a low-potential group.

Indicators

1. Number of vulnerable individuals and communities benefit from small grants with at least 20% increase in income generation.	A passive group of 10 unemployed and underprivileged youth
2. Ratio of women groups participating in community initiatives.	Less portion
3. Number of community initiatives on social cohesion.	Kolae Boat Model Training, the procurement of high-quality tools to construct Kolae boat models and production with mixed responses, the gathering of a small group of skilled artisans, The connection with potential consumers utilizing free social media opportunities.
4. Number of local authority participating in and taking on community initiatives.	PSU

In fact, this project was started from scratch with seed capital from UNDP to organize the training and start the production. Working on a time-consuming task, combined with internal conflicts between a group leader and members, varied local support

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[43] Kolae Boat Model is a famous traditional wooden boat souvenir produced at Ban Datoh in Yaring district, Pattani Province.

[44] Dr. Hamdia Mudor and Ms. Jareeya Arttanuchit are lecturers at Faculty of Communication Sciences, Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus, serving as consultants for the 8 community groups. They were nominated by the Small Grant Committee (Minute of the 1st PEC Meeting, 2016).

[45] The meeting was held at B.P. Samila Beach Hotel, Muang Songkhla District, Songkhla Province on 22 February 2016 (Minute of the 1st PEC Meeting, 2016).

over time, and former supporters became more receptive to messages from community skeptics, these factors pose important challenges for ensuring the achievement in this project. Slow delivery is also hampered by the migration of group members, particular youthful migrant workers to work in Malaysia.

However, this project continues to be one of the STEP Project Phase II's successes when helps turn passive group of 10 unemployed and underprivileged youth aged between 15 – 20 years old into engaged and informed communities and allow them to gain access to a larger network of academia through the Kolae Boat Model training. Targeting vulnerable youth group who may not necessarily be entrepreneurs is very challenging. There have been important achievements in involving underprivileged youths in the training on management. After the trainings, they started the procurement of high-quality tools to construct Kolae boat models and planned to organize regular workshops once a month to improve the basic and technical skills.

Ban Datoh community[46], a large fishing village has provided important seafood resources to Pattani's coastal economy. The community was shifted away from traditional fishing when the marine resources declined a decade ago due to environmental problems and commercial fishing. Besides, the community has a long history of economic marginalization with high prevalence of use of illicit drugs among youth. In fighting rampant drug epidemic, educational experience would expand opportunity and dissuade susceptible youth from consuming illicit drugs.

The project reached an important milestone when a small group of skilled artisans had gathered to deliver technical knowledge and share their experiential learning to youth and children in their home community. It allows the traditional knowledge more accessible to youth, closing the skills gaps toward achievement of sustainable development. Subsequently, some of them brought their products on-demand to new markets.

There is evidence of good performance in the STEP Project Phase II annual progress report in 2016. It indicated that 1) the group gets in a larger scope by developing many products including Kolae boat magnets and Buran Kite symbolized Southern Thailand and Malaysia's tradition, 2) in just a year's time, the group begin connecting to potential consumers including people and companies outside the region and from abroad, utilizing free social media opportunities, i.e., Novica introduced by UNDP New York and press releases to sale a number of Kolae boat models.

In conclusion, the team of consultants and group members suggested that the project is more prominently feature in a semi-organized community of youth working on of Kolae boat model rather than being developed into a business center. The project should follow a more flexible approach by allocating more time to study the context of the community and identify the product that addresses local needs.

2. Thienya Roasted Coconut Production Project

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[46] Ban Datoh was once a flourishing fishing community. Due to the decline of fish stocks, their incomes have significantly plummeted. Many of them travel to Malaysia to seek income, leaving their children behind with the elderly. The community has negative impacts from the ongoing conflict and suffers from rampant illicit drug activity, which is quickly spreading among the unemployed youth (The STEP Project Phase II Annual Progress Report, 2016).

Progress was made and all four indicator targets have been achieved and likely to be exceeded by 2017. The opportunity that the project offered for engagement has been vital for building relationship among community members. As people previously have not had a trust on each other and no platform to work together in economic activities, never been involved in the decision-making process, therefore, it can be considered a success story. This project revealed a clear social impact on women and vulnerable households who collectively work on this project: 1) it helped rebuild trust and harmony in the community while improving their livelihood, generating income. There is a reported increase in the number of members and increased livelihood on women. The group improved revenue generation

Indicators

1. Number of vulnerable individuals and communities benefit from small grants with at least 20% increase in income generation.	10 female members; 8 Muslims and 2 Buddhists
2. Ratio of women groups participating in community initiatives.	100%
3. Number of community initiatives on social cohesion.	Safe space for discussion and support, the production of toasted coconuts
4. Number of local authority participating in and taking on community initiatives.	Increasing

efficiency through team practices, frequent communication, meetings and gatherings. Groups are formed by women themselves. The group has marketed their product in local markets and through word-of-mouth advertising, they can run wholesale operations and import to Malaysia. The individualized and focused mentoring has helped the group push through the problems facing them and focused on creating a plan for immediate action. Gaining exposure to key government actors and other entrepreneurship resources allow the group to tap into a broader entrepreneurship network and a network of community advisors. The demand for roasted coconut, a locally produced food, is obviously high. Therefore, the group holds aspirational goals to serve wider markets by developing robust and scalable production solutions.

In recent decades, Thienya village, located in a very remote area of Thienya sub-district of Yaring district in Pattani province, has been a notoriously difficult place for women to participate in development matters. Recent brutal and violent attacks against Buddhists have strained the relationship between them[47], although it was once a harmonious mixed community of Muslim and Buddhist. As a result, neighbors do not communicate and look out for one another. Given years of violent conflict, Thienya village is a very unlikely place to see results from development aid.

