USAID/VIETNAM SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY

FY2023 Annual Progress Report

October 2022 – September 2023

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Cover Photo Caption: Forest Rangers conducting a forest patrol in Hoa Binh province. Photo Credit: Mr. Tuan Anh, Community Forest Management Coordinator, Hoa Binh

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABCD	Asset-Based Community Development
BCA	Biodiversity Conservation Activity
CBFM	Community-based Forest Management
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CFE	Conservation Friendly Enterprises
CFM	Community Forest Management
CFPT	Community Forest Patrolling Teams
CLA	Collaboration, learning, and adaptation
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
CPMU	Central Project Management Unit
CPFES	Carbon Payments for Forest Environmental Services
DAI	DAI Global, LLC.
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DDRT	Deforestation and Forest Degradation Risks and Threats
FA/FLA	Forest Allocation/ Forest Land Allocation
FMB	Forest Management Board
FPC	Forest Protection Contract
FPD	Forest Protection Department
FPP	Forest Protection and Management Plans
FSC	Forest Stewardship Councils
FY	Fiscal Year
FVDMS	Forest Violations Database Management System
GESI	Gender and Social Inclusion
GVN	Government of Vietnam
LE	Law Enforcement
LEAP	Law Enforcement Action Plan
LOP	Life of Project
LTTA	Long-Term Technical Assistance
MARD	Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Development
MBFP	Management Board for Forestry Projects
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MONRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MRV	Measurement, Reporting and Verification
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
OCDP	Organizational Capacity Development Plan
OCOP	One Commune One Product

ODA	Official Development Assistance
PA	Partnership Agreement
PbN	Preferred by Nature (previously NEPCon)
PFES	Payment for Forest Ecosystem Services
PIM	Project Implementation Manual
PM	Planting Material
PPC	Provincial Peoples' Committee
PPCP	Promoting Public-Private-Community Partnerships
PPMU	Provincial Project Management Unit
PSE	Private Sector Engagement
Q	Quarter
RBL	Rattan-Bamboo-Leaves
RECOFTC	The Center for People and Forests
SFMP	Sustainable Forest Management Plans
SIYB	Start and Improve Your Business
SOW	Scope of Work
STTA	Short-term Technical Assignment
TOT	Training of Trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
VIFORA	Vietnam Forest Owners Association
VFD	Vietnam Forest and Deltas Program
VNFF	Vietnam National Forest Foundation
VNFOREST	Vietnam Administration of Forestry
WEEmpower	Women's Economic and Environmental Empowerment
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

COVER STORY

INNOVATIVE FOREST VIOLATION TRACKING TOOL SUCCESSFULLY DEVELOPED AND READY FOR NATIONAL ROLLOUT

Written by: Dong Nguyen, Environmental Crimes Control Specialist and Clarence Cabañero, Deputy Chief of Party, Operations

Figure 1 Forest rangers at the district level are typically at the frontlines of forest monitoring. Once they identify a forest violation, rangers are required to collect, verify, and report these violations to their district-level FPDs for further handling.

Global timber demand spurs illegal logging.

Vietnam has 14.79 million hectares of forest land that accounts for about 42 percent of the country's total land area[1], but growing global demand for wood products has incentivized the illegal logging of natural forests. Vietnam's Forest Protection Department (FPD) has detected, on average, 8,000 to 12,000 forestry violations every year[2]. While cases have decreased in recent years, the severity of violations has worsened, including the size of impacted areas and volume of forest products removed. In the first eleven months of 2022 alone, the central FPD detected and recorded 8,124 forest violation cases spanning more than 1,000 hectares over 63 provinces, and fined violators nearly USD 3 million in penalties.

Keeping track of these cases is a huge task. However, it is critical to understanding areas with the highest deforestation threats. The country's previous tracking system was outdated, manual, and varied from province to province (and even within the same province). The Vietnamese government needed a systematic way of storing, managing, and monitoring forest violation and crime data from the entire country to effectively tackle cases and enforce forest laws.

[1] 2022 forest cover report published by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)

[2] National Forest Protection Department (FPD) under MARD

A new tool to identify and track crime hotspots.
With support from the USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project (the Project), a groundbreaking change in Vietnam's forest law enforcement is underway. In partnership with the FPD, the Project successfully developed and deployed the Forest Violation Data Management System (FVDMS)—an innovative web-based tool for reporting and tracking forest violations in real-time. The system enables users to enter cases, upload documentation (like photos), monitor case status, and share data through a user-friendly platform. The system reduces the administrative burden on FPD staff and strengthens coordination across government and sectors to identify hotspots for forest violations. This enables decisionmakers to target resources to discourage potential offenders and protect forests.

The system was successfully deployed in all FPD units of the seven provinces where the Project works. Feedback from the first phase helped improve the tool, which will be rolled out nationally in 2024, with ongoing support from the Project. Developing and deploying the FVDMS is directly improving the functionality of Vietnam's law enforcement system for forest violations and crimes to better protect the country's forest resources.

What is the role of a forest ranger and FPD agent?
Within the Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Development (MARD), the national FPD has a mandate to detect, record, investigate, monitor, and handle violations in the forestry sector. Forest rangers at the district level are typically at the frontlines of forest monitoring. Once they identify a violation, rangers must collect, verify, and report these violations to district-level FPDs for further handling.

Although forest rangers do their job of reporting forest violations, the process can be very tedious. Many FPD units used antiquated systems that require manual written reports and evidence, stored in physical file cabinets, hindering inter-unit access and coordination. A slow and segmented tracking system is a dream for forest violators—especially repeat offenders who can evade detection.

"To handle a forest violation case, we must collect all information on the violators, violation types, impacted level, penalty, fines, and so on, and we have to verify whether the violators have violated before to identify potential reoffenders," shared Mr. Nguyen Van Tam, the Deputy Head of Bao Thang District FPD in Lao Cai province. He added, *"Currently, we face difficulties taking the information and data, especially from violators who do not live in my area. This issue impacts our case handling by prolonging the process because we must contact relevant FPDs by sending official letters. This process can take around two weeks, sometimes longer."*

Mr. Nguyen Quoc Hieu, the Deputy General Director of the central FPD at MARD shared his experience. *"For many years, we always expected to have a centralized database system on forest violation to support us with our work. It consumes time for us to collect and synthesize data and report on forest violations from all provinces by requesting that they each send their data individually."*

Creating a centralized tracking system that spans national, provincial, and district jurisdictions will help the government reduce time-consuming paperwork, improve data collection and analysis (especially of historical forest violation data), and ultimately— enable the government to prevent forest violations and crimes.

A groundbreaking tool, FVDMS, is born.
Starting three years ago, the Project team collaborated with the central FPD and seven provincial FPDs to map out a solution. The team conducted an initial survey of the agencies' needs, identifying functionalities that can help FPD improve forest violation detection and handling.

"Working with the Central FPD is a key step to the development of the system because they understand the situation on the ground, and because they are responsible for forest law enforcement and development of policies," said Mr. Tran Le Tran, the Project's Environmental Governance Director. *"By working with*

them closely, we are encouraging them to take ownership of the system, roll it out nationally, and ensure its sustainability beyond the life of project."

With the FVDMS concept mapped out, the Project engaged a local software developer to design the database, develop a user-friendly web platform and interface, and ensure a secure system. Following many rounds of review, the Project piloted the system in Son La and Nghe An provinces. Based on users' feedback, the Project further refined the system. Between February and April 2023, the team led trainings on the tool for FPD staff across all seven provinces before deploying the system to those seven provinces on May 30, 2023, while offering continued technical support.

