

**GREATER MEKONG SUBREGION (GMS)  
BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION CORRIDORS**

**Ngoc Linh – Xe Xap –Huong Hoa Biodiversity Corridor  
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM**

**Commune Profile and Investment Plan**

**Huong Lap Commune, Huong Hoa District, Quang Tri province**

**13 June 2010**

## PART A: VILLAGE PROFILE

### 1. LOCATION

Huong Lap is a remote commune which is 65 km North of the district centre. The commune shares 17-km border with neighboring Lao PDR. It is the border between the North and the South during the war when it was a destruction focus of the U.S. army.

The commune is bordered on the North by Quang Binh province, Huong Lap commune in the South, Vinh O commune (Vinh Linh district) in the East and Lao PDR in the West.

GPS coordinates are 667345 – 1867221 with elevation 309m masl

### 2. SOCIO-CULTURAL PROFILE

Table 1 presents the summary of socioeconomic profile.

**Table 1. Summary of socioeconomic profile in Huong Lap Commune**

| PARAMETER                     | RESPONSE/ ENTRY                                                  |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Population</b>             |                                                                  |
| Total population              | 1578                                                             |
| Population density            | 10.2 persons per km <sup>2</sup>                                 |
| Household population          | 249                                                              |
| Household size                | 6.33 persons/household                                           |
| Male population               | 796 persons                                                      |
| % Male population             | 50.4 %                                                           |
| Labor force                   |                                                                  |
| Education                     | Mostly primary                                                   |
| <b>Poverty and livelihood</b> |                                                                  |
| Average income                | 2.652.000 VND/annum/ working adult                               |
| Source of income              | Husbandry, farming, forest plantation and war remains collection |
| No of Poor Households         | 67                                                               |
| Poor Population               | 439                                                              |
| % poor population             | 27.8                                                             |
| <b>Ethnic Minority</b>        | 67                                                               |
| Total EM population           | 0                                                                |
| <b>Population</b>             | <b>Van Kieu</b>                                                  |
| Total population              | 1578                                                             |

(Source: Huong Lap CPC)

#### 2.1 Population and labor

Huong Lap has the population of 1,578 persons with the total number of households of 249. Population density is low though average household size is average at 6.33 persons per household in comparison with 3.6 persons/household in Huong Phung commune.

The quality of labor is low, mostly manual labor. The number of working labors in a household is low also. Each family has 2 main labors and 1 supporter (children below the labor age but help their families with production). Family members reaching the labor age often get married and live on their own.

#### 2.2 Ethnic Composition and main characteristics

Huong Lap is a remote commune without means of communication. There are even no roads in some villages so the communication and culture exchange are limited. In addition, nearly 100% of the population is Van Kieu (an ethnic minority) so many

obsolete traditions of Van Kieu are still maintained, for example: worshipping or meeting powwows when ill, etc.

### **2.3 Gender Analysis**

Though the proportion of males and females in the commune is quite equivalent (50.44/49.5), there is not much equity between man and woman. Men are the heads of the households who decide all family affairs (like production investment, input purchases, product sales, etc.). Women rarely attend training in the commune. All of them are not allowed to join study tours. Also, they are not allowed to sleep in the upper house and join the meals with men.

In terms of production activities (household labor allocation), women have more tasks on hand which include child rearing / child care, cleaning and laundry work, fuel wood gathering, fetching water, and collecting animal foods. The men do house repairs, forest product gathering and hunting.

### **2.4 Dimensions of Poverty**

In accordance with the commune's People's Committee, average income per capita is low (VND 2.652.000VND/ person per annum), of which the income from war remain collection accounts for 30%, forestation for 30% and the rest is from farming and husbandry. The proportion of poor households reduces slowly (114 /184 households in 2005, 67/249 households in 2010). The number of medium households is low at 12/249 HH.