Agriculture, particularly rice farming, together with oil palm and coconut plantation, is their predominant economic activity. Being dependent on climate-sensitive smallholder agriculture, many young men and women left the community for a better job in the city. A group of Muslims and Buddhists decided to produce toasted coconuts.

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[47] This climate of fear has driven Buddhists in Ban Thienya to leave the village. The total number of Buddhist households was reduced from over 30 to 10. (The STEP Project Phase II Annual Progress Report, 2016).

Production activity is run in an enclosed commercial space in a house of the group leader, comprising a mix of complementary uses of shared-use kitchen for start-up toasted coconuts business and to share experiences among women and vulnerable households as well as support one another after living lives in fear for a long time. This space was vibrant all year long.

Group members shared their many positive experiences of having a chance to work on the project. Their startup stories were widely shared among local authorities and more women have shown interested to join the entrepreneurship. Enlarging the production space will provide a new platform for local authorities to get involved, with many government officers taking part as mentors.

3. Palm Sugar Development and Branding Project

Achievements in this activity have been significant, particularly changes in internal conflict situation with the community and women's empowerment. The importance of women's empowerment and capacity building is clearly shown in the production, product classification, and product development. All indicators are on track, particularly adaptive action that enhanced the 1st indicator by increasing the number of vulnerable individuals and communities benefit from small grants with at least 20% increase in income generation. A new classification system of palm sugar has recently been introduced and the price for granulated palm sugar and sliced palm sugar has been raised up. The price of granulated palm sugar is satisfactorily, 50 percent higher than palm sugar syrup.

Indicators

1. Number of vulnerable individuals and communities benefit from small grants with at least 20% increase in income generation.	70 members from 35 households from Ban Thung and Ban Huakhlong villages, mixed communities of Muslims and Buddhists.
2. Ratio of women groups participating in community initiatives.	Nearly 100%
3. Number of community initiatives on social cohesion.	The production of plam sugar and granulated palm sugar, product classification, and product development.
4. Number of local authority participating in and taking on community initiatives.	Many particularly Sub-district organizations working on cultural revitalization

Initially, this project do not generate substantial revenue, but serve as community development tools by reducing blight, promoting educational awareness on traditional food, providing a way for community members to gain new skills, and simply creating a safe space for people to gather. The woman takes her leadership role very seriously and the past year has seen dramatic results in their efforts, particularly enhancing quality of the products and packaging using woven baskets. Having a woman in a leadership position allows other women participate constructively in village decision-making and realize economic benefits as a result.

The group worked well with multi-actors to drive innovation and diversify the types of Palm Sugar commodities that have improved client satisfaction and nutrition. In response to demand change and complex market dynamics, the group started refining palm sugar

syrup into palm sugar powder during the last quarter of 2015. A new product has yielded a higher profit than other palm sugar products.

This project is another mixed Buddhist-Muslim community enterprise predominately run by women. This project focuses on team-based interaction among 70 members from 35 households from Ban Thung and Ban Huakhlong villages[48]. Muslims and Buddhists still maintain close ties. Many households engage in mixed production activities and diversify livelihood activities, including rice production and palm sugar development.

Palm sugar typically does not generate substantial revenue. Small amounts of palm sugar and lack of a uniform quality are likely major obstacles to successful marketing of palm sugar in the Deep South region. Extracting and processing the palm sugar is hard manual work under difficult working conditions. Violent conflicts in neighborhoods constraints have hindered performance in this activity and force villagers to restrict traveling outside the familiar territory, reducing their chances to earn extra income. The villagers considered these challenges together and came up with a project proposal to improve and standardize the quality of palm sugar.

The distinct lesson relevant to the group success is based on their surveys that discovered a high quality of palm sugar and an unmet demand for palm sugar powder. The group was actively working with members to identify and produce information about available equipment, shortage of tools, number of palm trees, production quantity, markets and other problems for more effective income generation activity. Data collection led to the evaluation of palm sugar production sites for each household and found that kitchens and shelters were used as a factories and production procedure was not standardized. Survey data played a key role in the renovation their shelter to function as a proper factory for palm sugar production.

 Their incomes depend on how many palm trees they have and how much palm sugar they can collect. The group adopted multiple revenue streams for a reliable cash flow through the production of palm sugar powder and planed for ecotourism promotion.

4. **Dried and Fresh Fish Crackers Project**

This project built on previous performance of a local Muslim family that joined hands with a couple of neighboring groups of villagers in Na Pradu sub-district, started producing and selling fresh and dried fish crackers branded "Harofat" over the last 10 years. Incorporating the successful aspects of past efforts, performance in this project has tracked steadily. Hiring both Muslim and Buddhist villagers who are not working is a major contributing factor toward promoting social inclusion. More importantly, production efficiency succeeded to address the larger social concerns about food product standards, networking and local input in decision-making.

The STEP Project Phase II began work with this community enterprise to announce expansions for their business through provision of technical support and capacity development. There were signs pointed to an increased interest in quality of food.

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[48] Ban Thung and Ban Huakhlong are mixed communities, located in two adjacent sub-districts—Tha Kham and Ban Noak, respectively—in Panarae district. Ban Thung has significant Buddhists (42.36 per cent) and Muslim (57.64 per cent) of a total population of 458. (The STEP Project Phase II Annual Progress Report, 2016).

Of particular in this project is that different authorities have leveraged funds to scale up the production of dried and fresh fist crackers from small-scale to middle-scale[49] with new investment on rebuilding a factory to be a demonstration site and training center. This was a result of being always on the lookout for networking opportunities and foodie meetups.