How the system works

Previously, Vietnam's approach to tracking and recording forest violations was time consuming, outdated, and non-systematic, which made it very difficult for rangers and agents to search, verify and analyze violations, especially of repeat offenders. There was little to no data sharing beyond individual units, even though many cases involve offenders who commit violations across provincial lines—a problem that affects forest protection agencies at all levels of government.

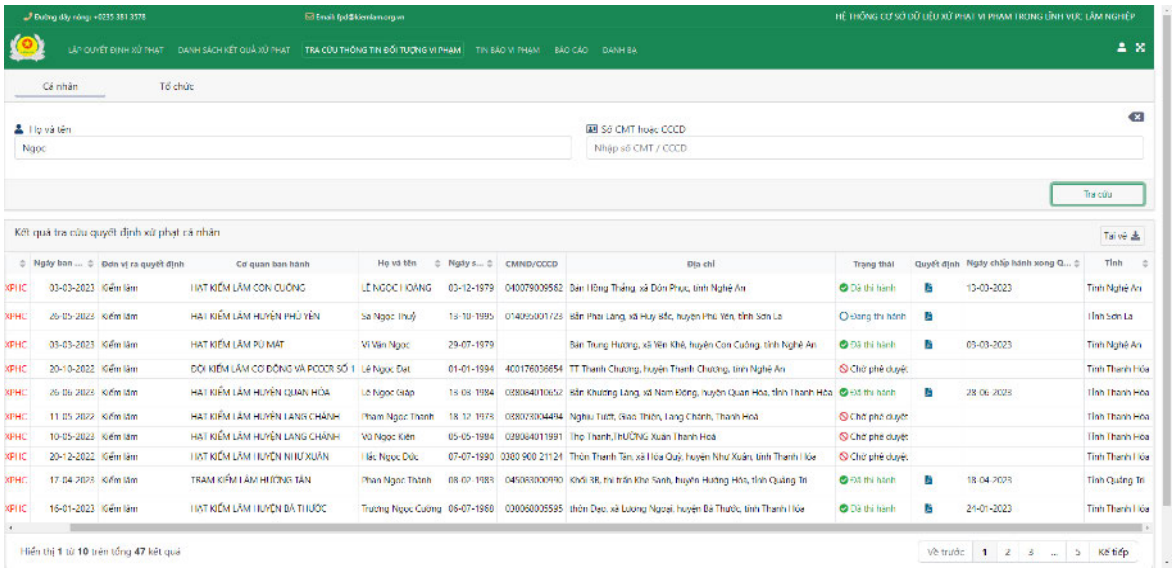


Figure 2. A screenshot of the Forest Violation Data Management System, which allows forest rangers to search information related to current and closed violation cases nationwide.

The FVDMS addresses these issues. At the local level, when forest rangers detect a violation, they create a case in the system with standardized details. Evidence is digitally scanned into the system. Once completed, the agent can submit the case and the data will be saved on a secured centralized server. Once cleared, the information is available for other agents across the country. Data entered by agents can then be extracted to produce reports or dashboards plotting violations by region and/or by period. As a result, the agency can better allocate resources, prioritize hot-spots, and facilitate cross-province collaboration to identify and prosecute repeat offenders across jurisdictions.

So far, local authorities have found the system to be a great tool to support their important work. *"The [new FVDMS] system is helpful and will very much support our work storing, monitoring, and analyzing forest violation cases,"* shared Mr. Nguyen Van Tam, the Deputy Head of Bao Thang District FPD in Lao Cai province. *"Searching for information on one forest violator to identify whether the violator is a re-offender becomes faster, easier, and more precise with the online system. We will continue to frequently update the violation data from our district into the centralized database."*

Comprehensive support ensures long-term success.
The Project recognized that a well-functioning tracking tool by itself is not enough. To strengthen the country's forestry law enforcement system, forest rangers at the local level require the skills and capacity to successfully fulfill their duties, in addition to an enabling policy environment to do so.

Mr. Dong Nguyen, the Project's Environmental Crimes Control Specialist shared, *"Forest rangers are the ones who receive and process information related to detected forest violations in their areas. They are responsible for reporting and monitoring forest violations. That's why we thought it is important for them to be trained and improve their basic investigation and reporting knowledge and skills, to ensure the quality of the information and data collected and inputted into the system."*

Figure 3 Mr. Nguyen Van Tam, Deputy Head of Bao Thang District FPD in Lao Cai, during one of the demonstrations for the FVDMS.

Since 2021, the Project has provided technical support and training to FPDs, helping agents and rangers better detect forest violations, investigate and collect relevant evidence, and properly monitor cases. In 2023, the Project equipped agents with devices, such as smartphones and computers to help capture evidence and upload them to the system; GPS and binoculars to help them navigate forest terrains better; and laser distance measurement and tree-height measurement devices to improve the accuracy of their reporting.

The Project also supported FPDs to develop policies and regulations to support their efforts, such as interagency coordination protocols between FPDs on data sharing, on cooperating on forest protection, and on forest fire fighting and prevention. The Project also supported FPDs and local partners to conduct awareness activities to promote forest protection among local communities, empowering them to report suspected forest violations to their local FPD through the FVDMS.

Next steps for sustainability.
The Project's initial deployment of FVDMS to seven target provinces in 2023 was a huge success, demonstrating the game changing potential of systematizing, digitizing, and strengthening Vietnam's forest crime tracking and enforcement system. Initial results have been promising. From January 2022 to October 2023, around 2,000 forest violation cases from were entered and monitored in the system. In 2024, the Project will support the National FPD/MARD to deploy the system nationwide, in addition to conducting four training-of-trainer sessions to reach all 60 forested provinces. The Project is also exploring a future tool function that will allow local communities to report suspected forest violations through their own smartphones to help FPDs detect and prevent forest violations in real-time. All support will significantly contribute to reducing violations and to further protect the country's forest resources.

"The FPD would like to say thank you to USAID for development of the FVDMS," said Mr. Nguyen Quoc Hieu, the Deputy General Director of the central FPD at MARD. *"This contributes significantly to the development of Vietnam's forestry sector and will support us to protect our Earth."*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This year's efforts focused on scaling up targeted support to develop forest value chains and strengthen forest enterprises, expanding effective planning and management of community forests, and deepening government engagement to guide, develop, and revise forest policies.

To facilitate greater policy influence, the Project shifted from a "bottom-up approach" that provided provincial evidence to guide national policy recommendations, to a more strategic approach that works directly with Vietnam's top policymaking bodies, to provide recommendations through these bodies with a higher likelihood of adoption. To improve law enforcement efforts, the Project successfully completed the first phase of rolling out the innovative tool to track and monitor forest violations– now ready for nationwide deployment. Despite receiving lower than planned fund obligations affecting mainly the fourth quarter, this fiscal year, the project made notable strides towards reaching Project targets, including 136,339.40 ha of forest land and 2,263.93 ha of non-forest land under improved management, securing USD 30.8 million in investments and commitments, and ultimately benefitting 56,393 people through U.S. government assistance.

Below is a summary of key Project milestones achieved this year.