In some years, Huong Lap has the threats to face poverty because of the following reasons:

- (i) Increasing population
- (ii) Decrease in forest resources and strict management in special purpose forest
- (iii) No more war wastes
- (iv) Natural disaster, epidemic
- (v) Shortage of production land, techniques, capital, etc.

## **3. BIO-PHYSICAL CONDITIONS**

### **3.1 Climate**

Same as Huong Phung Commune, Huong Lap is affected by Lao climate. There are two distinct seasons in a year. The rainy season begins in August and ends in December while the dry season lasts from December to August every year. The annual average temperature is 22<sup>0</sup>C, the rainfall level is 2400-2800mm, and the commune is total not affected by hot and dry South West winds.

*Source: Khe Sanh Weather Station*

### **3.2 Topography and physical features**

Most villages in the commune have the topography of mountains. Especially in some villages like A Soc, there are many rocky mountains. In the neighboring areas of Quang Binh province are many high mountains running from North West to South East, highly partitioned with the common slope of from 20<sup>0</sup> to 30<sup>0</sup>.

### **3.3 Rivers and water bodies**

Huong Lap has SE PANG HIENG river and many other creeks originating from Cuoi, Tri village running West to Laos PDR. In general, the rivers and water bodies provide enough water for daily activities and irrigation in the commune.

#### 4. LAND AND FOREST RESOURCE USE

##### 4.1 Land Cover and Present Land Use

The commune's total area is 15,537.22 ha, in which 115.3 ha is agricultural land (mostly kaingin), forest-covered land 11286.8 ha (coverage is above 60% in the whole commune), designed forest land but not covered yet is 4085.7 ha. In general, the land resource of Huong Lap commune is enough for forest plantation and agricultural activities in some next years.

**Table 2. Landuses in Huong Lap Commune**

| Land use types                                                  | Coverage area (ha) | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| <b>Total natural area</b>                                       | 15537.22           | 100            |
| <b>A. Agriculture land (excluding uncultivated hill fields)</b> | 115.3              | 0.74           |
| 1. Wet rice land                                                | 50.6               | 0.33           |
| 2. Upland rice land                                             | 51                 | 0.33           |
| 4. Cassava land                                                 | 13.7               | 0.09           |
| <b>B. Non agriculture land</b>                                  | 15416.8            | 99.22          |
| 1. Special use forest (including land without forests)          | 10172.3            | 65.47          |
| 2. Protection forest (including land without forests)           | 2689.46            | 17.31          |
| 3. Production forest (including land without forests)           | 2510.8             | 16.16          |
| <b>C. Residence land</b>                                        | 5.1                | 0.03           |
| <b>D. Unutilized land</b>                                       | 0                  | 0              |

*(Source: Huong Lap FPD and CPC 2010)*

##### 4.2 Forest Resource

The commune has enormous forest resources with large area of forests which are little touched or exploited, rich in wood reserves as well as NTFPs. There are about 150 species of timber trees, hundreds of NTFP species used for medicine production, materials and foods.

According to the local people, the commune is very rich in forest resources but the exploitation areas are near residences and the method is quite manual so that the forest resources are not materially affected.

##### 4.3 Biodiversity assets

Huong Lap is recognized as the most important area with rich biodiversity in North Huong Hoa Natural Reserve. It has a large area of primeval forest and a lot of valuable and rare species such as Sao La (*Pseudoryx nghetinhensis*), Ha Tinh langur (*Trachypithecus hatinhensis*), gibbon, tigers, Song bot (*Calamus Poilanei*), etc. The area is categorized by international criteria as the endemic bird area – Central Vietnam low-lying land.

#### 5. ECONOMIC SITUATION

##### 5.1 Farming system

The farming and production system in Huong Lap commune is the most out-of-date one in comparison with that in other communes in North Huong Hoa. As the area are considerably covered by forests, many villages are far in the jungle (Cuoi, Cop) and the

area is highly partitioned, the production is tattered and not well planned.