Indicators

1. Number of vulnerable individuals and communities benefit from small grants with at least 20% increase in income generation.	15 members
2. Ratio of women groups participating in community initiatives.	3 men and 12 women
3. Number of community initiatives on social cohesion.	The production of dried fish crackers branded "Harofat", capacity building, hiring both Muslim and Buddhist villagers, rebuilding factory, improve sustainable business practices through product development to meet health/quality standards, i.e., the Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) or HALAL food certification, developing attractive package.
4. Number of local authority participating in and taking on community initiatives.	Very many with Na Pradu sub-district Administration Organisation, Sub-district Health Promotion Centers, SBPAC, district office, and the 43rd Paramilitary Regiment

Peer recommendations from the provincial public health office and consumer protection offices about the manufacturing process, product quality, and factory building standards have helped the group to develop a construction plan and design for the factory. The facility at the end of 2016 was under the construction, reaching 80 percent of completion due to complicated renovation in accordance with the standard factory plan.

Subsequently, project funds were raised through a range of sources including Na Pradu sub-district Administration Organisation and the Southern Border Provinces Administration Centre (SBPAC) for the cost of construction. The 43rd Paramilitary Regiment also provided a group of rangers to help build the factory. To empower practical grassroots innovation, the improved packaging was developed with and expertise and ideas from the Community Development Department.

Most significantly, interest from the local authorities and the community continues to grow for this project alleviated some of the causes of poverty in rural areas of Pattani where there is a strong Muslims and Buddhists presence.

Taking advantage of new opportunities in running a community enterprise and ideas, this group, as well as other villagers established the "Harofat Fish Cracker Group." Comprising of 15 members (3 men and 12 women) with a mutual aim of becoming self-sufficient and generating income by producing and selling fresh and dried fish crackers, this

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[49] The predecessor to this project began in 2004 when a local Muslim family, together with a couple of neighboring groups of villagers, started producing and selling fresh and dried fish crackers branded "Harofat." Even though they have been producing the fish crackers from more than 10 years, the scale of operations for this small business has been limited.

group would like to improve sustainable business practices through product development to meet health/quality standards, i.e., the Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) or HALAL food certification and to reach wider markets. Obtaining health/halal certification and developing attractive packaging will extend their potential customer base into foreign markets.

Local capacity has been built so that the group is now able to run the production process. While the production facilities are under the renovation, the group continues their small-scale production operations in functional areas of the factory serving a nearby market. To launch the product into the spotlight, villagers use public demonstrations.

In situations where the economic climate of a community can not feasibly support new development, in a conflict area, which limits the villagers' opportunities to travel freely, work without fear, and find jobs outside their village, community enterprise represents an alternative to offer members with stable jobs. Buddhists are assigned to work on marketing while Muslims take the responsibility of production.

5. Development of Prepared/Preserved Garcinia Project

This project[50] is a locally-operated food production, i.e, prepared/preserved garcinia that generates revenue through a variety of products. Garcinia, a sour fruit and widely planted in Sai Khao has grown a robust demand and local and sustainable food movement. The Sai-Khao Agriculturist Housewife Community Enterprise, comprising of 50 elderly members, was established to create healthier, more engaging, and more inventive future food systems of garcinia's food processing, packaging and marketing. A variety of products from preserved garcinia was created and will acquire a Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) certificate in order to expand their market.

Indicators

1.	Number of vulnerable individuals and communities benefit from small grants with at least 20% increase in income generation.	50 elderly members
2.	Ratio of women groups participating in community initiatives.	100%
3.	Number of community initiatives on social cohesion.	Garcinia's food processing and product development
4.	Number of local authority participating in and taking on community initiatives.	Public Health

A public health officer was contacted to provide advice to the group. As the factory of this group is well built, it did not need to be significantly renovated; only some parts were improved to meet the requirements outlined under the GMP standard. The group has improved the factory and also designed new products. They later decided to produce spicy and sour preserved garcinia.After successfully creating new products like garcinia tea and spicy preserved garcinia, which were popular with consumers, the group designed

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[50] The project on "Development of Prepared/Preserved Garcinia," is located in Sai-Khao Sub-district, Khok Pho district, Pattani. Sai-Khao is an ancient village with a long history and is rich in natural resources (The STEP Project Phase II Annual Progress Report, 2016).

appropriate packaging for the spicy preserved garcinia—a small plastic cup with a colourful sticker label. In 2016, the group produced and sold spicy preserved garcinia in various markets in the Deep South and also in Bangkok, especially through the One Tambon One Product markets organised by the government.

As this group is considered as one of the successful community enterprise, the group leader shares best practices in innovative food processing to other groups and supports business expansion through effective management.

6. Economic Empowerment for Gujingluepa Conflict-affected Women

The economic empowerment for Gujingluepa conflict-affected women project has made great stride towards all 4 key indicators, particularly social inclusion. Involving 15 conflict-affected women in fried fish crackers has spurred many changes that have helped to make Gujingluepa a better place for outsiders. The group has partnered with the Network of Civic Women for Peace (NCWP) on peace-platform to take violence prevention in their own hands and play an important role of women peace-builders to complement the larger peace-building process.

Indicators

1. Number of vulnerable individuals and communities benefit from small grants with at least 20% increase in income generation.	Involving 15 conflict-affected women
2. Ratio of women groups participating in community initiatives.	100%
3. Number of community initiatives on social cohesion.	Pried fish crackers, packaging and labeling development, trainings
4. Number of local authority participating in and taking on community initiatives.	PSU and local authorities

Gujingluepa became the violence-prone area since last decade[51]. Mistrust, suspicion, fear and violence corrode the foundations of a healthy community. Some members were victims of violence with others living in the most unstable setting of violence for a long time. In escalating violence and divisiveness, women were at a disadvantage due to their comparative lack of experience in entrepreneurship and certain technical skills. Livelihood development has rarely been made a priority as Gujingluepa has widely been viewed as a dangerous, highly conflict-affected and economically struggling community. Tensions between local people and the government still linger long after the peace process started few years ago. Bringing about women empowerment project is a highly complex challenge. With little experience in food production and project management and even less of a customer base, Muslima KL group in Gujingluepa village of Narathiwat province, initiated fried fish crackers to the market.