FY23 in Numbers cumulatively:

By the end of FY23, the project has reached the following cumulative life of project achievements:

- 34,010 people trained
- 109 institutions have improved capacity
- 57 policies or plans have been developed
- $33.6 million has been mobilized towards conservation-friendly enterprises
- 61,356 people have received livelihood co-benefits
- 45 conservation-friendly enterprises are receiving support through the Project
- 5,407,714 tons of CO2 emissions have been reduced, sequestered, or avoided
- 14,926,873 tons of CO2 will be avoided from the adoption of policies supported by the Project.
- 138,603 ha of forests are under improved management
- 13,564 people have received support to adapt to climate change
- 10,984 people have implemented risk-reduction practices.

PROVIDING STRATEGIC POLICY INFLUENCE FOR AN IMPROVED FORESTRY SECTOR IN VIETNAM.

- In FY23, the Project completed its support of four national policies and 14 provincial policies, four district policies/ plan and 17 community plans/ regulations.

- Notably, **Conclusion 61-KL/TW** of the Secretariat of the Party's Central Committee was issued with the Project's technical support (guided by the Project's assessment of five years of implementing **Directive 13-CT/TW)**. This Conclusion paves the way for improved forestry development and revised forestry policies to come. It provides additional forest management measures, including accelerating preparation for a carbon market in Vietnam, strengthening government control over conversion of forests, and ensuring forest land allocation to local communities, among others.

- The Project supported submission of Revised **Decree 156/NĐ-CP** to the Government, which strengthens forest protection mechanisms and tightens the government's control over forests and forest land conversion while also opening income generation opportunities from forests through environmental services. Significantly, the promulgation of this Decree will facilitate the implementation of policies and provisions related to carbon PFES (C-PFES) for a carbon market in Vietnam.

BUILDING THE CAPACITY AND COOPERATION OF COMMUNITIES TO BETTER MANAGE FORESTS.

- The Project's facilitation resulted 11 communities in Quang Tri province and the Dakrong Protection Forest Management Board signing five cooperation mechanisms for joint forest patrolling and forest fire fighting and control—contributing to improved forest management of 4,163 ha of community forests.

- The Project supported 103 communities to complete development of 14 sustainable forest management plans (SFMPs) and 89 forest protection and management plans (FPPs), which resulted in strengthened institutional capacity for community forest management boards and community forest protection patrolling groups of 100 communities.

- With the Project's support, 50 village conventions on forest protection and management including village regulations on the utilization of payments for forest environmental services (PFES) funds were prioritized for forest protection efforts and other common benefits of the communities.

SUPPORTING IMPROVED PATROLLING AND SCALING UP EFFECTIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT OF FOREST VIOLATIONS AND CRIMES.

- The Project successfully completed the first stage of rolling out the innovative Forest Violation Database Management System (FVDMS), trained 181 Forest Protection Department (FPD) staff, and uploaded 1,959 violation cases from seven Project provinces into the system. Nationwide roll-out of FVDMS will be completed in FY24.

- To further strengthen forestry law enforcement, the Project organized 10 trainings for 351 participants (i.e., local FPD staff, and district and commune sub-agencies and divisions); reviewed and updated two provincial forest law enforcement action plans (LEAPs); and held 18 awareness events reaching 1,180 community members (299 females and 847 ethnic minority participants).

- This year, community forest patrolling groups completed 6,489 days of patrolling in community forests, detecting and preventing 37 forest violation cases, and contributing to the improved management of 78,997 ha of natural community forests.

- The Project provided 39 trainings on forest patrolling skills, enabling community forest patrol groups to utilize patrolling schedules as part of their SFMPs or FPPs. The Project supported 105 communities to review existing community forest patrolling teams (CFPTs) for further improvements or to establish new CFPTs.

DEVELOPING FOREST VALUE CHAINS AND STRENGTHENING THE PRIVATE SECTOR'S ROLE IN SUSTAINABLE FOREST PROTECTION.

- In FY23, the Project supported 26 conservation friendly enterprises (CFEs) to improve 27 products and to develop 31 new products.

- The Project built the capacity of CFEs—especially with women-led or women-owned small-scale CFEs— involved in the Project's selected value chains of rattan bamboo and leaves (RBL), medicinal plants, cinnamon, coffee, tung oil, areca, and fruits through 167 training courses for 4,947 participants.

- In FY23, the Project's support and facilitation enabled 16 product purchasing contracts worth USD 2.042 million signed with 15 CFEs in three value chains.

- The Project facilitated CFEs' participation in trade promotion events, trade fairs, competitions, and exhibitions to promote their products- with many earning high recognition. Tam Lu Rattan and Bamboo Cooperative (Thanh Hoa province) won first prize for their bamboo basket products at MARD's 2022 National Handicraft Competition; and Khe Sanh Agricultural Cooperative won first prize for their roasted arabica coffee at the 2023 Vietnam Specialty Coffee Competition.

- The Project assisted Quang Tri province to develop and issue Plan No. 237/KH-UBND guiding production development of Tung oil, leveraging a budget of nearly USD 690,000.

- The Project also supported Quang Tri province to develop and issue Decision No. 3159/QD-UBND, to develop agricultural and forestry cooperatives. The province will allocate USD 6.9 million to implement this Plan.

PRIORITIES FOR FY24.

Entering FY24, the Project will build on this year's key milestones with a shift towards promoting and replicating success from piloted activities, promoting local ownership and sustainability, and scaling up results. Some upcoming key priorities are summarized below:

- Follow up on approval and start supporting implementation of Revised Decree 156 to guide the implementation Articles of the Forestry Law, especially related to C-PFES.
- Conduct preparedness for carbon inventory and carbon credits trade in Son La province.
- Support implementation of small hydropower into the PFES system in Son La province.
- Support the development of national and local policies and practices, with priority given to monitoring and assessing the implementation of the Forestry Law and its bylaws.
- Support the development of MARD's Decision on compulsorily applying FVDMS nationwide and support the deployment of FVDMS in all 60 provinces and cities with forests in Vietnam.
- Support the implementation of the provincial LEAPs in seven provinces.
- Support awareness raising events on forest management, protection, and development, with special attention to provincial middle- and top-level managers, who are, as assigned by Conclusion 61-KL/TW, accountable for forest management, protection, and development in their respective localities.
- Support capacity building activities for law enforcement and judicial agencies to strengthening forest law enforcement.
- Continue the support in value chains for timber and forestry certification, in NTFP development and related implementation of the partnership agreements with conservation friendly enterprises.

II. PROJECT OVERVIEW

Program Name:	USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project
Activity Start Date and End Date:	July 1, 2020– June 30, 2025
Name of Prime Implementing Partner:	DAI Global, LLC.
Name of Sub-implementing partners	RECOFTC and NEPCon (Preferred by Nature)
Contract Number:	7200AA18D00020
Major Counterpart Organizations:	Management Board for Forestry Projects of Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and Forestry Protection and Development Fund of Lao Cai, Son La, Hoa Binh, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Quang Tri and Quang Nam provinces
Geographic Coverage:	Hanoi Capital, Vietnam Lao Cai, Son La, Hoa Binh, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Quang Tri and Quang Nam provinces, Vietnam

USAID/Vietnam seeks to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation of natural forests, and to reduce poor plantation management practices in Vietnam. Various political and economic drivers, in Vietnam and internationally, have resulted in widespread forest degradation and constrained development outcomes. Despite national increases in overall tree coverage, there has been a reduction in the total area of natural forests and in forest quality in Vietnam. The USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project (the Project) seeks to leverage several approaches to promote sustainable land management to address the drivers of forest conversion and degradation in targeted areas. At the core of this approach are engagement with the private sector and improved co-management by communities, local authorities, and the national government.