The production habits of local people are still obsolete, production materials are poor; tools are rudimentary; production just mainly meets the internal demand; few technologies or mechanization is applied in forestry and farming.

Some difficulties to agricultural production are

- (i) Low education, obsolete farming techniques;
- (ii) Lackage of production materials, capital and output consumption,
- (iii) Natural disaster, droughts, floods and polluted land ;
- (iv) Epidemic for poultry and cattle.

## **5.2 Markets, enterprises, and industry**

There are totally no factories, no small businesses like carpenters, blacksmiths, repairers, etc. There are no markets in each village either but there are some small businesses (on average 1 business/village) collecting NTFPs, war wastes (scrap iron), selling essential goods such as rice, salt, petroleum, soaps, etc. There is only one food stall in the commune. There is no bus stop and no bus running to and from the commune. The only means of transportation is motorbikes.

## **5.3 Financial services and access to credit**

The available credit sources for households in Huong Lap commune include loans offered by Social Policy Bank through commune associations and unions at low interest rate (0.65%). The limit for these loans is no more than VND 20 million. Another credit source is collateral-backed loans from Agribank with the maximum amount of VND 30 million due within 60 months

Besides, people can take loans with out collaterals from development funds financed by BCI and PPFP programs. The funds are limited and give priority to poor households. The objective of the funds is to improve the household businesses.

## **6. PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **6.1 Physical infrastructure**

The commune has 20 km of Ho Chi Minh Highway which is convenient to reach the centre of the commune, connect with inter-village roads to some villages like Cu Bai, Se Pu. However, during rainy seasons, the roads are often damaged and blocked. In some villages like Cuoi, Ta Pang, Tri, transportation is difficult without roads.

The national electricity system reaches 178 households (71.6 %).

There are 3 irrigation systems, 2.7 km drainage and irrigation canal used to supply water for 50.8 ha wet fields.

184 households equivalent to 73.8% of the households use hygienic water.

There is signal of Viettel mobile network at the centre of the commune.

## 6.2 Social Infrastructure

The infrastructure for education is poor. Rooms, training materials, teachers are in need. In some remote villages, border soldiers are in charge of literacy eradication.

**Table 3. School facilities in Huong Lap Commune**

| School            | No. of Schools   | No. of Rooms | No. of teachers |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Nursery Schools   | 1 (3 small ones) | 8            | 4               |
| Primary Schools   | 1 (3 small ones) | 13           | 19              |
| Secondary Schools | 1                | 3            | 7               |

**Table 4. Social infrastructure in Huong Lap Commune**

| Commune infrastructures          | Response / Entry |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Community Meeting Hall           | 0                |
| Number of Village meeting houses | 3/8              |
| Number of commune health clinics | 1                |
| Number of solid houses           | 1                |
| Number of semi-solid houses      | 79               |
| Number of temporary houses       | 169              |

## 7. OTHER ONGOING/PLANNED PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

Several projects and programs of government and NGOs have and continue to support Huong Lap Commune as follows:

- (i) Program 134 - government program to allocate land and houses to ethnic minorities as well as develop agricultural production and water supply (2005-2010),
- (ii) Program 135 - government program on socioeconomic development for most vulnerable communes of ethnic minorities located in mountainous areas (first period 1997 - 2006, second period 2006-2010,
- (iii) Program 167
- (iv) Pro-Poor Forestry Project (PPFP)
- (v) Child saving project
- (vi) Biodiversity Conservation Corridors Initiative (BCI)

## PART B: VILLAGE INVESTMENT PLAN UNDER BCI PHASE II

### 1. Village PRIORITIES AND RANKING

| Small scale infrastructure                              | Priority | Quantity  |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Community meeting house                                 | 1        | 5 ones    |
| Fresh water supply (Cup, Chà ly, A xóc)                 | 2        | 3 systems |
| Irrigation dam supplying in Cup commune for 4 ha fields | 3        | 1 work    |
| Irrigation canals (0.9 km)                              | 4        | 1 work    |
| Nursery school (repair and upgrade)                     | 5        | 2 houses  |
| House for teachers                                      | 6        | 1 house   |
| Small bridges over creeks                               | 7        | 5 work    |