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[51] Gujingluepa village became well known a teacher who left her home in the North to instruct children in the South was abducted from a local school. She died in 2007 after having been severely beaten by her abductors (The STEP Project Phase II Annual Progress Report, 2016).

In addressing these challenges, this group has launched a campaign of "eatable peace", an emotive message to empower women and change the image of community to be free from violence. Freedom from violence has helped market their products. The group planned to produce various products such as donuts, fish crackers, and hot-pressed coconut oil using local materials.

When trained by a group of conflict-affected women from Po-Ming sub-district in Pattani, they began to introduce traditional fried fish crackers in different flavors. The products were popular and sold out quickly. The members are now producing both regular fried crackers and herbal fried, which are available at more than 15 local shops such as Narathiwat bus station, Yee-Ngo hospital, and local markets.

Yet the potential of the group lies in the strength of its members, who regularly attend peace platforms as well as the group leader, who is very active and eager to learn new things. The leader's enthusiasm to seek product development and marketing skills and keenness to follow the advice of the project consultant, the group has opened up opportunities to join market fairs and events arranged by government sector. Their products are also exported to Malaysia. The members have currently earned an extra income approximately 5,000 Baht a month from fried crackers.

7. **Economic Empowerment for Po-Ming Conflict-affected Women**

For more than a decade, Po-Ming village in Panareh district of Pattani province has been considered unsafe but a group of widow are pushing forward new efforts to make their home community and neighborhood safer. This project is seen as a national example of a successful, financially self-sustaining community enterprise. The Warnita Group has more potential for growth and endeavor to diversify product lines including roasted coconut, coconut dessert balls, packaged locally produced rice, and potato chips.

Indicators

1. Number of vulnerable individuals and communities benefit from small grants with at least 20% increase in income generation.	15 members of conflict-affected Muslim women and widowed
2. Ratio of women groups participating in community initiatives.	100%
3. Number of community initiatives on social cohesion.	The production of roasted coconuts and desserts, training for other communities
4. Number of local authority participating in and taking on community initiatives.	SBPAC, SAO, local religious school of 3,000 students, a number of visiting groups of local authorities is increasing.

To addressing pressing challenge, the Warnita group was formed by 15 members of conflict-affected Muslim women including widowed[52] to create products from coconuts to enhance their quality of life and improve their livelihood. The project also fosters social cohesion between Buddhists and Muslims in the most contentious area of the Deep South as they work collaboratively with the KL women's group from Gujingluepa village, Narathiwat. With an abundance of coconut trees, the members also produce desserts and

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[52] As a result of violence in the Deep South, while others have been forced to become the primary income-generating source in their families due to the incarceration of their husbands.

earn 800 - 1,000 Baht/month and those who produce roasted coconuts can earn 1,000 - 1,200 Baht/month.

Pho Ming sub-district is one of the "red zones" in Panareh district of Pattani and considered by the military to be under the sway of armed Islamic separatists. Several violent incidents, clashes, and arrests of suspected insurgents have taken place in this area. A group of conflict-affected women from Po-Ming sub-district who have regularly participated in peace platforms conducted by the Network of Civic Women for Peace (NCWP) indicated their interest in running a community enterprise to develop their quality of life and to help people in their village.

The project's manufacturing site is small but fit with the scale of present operations. In addition to their increasing income, the pivotal role the group members play in supporting their families has empowered them immeasurably and instilled in them a great entrepreneurial spirit. The empowerment of the women from Warnita Group is an integral component in perpetuating their ambition. This is directly educed from the strong social cohesion among group members, in which project participation offers them a space in which they may share similar experiences and offer support to one another.

Energy and environment preservation

While fuel prices have been declining globally, oil smuggling from Malaysia to Thailand via the southern border provinces has become increasingly problematic. This trend will continue as long as fuel prices differ between Malaysia and Thailand and conflicts in the Southern border provinces remain. Lack of income-generating opportunities in the Deep South triggered the migration of male household members to Malaysia and elsewhere, but those who cannot leave their hometown remain unemployed or underemployed. The following three projects aim to build a sustainable community economically, socially and environmentally.

8. Energy Saving Oven and Charcoal Production

This project has steadily progressed towards achieving its indicator targets, and is on track for all four in 2016. Energy saving oven and charcoal production is an approach that brings together a group of 30 unemployed youth from 5 villages in Lochut sub-district of Waeng district, Narathiwat province to promote the use of energy-saving household appliances. Energy-saving ovens and charcoal kilns are impactful products addressing sustainable actions and youth partnership on collective drives for green energy.

Applying a human-center design, local youth, particularly those engaged in illegal activities, have opportunities to be involved in different income generation activities. Using energy-efficient cooking appliances by taking advantages of abundant resources from trimmed tree branches including rambutan branches, rubber and dried coconut shells, has reduced amount of energy consumed and the energy bills. Their income from selling the products was between 1,500-3,000 Baht per month, depending on their production

Indicators

1. Number of vulnerable individuals and communities benefit from small grants with at least 20% increase in income generation.	30 unemployed youth from 5 villages
2. Ratio of women groups participating in community initiatives.	TBD
3. Number of community initiatives on social cohesion.	A workshop and the production of 100energy-saving ovens and charcoal kilns
4. Number of local authority participating in and taking on community initiatives.	Many including Provincial Office of Administraiton and Narathiwat Energy Office

capacity. Most of the villagers in Waeng district still use charcoal stoves for cooking. A high demand on charcoal assists them in earning a living, and allows them to be more productive.