The Project focuses on reducing land-based emissions and increasing carbon sequestration in Vietnam's natural production forests and plantation production forests. These forests provide carbon, ecosystems, and economic services at local, national, and global scales. Specifically, the Project aims to:

1. Avoid carbon emissions from natural forest conversion;
2. Increase carbon sequestration through better management of plantation forests; and
3. Improve quality, diversity, and productivity of natural production forests.

The Project will achieve this goal through five interlinked objectives: (i) improve and expand community forest management; (ii) increase conservation-friendly enterprises in forest-dependent communities; (iii) increase functionality of law enforcement (LE) systems for forest crimes; (iv) improve production forest management practices; and (v) mobilize domestic resources for forest management and protection.

Exhibit 1: The Project's Objectives

The interaction between the Project's five objectives is described in Exhibit 1. The proposed policies and LE or mobilized domestic resources from Objectives 3 and 5 are the enabling environments for supporting the implementation of other objectives' activities (e.g., CFM, CFEs, value chains, Forest Stewardship Councils [FSC] certification, SFM, payments for forest environmental services [PFES] and carbon [CPFES] in the field).

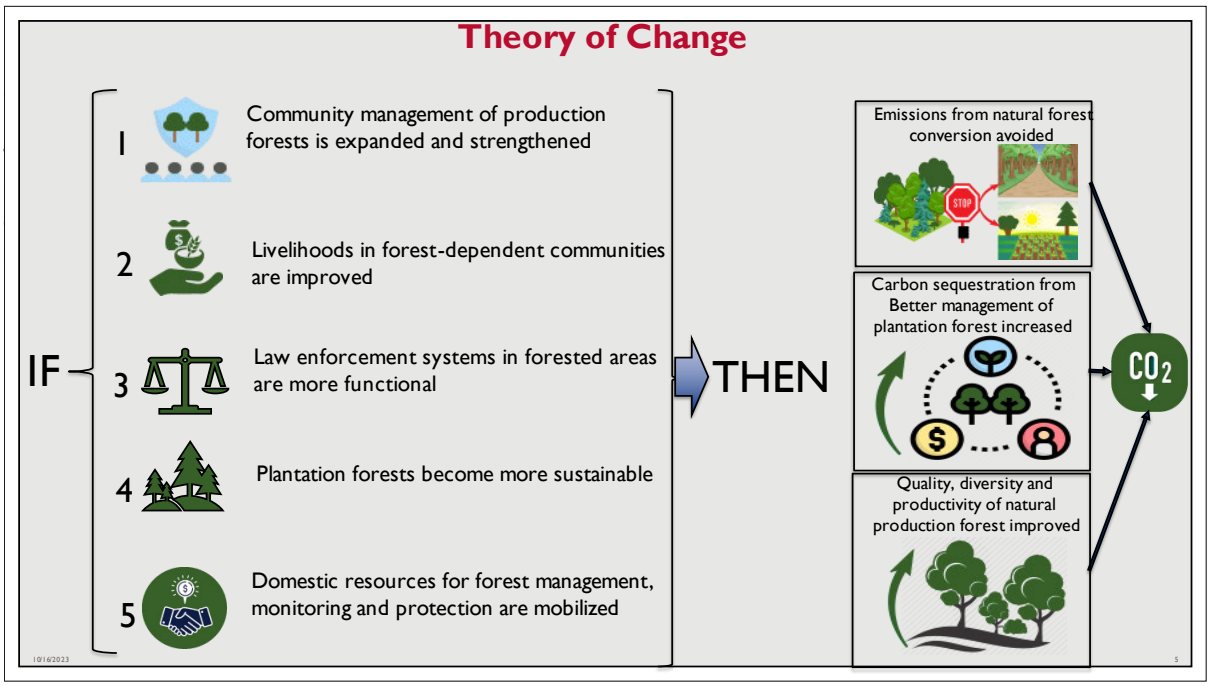
THEORY OF CHANGE

The working theory of change for the USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project is that IF

1. *Community management of production forests is expanded and strengthened; and if*
2. *Livelihoods in forest-dependent communities are improved; and if*
3. *LE systems in forested areas are more functional; and if*
4. *Plantation forests become more sustainable; and if*
5. *Domestic resources for forest management, monitoring and protection are mobilized.*

THEN communities and management authorities will work together effectively to reduce drivers of low carbon forest management, natural forest conversion, and unsustainable natural forest use LEADING TO reduced deforestation and degradation of forests, and improved carbon sequestration and environmental co-benefits.

Exhibit 2: The Project's Theory of Change



III. ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS BY OBJECTIVES

This section presents major milestones and progress by objective, along with the associated indicators that those activities contributed to during this period. Additional details on overall activity and indicator progress, as well as a list of events and deliverables during this period, can be found in the Annexes section.

OBJECTIVE 1. IMPROVE AND EXPAND COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT

Under Objective 1, the project aims to provide policy updates and guidelines on community forest management (CFM) across seven provinces through the formulation and facilitation of a CFM manual and CFM models. At the provincial and commune site levels, the project focused on identifying target forest areas for CFM interventions, including forest allocation/forest land allocation (FA/FLA) and other CFM modalities. Based on the identified target forest areas and CFM interventions, the Project built institutional and technical capacities of target communities to set up and implement CFM models.

OBJECTIVE 1 MILESTONES

This year, the Project accomplished three major milestones under this objective that contributed to overall progress towards targets. These will set the Project on course to meet its key deliverables next year:

- First, 103 communities completed the development of 14 sustainable forest management plans (SFMPs) and 89 forest protection and management plans (FPPs). These resulted in strengthened institutional capacities for community forest management boards and community forest protection patrolling teams of 103 communities. In addition, the Project supported 49 communities to develop village conventions and/or forest protection and management plans including benefit sharing mechanisms that allows village management boards to establish community funds from varies sources such as PFES revenues, payments from forest protection contract, government fund for forestry development, sustainable harvesting of NTFP, funds for assisting regeneration for community natural forests, interest from microcredit fund, etc. The funds are not only prioritized for forest protection efforts but also development of the community infrastructure, e.g., road, irrigation, conventional hall, etc. These mechanisms enable the communities to share benefit for 21,533 people.
- Second, community forest patrolling groups completed 10,250 person-days of patrolling in community forests, which detected and prevented 37 forest violation cases, and contributed to improved management of 79,762.5 ha of natural community forests.
- Third, the Project facilitated and captured the experiences and lessons learned from the development process of 14 SFMPs, which were used as significant contributions at the policy level. This policy support will enable communities to sustainably manage their allocated forests nationwide.

Objective 1 activities contributed to the following indicators during this period:

ID1: Number of people trained: **2,666**

ID2: Number of institutions with improved capacity: **11**

ID3: Number of laws, policies/ plan, regulations, or standards developed: **22**

ID5: Number of people receiving livelihood co-benefits: **21,533**

ID6: Greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduced, sequestered, or avoided (tCO2): **2,817,513**

ID8: Hectares under improved management: **79,762.53**

ID11: Adults who perceived land tenure rights as secured: **1,403**

Strengthened communities' governance capacities in sustainable forest management.

In FY2023, the Project strengthened the governance capacities of target communities in two major areas: development of communities' capacities to develop SFMPs and/or FPPs; and enhancement of villages' conventions and regulations on the management and utilization of communities' resources.

Firstly, the Project strengthened planning capacities by supporting 100 communities to develop 14 SFMPs and 89 FPPs. A summary of the Project's support throughout the year is provided below.

