



The 3rd International Forum
on Water and Food
Tshwane, South Africa
November 14 – 17, 2011



Co-hosted by:



Qualitative livelihood assessments and quantitative models: Synergy to support livelihoods strategies in the hydropower development context

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Session: Basin x TWG



FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH ETHNIC MINORITIES GROUP ABOUT LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES AND PAST AND FUTURE CHANGES IN SA THAY COMMUNE, KOM TUM PROVINCE, CENTRAL HIGHLANDS, VIETNAM (JULY 2011) (PHOTO BY OLIVIER JOFFRE).

Key Message

The study analyzes past and expected future changes in livelihood activities in hydropower development impacted areas by using a series of quantitative and qualitative analysis at the community and household level. Combination of different analytical tools, such as hydrological and land use optimization model and qualitative and dynamics livelihood analysis, provides new information to design livelihood pilots for better adaptation.

Summary

In three watersheds where hydropower dams are in operation (Vietnam), under construction (Lao) or planned (Cambodia), a broad scale survey and in-depth survey characterized the diversity and changes of natural resources uses and livelihood activities related to water. A first step includes the characterization of the actual livelihood of those communities. In a second step, the approach focuses on past and future changes and responses to changes of different livelihood activities related to water. Outputs of this analysis provide i) a better understanding of constraints and opportunities in the different communities ii) a qualitative assessment of the capacity of those communities to respond to changes ; iii) an assesment of the expected future changes and aspirations of the households in a hydropower development context. Results of the analysis provide inputs for the Decision Support System (DSS), composed of hydrological and land use optimization models to inform the design of the livelihood pilots to improve adaptation capacity of livelihood impacted by hydropower development. At the village scale, it provides an in-depth analysis of the resource use options and trade off that is used to develop strategic plans for adaptation.