The Pleasant Community Development Foundation, an escort organisation of the youth group organized. Village scholars from the foundation and an expert from the Narathiwat Energy Office were invited to teach and share their knowledge in the workshop.

The group produced 100 ovens and placed some of them at each member's house to produce charcoal for household consumption and for sale. There are several positive effects in the community as a result of the project: first, smoke from the oven helps keep mosquitos away from the vicinity. Second, each member contributes two percent of their income to the group's savings. Young men now have a greater sense of pride. Third, community leaders were not so interested in community-development projects before, but have since realized the positive impacts that the project has had on young men, their families, and their communities. Fourth, other villagers who have interest in similar income-generating activities and community-development activities visited the project sites, leading to increased communication between villages.

The group members are considering whether they should produce charcoal products such as soap and mosquito repellent for income diversification and job creation in the community. This project initially focused on taking the unemployed or underprivileged youth in the project area away from illegal activities by providing them an opportunity to develop their vocational skills and to use their leisure time wisely through the project's activities.

9. Sustainable Waste Management Project

Waste has grown to become a regional challenge[53] when Laem Pho is rapidly becoming a tourism hot spot. This project proposes first step towards developing a comprehensive solution to waste management which has progressed very well towards the improvement of waste management and adaptation strategies for greater resilience of vulnerable communities. Examples of achievements include an extensive civic engagement program on sustainable waste management, for example a weekly garbage collection activity by youth and children, the provision of more communal trash bins/ disposal points within the community, recycling activities in schools and households, and awareness raising to inform households and schools about waste issue and environmental impacts on their lives.

Indicators

1. Number of vulnerable individuals and communities benefit from small grants with at least 20% increase in income generation.	9,000 people living in 9 villages
2. Ratio of women groups participating in community initiatives.	High with a group of students
3. Number of community initiatives on social cohesion.	A comprehensive solution to waste management including a weekly garbage collection activity by youth and children, the provision of more communal trash bins/ disposal points within the community, recycling activities in schools and households, and awareness raising to inform households and schools about waste issue and environmental impacts.
4. Number of local authority participating in and taking on community initiatives.	Laem Pho Sub-district Administrative Organisation (SAO), Sub-district health-promotion hospitals.

An even greater concern is Laem Pho sub-district in Yaring district of Pattani province is a densely populated area of a Muslim community in a conflict zone. Tourism serves as an income-generating activity for those living in conflict situations.

After a year of implementation, there has been a significant change in waste movement and management practice. Firstly, the waste issue has been taken more seriously by Laem Pho Sub-district Administrative Organisation (SAO) holding primary responsibility for managing waste and acting as a consultant organization of the group, its partners including village public health volunteers, public health officers from sub-district health-promotion hospitals, members of Laem Pho Sub-district Administrative Organisation (SAO), and villagers. Secondly, participation and understanding of villagers and school children increased; and lastly, waste management has made Laem Pho become an ideal site for tourism and recreational activities with an increasing number of tourists and visitors.

Sustainable waste management project created engaging public spaces in every neighborhood of Laem Pho and becomes an effective tool in cultivating social cohesion. Close to 9,000 people living in 9 villages benefited from improved access to sanitation. Shifting towards greater control and oversight the waste is a good mechanism for promoting cooperation between local government and people and building trust among them. The group will work cooperatively toward sustainable waste management to advancing technical solutions for income generations.

10. Yala Bio-diesel Community Enterprise for People with Disabilities

The Yala Biodiesel Community Enterprise for People with Disabilities in Lam Mai Sub-district of Yala province provides a successful example of organizing waste oil recycling cooperatives including collection, transformation, and commercialization. This project explores different business model by involving a network of 3,000 People with Disabilities (PWDs) in 170 communities in the three southernmost provinces to work with a thriving private recycling company. The project has demonstrated remarkable progress in expanding horizons of applying technology to engage vulnerable people, i.e., PWDs in the community enterprise promotion which has tightened relationships between PWDs in different communities in the three southernmost provinces and disseminate health-related information more broadly than it ever has before.

Indicators

1. Number of vulnerable individuals and communities benefit from small grants with at least 20% increase in income generation.	High, 40 PWDs working with 3,000 PWDs in 170 communities in the Deep South region.
2. Ratio of women groups participating in community initiatives.	Obvious and working on promotional campaigns.
3. Number of community initiatives on social cohesion.	Many including the organization of waste oil recycling cooperatives, collection system, meeting and group line conversation for updating the information, biodiesel and health-related awareness raising campaigns.
4. Number of local authority participating in and taking on community initiatives.	With private participation

PWDs roles and functions are extensive and growing. Under this Project, PWDs have been working in diligently to collect leftover cooking oil door-to-door from different communities at the price of THB 6 per kilogram for the recycling company, i.e., Yala Bio-diesel Community Enterprise who will buy it normally in large quantities of 20 – 30 kiligrams at the price of THB 9 per kilogram. The company will transform leftover materials into fuel that can be blended with regular diesel fuel to help power vehicles. This long effort since established in 2009 became fruitful in 2014 with the involvement of PWDs.

The operating costs of the system are relatively small when involving People with Disabilities (PWDs) as intermediaries between used cooking oil providers - including schools, hospitals, and military camps - and the Yala Biodiesel factory. As the amount of Yala Bio-diesel Community Enterprise produced continues to grow more than one 15-gallon drum per week. Social cohesion and community resilience among PWDs have been enhanced.

Under this project, the awareness of biodiesel advantages over traditional fuels was raised through different promotional campaigns to prevent health risks of reusing oils. PWDs have increased the collection of used cooking oil throughout the three southernmost provinces and helped reduce the environmental impact of dumping[54]. In many areas, the increase of collection increased due to the promotional campaign. The establishment of systems that founded on environmentally and socially sustainable practices begins to change the concept of waste, the importance of recycling used cooking oil and health concern of the local people. This success model reinforced the idea that the STEP Project Phase II does not only produce the immediate results through empowering PWDs but also forging strong community ties among conflict-affected communities and their people.