The Project trained members of 14 target communities on forest inventories covering: forest area, forest timber volume or stock, forest regeneration, non-timber forest products (NTFPs), and forest fauna and flora. Through these trainings, the communities gained better understanding about their allocated forest resources, which will help them identify interventions for SFMPs.

A successful community and private partnership in Quang Nam

Quang Nam has strong potential to become one of the largest suppliers of rattan in Vietnam, with a volume of 7,000 tons per year, especially from natural forests in Nam Giang, Dong Giang, Nong Son, and Phuoc Son districts. Since FY22, the Project supported nine communities to develop NTFP utilization, management, and development plans with the main focus on rattan in about 15,000 ha of community forests. This contributes to collaboration between communities and the private enterprise, Luc Dong Construction and Trading Co. Ltd (Luc Dong company), which aims to restore about 1,000 ha of rattan and replant 5,000 rattan seedlings in three targeted districts. Luc Dong company's support will benefit about 330 local people belonging to ethnic minority groups (165 females) with total allowance for labor costs of VND 25 million (about USD 1,000). Luc Dong company will continue expanding the restoration and replanting of rattan in collaboration with these communities to ensure long-term supply of rattan materials, improved livelihoods for local communities, and sustainable management of natural forests.

Furthermore, the project helped mainstream gender equity and social inclusion (GESI) into plans. The Project's trainings on GESI helped 194 people (74 females and 186 ethnic minorities) from CFM sites in Son La, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Quang Tri, and Quang Nam to gain a stronger grasp of basic GESI concepts, thereby strengthening their ability to detect where gender inequality exists in how they manage their community forests and how to address those gaps. The participants applied their new GESI knowledge to identify opportunities to promote the active participation of women and disadvantaged groups in their respective CFM institutions, such as CFM boards, community forest patrolling groups, and community monitoring boards as part of SFMP processes.

Through trainings, the project supported the target communities with new knowledge and skills to develop plans on utilization, management, and development of NTFPs, forest patrolling plans, and regulations to manage villages' funds. These essential technical capacities helped strengthen implementation of SFMPs, to maintain forest protection efforts and ensure communities' common benefits.

NTFP species from community forests continue to play an important role in domestic consumption and generate income for communities in Quang Nam. However, findings from various NTFP assessments in Son La, Hoa Binh, Thanh Hoa, Quang Tri, and Quang Nam, which were conducted as part of the NTFP trainings, demonstrated that their availability in community forests are significantly decreasing in recent decades due to overharvesting or unsustainable harvesting techniques. This trend has created conflict among people within some communities, or between neighboring communities. To help solve these issues, the Project's NTFP trainings not only provided community members with basic knowledge and sustainable harvesting techniques of different NTFP species available in their respective community forests, but they also supported 14 communities in Hoa Binh, Thanh Hoa, Quang Tri, and Quang Nam to develop NTFP utilization, management, and development plans.

The Project facilitated village meetings and consultations with communities to identify key interventions for SFMPs in accordance with Circular 28/2018/TT-BNNPTNT on sustainable forest management planning, and the CFM Manual for better forest protection and management of their allocated forests. Similarly, the Project supported consultations to prepare FPPs for other communities under forest protection contracts (FPC) in Lao Cai, Quang Nam, and Nghe An and/or to manage forests allocated to individual households as community groups in Hoa Binh and Thanh Hoa.

The support provided is important because although communities are recognized as a type of forest owner by Forestry Law, most do not have the necessary institutional nor technical capacities to implement sustainable management practices or perform forest owner's responsibilities, such as protect and monitor forests or patrol. In addition, since other types of communities under FPCs or household groups are not forest owners, they do not organize or implement forest protection patrolling in a timely manner.

In FY23, the Project enhanced villages' conventions and regulations on the management and utilization of community resources. The Project supported 50 communities to review, renew, or formulate village conventions on forest protection and management. The Project ensured the full and effective participation of community members, especially women and ethnic minority groups. Some of these villages' conventions were endorsed by District People's Committees, like in Quang Nam, or by Commune People's Committees, which empower communities to handle minor forest violations caused by internal community members in community forests. The Project also facilitated the development of operations regulations for newly established or reinforced community forest patrol teams (CFPTs), which maintain the regular implementation of forest patrolling activities as scheduled in SFMPs or FPPs. This included building the capacity of target communities to effectively manage village-level funds from PFES and/or other state funds, and other community forest resources or NTFPs.

The Project conducted 17 trainings on financial management skills for 65 communities' representatives that focused on the management and utilization of PFES revenue. The training provided basic skills in financial management and utilization of village-level revenue or funds, such as preparations of villages' PFES spending plans, and regulations on the management and utilization of these funds. The Project also trained these communities' representatives in facilitating village meetings, enabling them to conduct follow-up discussions with the rest of their community members to develop PFES management and utilization plans and regulations. As a result, the target communities applied the knowledge and skills acquired from the trainings, thereby ensuring transparency, effective management, and utilization of PFES funds to maintain forest protection patrolling efforts as well as provide common benefit to community members.

Strengthened forest protection patrolling/forest protection efforts.

The Project provided 39 trainings on forest patrolling skills to enable community forest patrol groups to undertake forest patrolling schedules as part of their SFMPs or FPPs. The Project supported 105 communities to review existing CFPTs for further improvements or to establish new CFPTs. This has been particularly critical since most of these communities organized their own CFPTs, which are not always fully set up or functional. In addition, forest patrolling protection activities have been sometimes disrupted since some were recently merged from two or more smaller villages that had not yet updated their organizational structures or other villages' regulations. As part of the forest patrolling skill trainings, the Project also helped these communities develop forest patrolling schedules and update patrolling routes to improve effectiveness of forest patrolling, since the previous routes mainly followed walking paths in forests that often did not sufficiently cover the target areas of community forests (i.e. those areas that are most at risk of deforestation or forest encroachment). These issues were addressed during the training and through the Project's follow-up support for 101 communities to develop more effective forest patrolling plans. Moreover, the Project provided safety and equipment items for 26 communities to ensure safe and effective forest patrols.

Improving community patrolling and PFES revenue management: A case from Lao Cai

In Lao Cai province, Nam Than and Nam Cang villages of Lien Minh commune, Sa Pa district joined forest protection contracts with Sa Pa Protection Forest Management Board. The two communities receive more than two billion VND (or around USD 81,000) of PFES revenue every year, which was equally divided among community members without any funds reserved for forest protection. There was no patrolling schedule, and the patrolling routes did not adequately cover the community forests. Since FY2023, the Project conducted trainings on forest patrolling skills, which guided the communities in developing forest patrolling schedules with improved patrolling paths. After participating in the Project's training on financial management skills, the two communities agreed on regulations to utilize and manage PFES revenues that pay at least 25% of PFES revenue for community forest protection patrolling teams before the remaining share is equally split among community members. The communities will also reduce the PFES share for those households that violate the community's rules on forest protection and management.

The Project not only focused on forest protection efforts within communities, but it also helped promote cooperation among 11 communities in Quang Tri province. As a result, representatives of 11 communities and the Dakrong Protection Forest Management Board signed five cooperation mechanisms for joint forest patrolling, forest fire fighting and control, contributing to improved forest management of 4,163 ha of community forests.

Community forest patrolling groups conducted 10,250 person-days of patrolling and monitoring in community forests, and detected and prevented 37 forest violation cases, contributing to the better management of 78,997 ha of natural community forests. Of this total area, 15,111 ha of forest management areas is under 14 SFMPs (CFM), 30,490 ha of 38 communities is under FPCs, and 25,605 ha is under 36 community forest household groups.