## 2. LIVELIHOOD OPTIONS

| ITEMS                                                                           | Unit                             | Households benefiting |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Wet rice                                                                        | 40 ha                            | 50                    |
| Farm with Garden – Pond – Cage model and<br>Garden – Pond – Cage - Forest model | 4 models                         | 4                     |
| Cattle breeding (variety assistance)                                            | 50 ones                          | 50                    |
| Fresh water fish raising                                                        | 5 models =<br>2500m <sup>2</sup> | 5                     |
| Small businesses                                                                | 4 units                          | 4                     |
| Economic forestation                                                            | 80 ha                            | 80 HH = 8 groups      |
| Handicraft such as weaving, blacksmith,<br>carpenter (training and investment)  | 4 models                         | 40 HH = 4 groups      |

## 3. REFORESTATION

| ITEMS                                       | UNIT      | Households benefiting          |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| Natural forest delegation to households     | 400 ha    | 4 villages                     |
| Forest patrol (groups of forest patrollers) | 4 groups  |                                |
| Local seedling cultivation                  | 2 gardens | 20 HH = 2 groups of households |
| Forest land use license                     |           | 249 HH                         |
| NTFP plantation in forests (rattan)         | 80ha      | 80 HH = 8 groups of households |

## 4. OTHERS

| ITEMS                                                  | SIZE OF INVESTMENT (USD) | NO. OF JOBS |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| Funding for groups of forest patrollers within 7 years | 40,000                   |             |
| Credit funds                                           | 50,000                   |             |

## 5. Cost estimates

| ITEMS                                                     | Unit    | Quantity | Unit price | Value (USD)   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------|----------|------------|---------------|
| <b>Reforestation</b>                                      |         |          |            |               |
| Natural forest delegation to households                   | Ha      | 400      | 30         | 12000         |
| Local seedling cultivation                                | Gardens | 2        | 3000       | 6000          |
| NTFP plantation in forests                                | Ha      | 80       | 700        | 56000         |
| Assistance for forest land use licensing                  |         | 1        | 15000      | 15000         |
| <b>Livelihood options</b>                                 |         |          |            |               |
| Wet rice                                                  | Ha      | 40       | 400        | 16000         |
| Model farms                                               | Models  | 4        | 3000       | 12000         |
| Cattle breeding (variety assistance)                      | Animals | 50       | 700        | 35000         |
| 2500 m <sup>2</sup> for fresh water fish raising          | Model   | 5        | 3000       | 15000         |
| Training and initial investment                           | Unit    | 4        | 10000      | 40000         |
| Economic forestation (hybrid acacia, Litsea glutinosa)    | Ha      | 80       | 700        | 56000         |
| Small businesses at villages                              | Unit    | 4        | 5000       | 20000         |
| <b>Infrastructure</b>                                     |         |          |            |               |
| Nursery schools                                           | Schools | 2        | 5000       | 10000         |
| Fresh water (repair)                                      | Work    | 3        | 10000      | 30000         |
| Irrigation works to supply for 4 ha fields in Cup Village | Work    | 1        | 31000      | 31000         |
| Irrigation canals (0.9 km)                                | Km      | 0.9      | 10000      | 9000          |
| Community meeting house                                   | House   | 5        | 10000      | 50000         |
| House for teachers                                        | house   | 1        | 5000       | 5000          |
| Small bridges over creeks                                 | km      | 5        | 3000       | 15000         |
| <b>Others</b>                                             |         |          |            |               |
| Funding for groups of forest patrollers within 7 years    | Fund    | 1        | 40000      | 40000         |
| Credit funds                                              | Fund    | 1        | 50000      | 50000         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                              |         |          |            | <b>523000</b> |

Source: ADB R-PPTA 2010