There were 40 PWDs from Raman district working on this project, including congenitally disabled people as well as those disabled from accidents or armed conflict, were trained. Trained PWDs were equipped with compactors and skills to earn a living, i.e., approximately 10,000 Baht/month from reliable and steady income generated by leftover oil collection. The profit varies considerably among PWDs depends on their collection capacity. Parts of their income will be paid for the cost of fuel and gifts for waste cooking oil donators, for example boxes of dates during Ramadan or desserts. Additionally, at the collection points, i.e., a point to drop-off and purchase the materials have been established in Raman district in Yala province to help PWD residents who lack mobility devices to obtain the oil with greater ease.

Due to on one hand, biodiesel is renewable, biodegradable and emits less carbon dioxide, on the other hand, waste cooking oil is currently the most appealing source in the three southernmost provinces, therefore, biodiesel usage will likely become more widely accepted in the near future. The cooperative has empowered those PWDs to become self-reliant and resilient at great delight. In addition to the economic benefits provided by the group, members feel that the group has made them more social.

However, supporting measures to facilitate small-scale biodiesel producers currently are not available in Thailand. The project will be expanded to include a full product line of biodiesel by-products to serve local markets.

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[54] Households and restaurants in the Deep South of Thailand, in which deep fried fish crackers and fried chicken are popular dishes, are especially good candidates for bio-diesel sourcing.

Creating opportunity for new business

Creating new business in the southern border provinces is at a very early stage but the two following projects have the potential to generate income and employment with a local cultural and resource focus.

11. Meat Goat Raising Project

Goat production business seems most promising and well established in Ban Paka Harang, Pattani. Goat production in the three southernmost provinces is very important tradition and socio-economic activities. Ban Paka Harang became one the main suppliers of meat goat to the entire Deep region with a stock of 300 goats from 10 breeding farms within the community. The Meat Goat Farming Group at Ban Paka Harang comprising of 20 goat breeders came up with farm modernization and community resilience. Goat breeders play a role in strengthening the resilience in relationship with governance, knowledge and learning. The members accept advice and their participation in governance and construction farm building is increasing.

Key achievements include the adoption of a mixed production system of rice farming and goat raising, the construction of two-story farm building with sustainable goat farming practice, and the establishment of a learning center that provides relevant models for other communities. Living in the area that was susceptible to flash flooding, promoting farm modernization involves the construction of two-story farm building. Farm facilities have been made ready for modernization to enhance social inclusion through community tourism promotion. A mixed production system of rice farming and goat raising allows the group to operate the breeding stock with lower labor requirement for goat raising.

Tourism will bring a number of visitors to the community and offer an opportunity to those who can not speak Thai language and do not have a chance to learn to meet experts and advisors for better understanding. Tourism and foreign visitors will change an image of the community from red zone of conflicts into peaceful community while strengthening the social status of goal producers.

Having a partnership with the Pattani Province Livestock Office through different training projects strengthens the role and reliability of the group. The Meat Goat Raising Project follows accepted practices of small livestock by drawing an expertise and experience from the Pattani Province Livestock Office.

Indicators

1. Number of vulnerable individuals and communities benefit from small grants with at least 20% increase in income generation.	20 goat breeders and 10 breeding farms
2. Ratio of women groups participating in community initiatives.	Low
3. Number of community initiatives on social cohesion.	Farm modernization, social learning and learning center, a mixed production system of rice farming and goat raising, the construction of two-story farm building with sustainable goat farming practice, a plan for community tourism and catering services business.
4. Number of local authority participating in and taking on community initiatives.	Many but Pattani Province Livestock Office plays a key role.

With traditions and preferences for goat's meat, increasing production of goat is a big step towards long-term food security of conflict-affected communities. The most critical problems for goat production include low productivity of local breeds, the lack of good farmland pastures, losing local breeding wisdoms and goat herders, and the shortage of trained staff. As a start, there were 25 goats and now has more than 40 goats. The selling is started at the price of 170 Baht/kg for a 6-month-old goat, translating into 5,000 Baht or US$150. With few alternative employment opportunities due to conflict situation and literacy, this project provides significant additional income on top of rice farming to the members.

In addition, the group also stepped in social learning. The group leader interested in innovation and new developments, and has been involved in different learning environments, attending several workshops held by the provincial Livestock Office to receive further education regarding the goat-raising process. The knowledge and innovation has been shared widely among group members. As a result, the learning center was established.

The present goat sales and consumption levels are low. The number of goats is likely to increase as the number of Muslim population is increasing; new markets for the meat have to be developed.

Recognizing market opportunities for Halal produced goat's meat, the group planned to open a goat bistro with one of the best goat recipes, i.e., Briyani Rice with Goat Masala at the entrance. Taking an advantage of having a good leader, who possesses excellent cooking skills with long time experiences and a special technique to produce in accordance with Muslim traditions (Halal) guaranteed by a prize from goat meat cooking competition organized by the Office of Pattani Administration, and a good quality of meat from natural goat breeding at Ban Paka Harang, the group can provide local goat meat or cooking for catering purpose. In order to gain access to larger consumer base, the group will run catering services business for religious celebrations. The group also focuses on developing good farmland pastures.