OBJECTIVE 1 CHALLENGES

Challenge: The lengthy provincial peoples' committee (PPC) approval processes on FA/FLA plans and technical document designs continued to delay the FA/FLA implementation to communities in the field. **Solution:** To speed up the process, the Project made several requests to CPMU/PPMUs to provide clear deadlines and milestones. Consequently, Son La PPC approved the technical document design and cost estimate for FA/FLA of 15,000 ha to 314 communes, which includes 40 communes of Muong La, Moc Chau and Van Ho districts.

OBJECTIVE 1 PRIORITIES FOR FY24

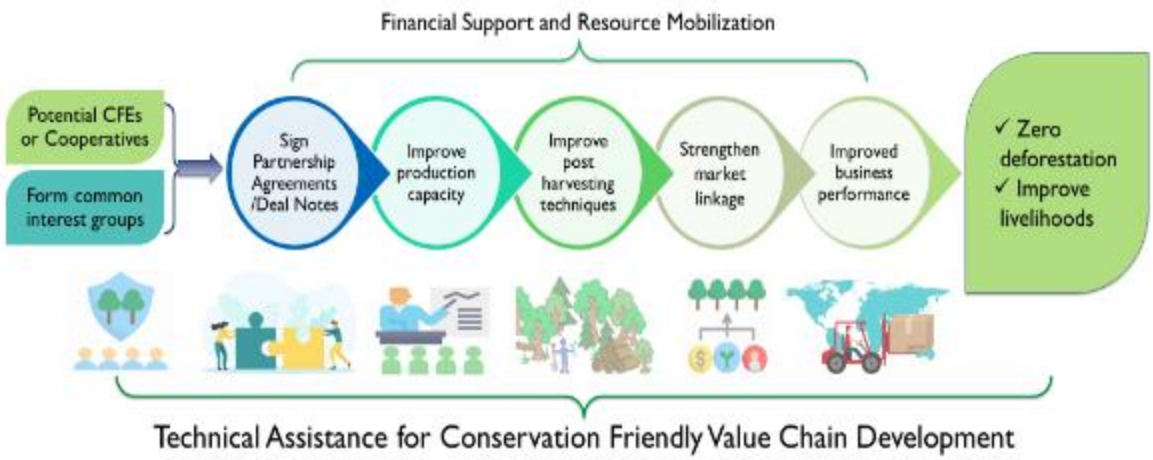
In FY24, the Project will focus on upscaling field interventions at provincial levels that aim to improve and expand CFM at national level. The Project will focus on the following key activities:

- Maintain the CFM network to exchange lessons learnt and inform national policies on FA/FLA and CFM.
- Continue support and promote the cooperations mechanisms at community and commune levels, and other stakeholders like enterprises, small-scaled hydropower plants etc.
- Improve communities' capacity to monitor community forests and/or contracted forests.
- Enhance ecotourism integrated with strengthened management and protection of community forests, and the preservation and promotion of cultural values at CFM sites.
- Promote and support FA/FLA to communities in Lao Cai, Son La and Thanh Hoa
- Continue capacity building, awareness raising and support communities to implement SFMPs, FPPs with a strong focus to link with livelihood potentials (e.g., NTFPs) and/or community-based ecotourism.

OBJECTIVE 2. INCREASE CONSERVATION FRIENDLY ENTERPRISES IN FOREST DEPENDENT COMMUNITIES

Under Objective 2, the Project aims to create additional and sustainable incomes for forest dependent communities by providing technical assistance for conservation-friendly value chain development. Activities to support value chain development will encourage conservation friendly enterprises (CFEs) to improve business performance and to create change in forest-dependent communities. This, in turn, will contribute to reducing natural forest conversion and will result in avoided carbon emissions. The approach is illustrated in Exhibit 3:

Exhibit 3: Value Chains Development Associated with CO2 Emissions Reduction



OBJECTIVE 2 MILESTONES:

Under Objective 2, the Project accomplished four major milestones during FY23 that will contribute to the Project overall targets.

- First, the Project continued providing technical and institutional capacity building for CFEs and value chain actors participating in the seven selected conservation-friendly value chain commodities (rattan bamboo and leaves [RBL], medicinal plants, cinnamon, coffee, tung oil, areca, and fruits).
- Second, the Project facilitated a market-based public-private-community-partnerships (PPCP) approach.
- Third, the Project facilitated research and development (R&D) and market access for CFEs to boost value chain competitiveness.
- Lastly, the Project catalyzed and created an environment that encourages conservation-friendly value chain development.

Objective 2 activities contributed to the following indicators during this period:

- ID1: Number of people trained: **4,947**
- ID2: Number of institutions with improved capacity: **33**
- ID3: Number of laws, policies/ plans, regulations, or standards developed: **2**
- ID4: Funds mobilized: $**9.5** million
- ID5: Number of people receiving livelihood co-benefits: **9,315**
- ID10: Number of enterprises supported: **33**
- ID12: Number of people supported to adapt to climate change: **3,932**
- ID13: Number of people implemented risk-reduction practices: **3,183**

Strengthened institutional and technical capacity for CFEs and value chain actors.

In FY23, the Project organized capacity building events for CFEs—especially with women-led or women-owned small-scale CFEs, state management agencies, and actors involved in the selected value chains. To date, the Project conducted 167 training courses for 4,947 participants (3,017 females, and 3,445 ethnic minorities), all conducted in the farmer field school and utilizing an adult learner-centered approach for higher efficiency. Through these training courses, the Project saw significant improvements. Specifically, 81% of participants across seven provinces have started applying the new techniques into their practices. CFEs that deal with medicinal plants have applied GACP and as a result, 5 hectares of medicinal plants have received GACP-WHO certification. Furthermore, RBL CFEs have designed and are capable of producing 24 new product designs as a result of the project's support. Lastly, with the Project's assistance, CFEs have signed 16 orders. A summary of training topics covered during the past year are summarized below.

*j*To enhance the institutional and organizational capacity for CFE leaders, the Project conducted workshops that helped budding CFEs to Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB)[3]. The Project also provided training on asset-based community development (ABCD), which is expected to contribute to stakeholders' resource management and sustainable forest development. The project continued to provide guidance on the 'good housekeeping' method and on internal control skills for cooperative supervisory boards, ensuring the long-term sustainability of their businesses. The Project trained cooperative leaders to attract new members and mobilize participants to pool resources and to collect financing from cooperative members and other sources to diversify CFEs' financial resources for better sustainability.

Ms. Dao Thi Hong Nien, second from right, is participating in a performance at the 2022 Handicraft Competition in Hoi An. Photo credit: Ha Nguyen.

The Project held capacity building sessions on cultivation, nursery and harvesting technics for CFEs and producers in the selected value chain. These trainings covered topics, including World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines on Good Agricultural and Collection Practices (GACP) for medicinal plants. The Project provided training on sustainable, environmentally friendly farming process for households participating in selected value chains, which will enable them to have a better knowledge and skills to apply into daily farming practice. The Project held training on techniques for environmentally friendly harvesting, pre-processing, and post-harvest preservation of agricultural products and NTFPs. The Project also provided support on composting from agricultural waste, coffee replanting techniques, and coffee cultivation using agroforestry methods, as well as organic cinnamon cultivation.

The Project also provided support to help improve CFEs' capacity in product R&D, marketing, production, and market access. These trainings included sessions on creative design for artisans in the RBL value chain; handicraft production with improved models and new designs; product research, improvement and development of new products for CFEs in the medicinal plants value chain; and market access, sales, and communication skills for effective trade promotion.