12. Mussel Farming for Fishermen

Hatchery-produced seed supply were provided at an acceptable cost and reproduced successfully at bouchot culture plots supported by UNDP STEP II. However, the mussel farm still remains a demonstrable livelihood improvement project due to stock collapses by storm attack and illegal harvest. The project has not generated a sizable profit from selling mussels but the social contribution of mussel farming for fishermen to society is varied. More importantly, there are wide-ranging benefits from program involvement including maintaining the functional integrity of the coastal resource systems, establishing a protection for coastal erosion, and generating alternative income from other marine resources and services. The benefits from increased marine resources are widely shared among conflict-affected coastal communities which have reduced resource-used conflicts

The holistic and comprehensive approach to ecosystem management of Pattani Bay has been used as an implementation framework for the mussel-farming project. Following the holistic approach, responsive education with integrated workshop series delivered to 20 fishermen and leaders subsequently emerged. Establishing a group of fishermen was

supported by a group of researchers from the Fisheries Department, Faculty of Science and Technology, PSU, Pattani Campus. The capacity-building initiatives allow potential mussel growers have an access to a specialized skill set to care for their crop in order to ensure access to quantities of food and to protect the mussels from predators.

Indicators

1. Number of vulnerable individuals and communities benefit from small grants with at least 20% increase in income generation.	20 fishermen and leaders working with PSU research team
2. Ratio of women groups participating in community initiatives.	Moderate
3. Number of community initiatives on social cohesion.	Mussel farming, bouchot culture plot building, capacity building initiatives
4. Number of local authority participating in and taking on community initiatives.	Office of the Provincial Fishery, Coastal Fishery, SAOs

13. Meat Goat Farming in Hutaetuwo, Khok Kian, Narathiwat

As the project was recruited in the first quarter of 2017 and started its project a little late.

During the period of conflict, Pattani Bay is facing the depletion of marine resources due to degraded fisheries habitats. Due to a lack of alternative livelihoods for conflict-affected communities, the dependence on marine resources is greater than ever. Calling for a greater public participation, communication and coordination on a large scale gave an opportunity to other communities to be involved in this project full time or to supplement their primary source of income. PSU as a catalysts institution is uniquely positioned to link communities together and facilitate the development of a mussel demonstration farm, which was a model on participatory and sustainable coastal natural resource management in Pattani Bay of STEP phase I. UNDP follow-up in support of the project produced an impact on building trust among different communities.

The group members expected the yield and growth rate to be sufficient enough for production to cross the sustainability threshold within two months. This would mark a turning point in the project in which seed need not be purchased and transplanted from colonies outside of Pattani province, which would help reduce transportation fees and other overhead considerably. The project addresses an important issue on the control of the impacts of human intervention on the environment.

Activity 3: Project Documentaries for the promotion of Social Cohesion and SDGs

According to 2016 Annual Report, the twelve livelihood improvement projects have developed successfully and promoted social cohesion and SDGs at the local and national levels. The Civic Women's Network and the Office of Extension and Continuing Education, Prince of Songkhla University served as implementing partners to further promote social cohesion and SDGs by producing 10 documentaries of livelihood improvement projects to be broadcasted on the citizen reporter programme of Thai Public Broadcasting Service channel (Thai PBS) and disseminated through social media such Facebook, YouTube, and etc.

3.4 Efficiency

The efficiency of project was high in most aspects. The STEP Project Phase II operates an extensive network of operations in relation to a global priority, a national priority and does so with a high level of accountability. The Strategic Plan does provide the direction to operate efficiently. Particularly Output 3 to promote social cohesion and community resilience through greater employment and improved livelihoods as well as through longer-term community development and participation, nearly all activities were carried out in excess of what was originally planned.

The core funding decline has placed pressure on the functions of the implementing agency. Project partners are aware of the shortage of funds and actively fund-raise for priority activities.

To cope with frequent unexpected events, the Project Manager has exercised a great amount of flexibility and creativity. A variety of communication channels has made available for systematic project management and implementation. Following a more flexible approach, the project tailors standard procedures to the unique needs of their projects and partners. It is noted that the project receives non-government funds and is not under audit scope of the Office of the Auditor General of Thailand. Subsequently, the budget was fully spent.

Monitoring is stated to be the best way to hold consultants, partners and group members accountable for the implementation. The demand for monitoring and evaluation of project implementation at the local level was evident. From the 2016 Annual Report, it is indicated that the project is regularly monitored against the schedule and budget. Project implementation was monitored by the STEP II Project Management Unit through weekly updates, monthly team meetings, quarterly partnership meeting, and project site visits. The monitoring activities allowed the project team members to oversee, improve, and solve projects in time. From the interview, project monitoring mechanisms largely involve local participation has ensured project activities were managed efficiently and empowered local network of consultants so that the activities were implemented productively.

Having donors who are actively engaged in project implementation (Output 3) is the leading factor in project success.

The project has produced both intended and unintended results. It has achieved the target beyond expectation of vulnerable groups including vulnerable youth, women and widows, and communities and delivered in a timely and cost effective manner as the result was doubled from the planned. Publishing the achievements on UNDP website and linked up data has had international reach and enhanced participation. A data set created by local partners and group members provided more information than was publicly available at that time.

The capacity building and the involvement of community members has surpassed the target number. The trained members have supported the implementation of measures of government authority to promote livelihood improvement and community development.

Many communities find a new way of working with local authorities and different partners/CSOs by creating platforms/tools in order to engage with them directly. Of

particular, data collection connects community data collectors with local authorities and decision makers. From data survey, the community group becomes better at adapting to the rapidly changing needs of the society.

The assessment survey notified the coordination challenge with some vulnerable groups and maintaining forward momentum which should be performed continuously.

3.5 Sustainability

UNDP's Southern Thailand Empowerment and participation Project (STEP) has the ability to foster a resilience society and has the credibility in the three southernmost provinces. The project has received constant support and cooperation from local authorities, including the, Sub-district Administration Organisations (SAOs), Deep South's provincial offices, the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education, and especially the Southern Border Province Administration Centre (SBPAC), which has been supporting the STEP project's activities for years and has committed to strengthen its partnership with UNDP to implement development projects in the Deep South.