Finally, the Project also supported the Quang Tri DARD to organize one study tour in Lao PDR for 18 participants (two females, one ethnic minority), joining from different line departments (DARD,

[3] Start and Improve Your Business Programme (ENTERPRISES) (ilo.org)

Rural Development Sub – department, Agriculture Extension Centre, Huong Hoa DPC, Huong Phung CPC, Huong Hoa district DARD and several CFEs. The delegation visited and learned from coffee farmers, cooperatives and Slow Agroforestry Coffee Company in several topics, agroforestry coffee production, multi-layered production to improve coffee quality, soil protection and bio conservation. In particular, the delegation has had an exchange visit to the Champasak DARD and local coffee companies appealing for investment into coffee industry in Quang Tri. As a result, after the study tour, Quang Tri DARD has initiated their action, via promulgating relevant documentation and decisions approving CFEs to transform from single coffee farms into agroforestry coffee. DARD also supported Slow Company to finalize their business registration in Quang Tri province. Furthermore, the Project has facilitated two contracts in agroforestry coffee development and off – farm sale with the fixed higher price of US$ 0.12 with two local CFEs.

Enhanced PPCPs to promote viable conservation-friendly businesses.

Mobilizing resources from the public and private sectors and from communities is critical to achieving success in implementing deforestation-free value chains. To accomplish this, the Project collaborated with CFEs and relevant partners to conduct a review of available and appropriate resources in the provinces, including those from both central and local sources. The findings helped six CFEs from the RBL, areca, coffee, and Tung oil value chains to develop six proposals. Three proposals for the RBL value chains were sent directly by the Provincial People's Committee (PPC) to Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) for approval, while other three proposals for the coffee and tung oil value chains were sent by the provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) to the Quang Tri PPC for approval. MARD has approved two proposals for Son La Green Bamboo Cooperative and Quang Nam Green Areca Cooperative, totaling 1.5 million USD. The remaining four proposals were submitted and are being reviewed by the relevant government agencies.

The Project also provided technical assistance to 26 CFEs to carry out their previously signed Partnership Agreements (PAs) with the Project. This assistance has helped CFEs attract 1.9 million USD in private sector investments to reorganize factory premises using the 'good housekeeping' methods, to purchase equipment to produce new products, to acquire materials to expand businesses, and to establish distribution and sales channels. The technical assistance also encouraged forest-dependent communities to contribute readily available resources, such as land, material, and labor, and to collaborate with CFEs to develop sustainable value chains associated with forest conservation and development.

"In the past, the areca leaves fell all over the road, which was wasteful and polluting, worsening our environmental landscape. Now, wherever I go, I pick up areca leaves, as each one is valuable. One piece of areca leaf sold as raw material costs VND 500, but we can use five pieces of areca leaves to make one handbag in a day and sell it for VND 250,000. The Project's support in this activity is very meaningful, helping our cooperative members have a stable income."

-- Mrs. Dao Thi Hong Nien, a member of the Quang Nam Green Areca Cooperative

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Product R&D and market access for CFEs to boost value chain competitiveness.

The Project provided technical assistance to CFEs to develop new products in typical value chains with high potential, such as the bamboo and rattan value chain and the medicinal plants value chain. The products researched and developed adhere to the principles of: i) indigenous knowledge of local ethnic minorities and the products CFEs have produced with room for improvement; ii) guided by consumer trends and customer needs; iii) ability to invest in and expand production of CFE; and iv)

market competitiveness and profit margin compared to other business activities. As a result, the Project supported 26 CFEs to improve 27 products and to develop 31 new products. Furthermore, the Project helped CFEs participate in trade promotion events, trade fairs, and competitions for handicraft development initiatives, as well as exhibition events to promote their products. Most of the products from the participating CFEs received high recognition from participating clients. At MARD's 2022 National Handicraft Competition, the only special award went to the Tam Quang Rattan and Bamboo Cooperative (Tuong Duong district, Nghe An province) for their bamboo furniture products. The first prize went to the Tam Lu Rattan and Bamboo Cooperative (Quan Son district, Thanh Hoa province) for their bamboo basket products, and the second prize went to Co Tu ethnic artisans from the Bhoong Bamboo and Rattan Cooperative in Dong Giang district, Quang Nam province, for their bamboo gift box product. These achievements are all thanks to the efforts of artisans with technical support from the Project. In coffee value chain, the Khe Sanh Agricultural Cooperative's product won first place in the roasted arabica coffee category at the 2023 Vietnam Specialty Coffee Competition. In 2023, Quang Nam green areca cooperative's areca-leaf handbags won a consolation prize at the first Hoi An Handicraft Competition and was well received by customers (distribution companies) in Hoi An and Ho Chi Minh Cities. FY23 also saw 16 product purchasing contracts worth USD 2.042 million signed with 15 CFEs in three value chains.

The Prime Minister and Minister of MARD inspect a handicraft supported by the Project. Credit: Vietcraft.

A product made from areca palm in Quang Nam province. Credit: Vietcraft.

MARD Minister awarding a special award to an artisan from Nghe An. Credit: Vietcraft.

Created an enabling environment for sustainable value chain development, leading to emissions reduction.

The Project assisted Quang Tri province in developing and issuing Plan No. 237/KH-UBND, dated December 30, 2022, of the Quang Tri PPC on the production development plan associated with Tung oil in Huong Hoa and Dakrong districts in Quang Tri province from 2023-2026, with a vision to 2030. The plan aims to help Quang Tri better manage the existing 2,948 ha of Tung oil forest; increase the raw material areas, thereby reaching 5,000 ha by 2025 and 8,320 ha by 2030; and create annual seasonal jobs and increase incomes for at least 1,000 households in Huong Hoa and Dakrong districts. The total budget for implementing this plan is nearly USD 690,000, coming from the state budget through the National Target Program for New Rural Development, the National Target Program for socio-economic development in ethnic minority and mountainous areas, and the Sustainable Forestry Development Program, and other sources.

In Quang Tri province, the province supported the development and issuance of Decision No. 3159/QD-UBND, dated December 12, 2022, of the PPC approving the Plan to innovate and develop agricultural and forestry cooperatives of Quang Tri, from 2022-2026, with a vision to 2030. This provincial plan will focus on innovating agricultural and forestry cooperative operating methods, shifting from quantity development to consolidating and developing the *quality* and efficiency of agricultural and forestry cooperatives. Developing agricultural and forestry cooperatives relies primarily on the organization's internal resources and the cooperative's members. The State only supports several policies and budget arrangements to foster an environment for agricultural and forestry cooperatives to grow in an equal manner. Priority will be given to assisting cooperative development with policies and plans to increase technological use, and for environmentally friendly

activities associated with deforestation-free value chains, such as arabica coffee, Tung oil, and large timber forests. The expected outcomes from this technical assistance will have a significant impact on community members. The province will allocate a total budget of USD 6.9 million to implement this Plan.

The Project provided technical assistance for Quang Tri province to implement the medicinal plants value chain development initiatives associated with the One Commune One Product (OCOP) program from 2022-2026, with a vision to 2030, which was approved by the Quang Tri PPC in Decision No. 1113/QD-UBND, dated April 22, 2022. To date, four significant results have been achieved: the project identified key medicinal plants for each ecological region; selected CFEs to participate in restructuring the province's medicinal plants sector to improve competitiveness; supported the initial formation of a network of businesses operating in the field of medicinal plants in the province; and assisted in the implementation of MOUs and product purchasing contracts signed at the Project's event calling for investment and promoting trade in medicinal herbs in Quang Tri province in June 2022.