Several projects under the STEP Project are popular and flush with achievements, many related to the success of women empowerment and livelihoods development. The STEP Project Phase II significantly upgraded and expanded the team, especially TOTs who will infuse new talents and skills into local economies and societies. Efforts are being made to identify partners/group members who have engaged positively with the training courses and dialogues and show potential as trainer, in order to create a pool of future trainers within the community. The next phase of the project should further work towards institutionalizing of the function of trainers from all sectors including local communities, NGOs, and government who are working within the livelihood improvement and community development areas.

The focus on community development and participation, particularly the marginalized groups has become a general driver for all activities and is embedded in the new vision and movement of local government. However, knowledge and interventions from UNDP on transitional justice for local NGOs and government officials at the operational level are requested from project partners. It is suggested that the project needs to focus on roadmap to shape more inclusive strategies.

PSU as the implementing partner took up a challenge to work with different networks. A long term nature of their trainings given by local experts of PSU and a huge support from PSU students has enhanced relationship building between the trainers, communities, and beneficiaries.

For the ultimate long-term success and sustainability of the STEP Project Phase II, it is essential to continue the STEP Project Phase II with UNDP Office to ensure the presence in the three southernmost provinces and increase financial base.

3.6 Impact

The sustainable livelihoods and development project is only the first step but achieving impact in its activities. These impacts relate to the Theory of Change and the stakeholder analysis. The collective results of activities across all three outputs can be seen

in the performance data and the overall positive evaluation reports across projects. It is also reflected in the positive feedback through the IPs and stakeholders survey.

To create cohesiveness and inclusiveness among diverse groups in fragile areas will require a comprehensive approach, which need to enhance connections from national to regional and local community including PSU, and vulnerable youth. The success of Output 3 needs to be supported by equivalent strength in the neighboring countries and with comprehensive regional approaches. Local communities are a game changer and alternative income generation activities serving as the great mediator in a conflict zone.

Assisting broadening public participation in peace process requires 1) a participatory approach to form a local agenda that moves towards a peaceful solution and 2) parallel and integrated interventions in governance an action in order to giver sustainable impact.

Regarding improving access to justice of vulnerable populations at the community level through the provision of support services focusing mainly to the grievances of vulnerable and marginalized groups, key partners acknowledged that this approach have impact on marginalized groups, particularly children, women and the elderly. It goes beyond typical strategies to show how community function can be revived in conflict prone areas by empowering people and civil society.

UNDP's STEP Project Phase II has pushed the boundary of peace building and conflict prevention by organizing public outreach activities to reach the hard targets and raise the awareness of the vulnerable people on the available resources for receiving legal aid and legal information. However, the impact of Output 2 remains very much to be seen, as the mechanism is now beginning to pick up momentum.

UNDP's approach is ultimately to achieve a change in mindset of decision-makers in government where they see the benefits of the working in collaboration with CSOs and funding social resilience and livelihood improvement programme – and this contributes to transformational change. However, a stronger knowledge management and advocacy approach is required to accelerate community understanding.

Chapter IV Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

This evaluation found that the STEP Project Phase II's strategy continues to be relevant and effective in the changing context of the three southernmost provinces. However, in 2016 the Thai government shifted focus from the political and security aspects of the conflict to promote economic growth. The most significant change is to move to a more strategic approach which places the local communities at the center of thinking. Continuity can be seen in a number of areas, particularly peace dialogue. The military authorities are invited to exchange views. The evolving approach to community empowerment and human security encourage more engagement across partners but limited KM platforms to reach the hard targets constrain deep engagement.

The STEP Project Phase II demonstrates very good implementation processes. Priorities are increasingly driven by local communities complementing focused donor priorities. Annual Progress Reports show good progress in achieving indicator targets for all focus areas with extensive achievements in the Deep South region. Most of this information is available within UNDP and could be collated. Indicators are that good progress is being achieved. Evidence from interviews and evaluation reports confirmed that good progress is being achieved.

UNDP's key contribution to achieving resilience-building is a global recognition. Local peace networks are a driver of development, and the number of indicators throughout the SDGs relate to resilience-building. The project succeeded in developing common responsibility among local community leaders. However, increasing complexity and turbulence requires enhancing leadership capacity. Mentoring initiatives were seen as a way of promoting inclusion particularly for NGOs and local leaders.

However, UNDP has not optimized this leading position by communicating achievements widely with an integrated strategic knowledge management function to support its very extensive and deep knowledge production capacity.

Community enterprises represent a new way of thinking about food production to locally sourced and produced food throughout the region. The government also realizes the increasing wave of interest in locally grown manufactured, produced goods, and community food-based entrepreneurs continue to emerge as an important part of local economy.

4.2 Recommendations

UNDP's STEP Project should provide more integrated support for the vulnerable and low-income, and enable holistic support for the elderly, persons with the disabilities, and youth and target the hard targets. There are anonymous 10,000 victims hidden in the region. The STEP Project Phase III should offer an opportunity to enter into or glimpse areas that are usually hidden and/or restricted.

For the ultimate long-term success and sustainability of the STEP Project Phase II, it is essential to continue the STEP Project Phase II to maintain forward momentum with UNDP Office to ensure the presence in the three southernmost provinces and increase

financial base. The next phase should focus more on an integrated strategic knowledge management function of UNDP to support its very extensive and deep knowledge production capacity.

The next phase of the project should further work towards institutionalizing of the function of trainers from all sectors including local communities, NGOs, and government who are working within the livelihood improvement and community development areas.

To power communities across the region and promote models of development, it requires a special handing including 1) establishing deep and inclusive national ownership and 2) robust grounding of the research. The research direction includes 1) peace dialogues and follow-up actions, 2) people-centered, better and more comprehensive governance, and 3) prevention oriented responses as a means to tackle the root causes of conflicts.