Ms. Mr. Mao, Director of Son Nguyen Cooperative is signing a cooperation contract with partners. Photo credit: Tuu Le.

"Since our cooperative was established, we have only focused on production solely based on traditional experiences, but we did not focus on learning and applying new knowledge, and off – farm contracting. Since participating in the Project's activities, we have learned about agroforestry coffee farming models and multi-layer coffee gardens. Having access to leading firms and export businesses enable us to sign off- farm contracts with confirmed sale volumes and competitive prices. That helps our cooperative feel more secure with clear and stable production and business plans, contributing to increased incomes of coffee growers in the cooperative. Therefore, we do not need to go into the forest to exploit forest products to sustain our livelihoods."

- Mr. Tran Van Mao - Director of Son Nguyen Agricultural and Forestry Cooperative

Lastly, the Project assisted the Management Board for Forestry Projects (MBFP) in developing a proposal for the Sustainable Development of Vietnamese Bamboo

"2023 has been a very successful year for our company. Customers know us more and more, and the company's image appears more and more. The Project has promoted the connection of our company with the Institute of Traditional Medicine and the Women's Union of Thanh Hoa province. These organizations have empowered us, giving us the opportunity to express ourselves, promote confidence, and a spirit of ownership. Since then, we have approached and connected with other pharmaceutical businesses inside and outside the province. We greatly appreciate this support and companionship."

- Mrs. Truong Thi Son, Director of the Central southeastern pharmacy JSC.

Mrs. Truong Thi Son, Director of the Central southeastern pharmacy JSC presented at the women's creative startup competition in Thanh Hoa province. Photo credit: Nga Dao.

Project in the provinces of Hoa Binh, Thanh Hoa, and Nghe An for the period 2024-2028. Currently, the MBFP is working with different donors to identify funding opportunities and will send relevant proposals to potential donors, such as Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA);
The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and USAID. If awarded, the initiative will be implemented in these three provinces guided by the Project's achievements, which will have both direct and indirect impacts to help better manage bamboo forests in the high-risk areas of deforestation and forest degradation.

OBJECTIVE 2 CHALLENGES

Challenge 1: Although the Project helped CFEs to apply for above-mentioned projects approved by MARD, the team encountered several challenges, including the lack of standardized guidelines or instructions among government line ministries. This led to differing understanding among local agencies. For example, the USD 247,000 amount for 2023 was transferred from MARD's budget to Son La Province. However, currently both the Province and Mai Son district still have not agreed on a detailed capital allocation method and could not carry out investment activities for the Green Bamboo Cooperative (supported by the Project). **Solution:** To solve these challenges, the Project has been actively connecting local stakeholders to discuss, analyze bottlenecks, and find appropriate solutions based on interdisciplinary consensus and agreement, to avoid any misleading or misunderstanding during implementation.

Challenge 2: The market for certain value chains of handicrafts and medicinal plants has been downsized due to domestic and international economic challenges related to high inflation and economic stagnation in developed countries, most of which are export markets for these selected value chain products. Customers have faced tighter budgets and reduced spending this year, with a focus on essential expenditures for day-to-day life, rather than handicraft and herbal health care products. According to Vietcraft, export handicraft orders have decreased by 40 percent compared with previous years. **Solution:** To help CFEs overcome this challenge, the Project has consulted CFEs to focus on core and competitive products for example, Thai traditional sticky rice boxes and tea gift boxes produced by Phong Lap Bamboo and Rattan Handicraft Collective Economic Group, and to reduce production costs by providing vocational training and necessary equipment**.** The Project is also developing a marketing newsletter to exchange and dissmeminate timely market information to CFEs and producers to improve market access.

OBJECTIVE 2 PRIORITIES FOR FY24

Building on progress made during FY23, the Project will focus on the following in FY24:

- Accelerate the implementation of 26 signed PAs with CFEs in seven environmentally friendly value chains.
- Enhance institutional and organizational capacity of CFEs to improve their performance and competitiveness in the domestic and international markets. This, in return, will strengthen linkages between CFEs and forest-dependent communities to develop and expand raw material areas.
- Continue to support institutions to implement value chain-related policies, including the Master Plan Development of medicinal plants in association with the OCOP program in Quang Tri from 2022-2026, with a vision towards 2030.
- Develop a wrap-up strategy to avoid gaps after the Project concludes. The Project will decelerate technical assistance and instead, allow CFEs to develop and deploy their businesses using the skills and knowledge and support that they gained from the Project activities. This will allow CFE to steadily stand on their feet after the Project ends.

- Document best practices, case studies, and recommendations of Project partners for communication and to encourage replication and expanded operation of State projects and programs.
- Due to the continued high demand for technical assistance from Project partners given the Project's currently restricted resources, the Project will prioritize activities and tasks from high priority to low priority and will develop different scenarios to effectively allocate resources.
- Apply scientific tools to determine how value chain activities will contribute to increasing income for forest dependent communities, leading to reduced pressures on natural forests and reduced emissions.

Commercialize traditional RBL handicraft products of the Thai ethnic minority in the northwest of Vietnam.

Lua, a village two kilometers from the center of Phong Lap commune, Thuan Chau district, is home to 82 Thai ethnic minority households. The village is classified as 'extremely difficult' in terms of poverty rate, rate of untrained workers, access to education, and transportation infrastructure by the government's evaluation criteria. Villagers make their living primarily through agricultural-forestry production, bamboo, and bamboo shoot exploitation, other NTFPs. Bamboo baskets, fish baskets, rice boxes, and hats are among their traditional crafts, but these are mostly for household use only. While some households sold and exchanged bamboo products with Thai households in neighboring villages, the trade did not generate much income.

Since April 2022, 69 households in Lua village have been members of the Phong Lap Bamboo and Rattan Handicraft Collective Economic Group, which is supported by the USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project. The group elected Mr. Lo Van Hoan as their group leader. Hoan worked closely with reputable people in the village and local authorities to encourage villagers to actively participate in Project activities aimed at developing the RBL value chain to improve competitiveness of their products for better incomes. At first, most villagers did not believe their products could be sold to tourists, customers in large cities, like Hanoi, or to export companies to increase their incomes. The group persevered, with the assistance of professional artisans invited by the Project to inspire and guide them, the group improved their traditional goods and created new products that meet customer needs. To date, the group has created more than 10 marketable models divided into three product categories: sticky rice boxes, gift boxes, and bags.

Representatives from the group also participated in Project-hosted exchange visits to Thanh Hoa and Hoa Binh provinces to learn about sustainable bamboo forest planting, management, and exploitation, and visits to Ha Noi and Ha Nam to observe rattan and bamboo factories and gain perspectives on product design, production organization, and sales.

Their diligence paid off. The signed a purchasing contract with the Vietnam Design and Product Development Company and has sold their products at Son La province events. In response to new orders, the group is currently producing 300 sticky rice boxes, 200 tea boxes, and 200 bags worth nearly 80 million VND, (about USD 3,300) contributing to new jobs and increased income for members during the off-season. With the Project's continued support, the group hopes to expand their business, receive more orders, and increase their income in the near future, contributing to reduced pressure on natural forests for livelihood purposes.

Three new products produced by Phong Lap RBL Handicraft Group. Photo credit: Vietcraft.

OBJECTIVE 3: INCREASE FUNCTIONALITY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT SYSTEMS FOR FOREST CRIMES

Activities under Objective 3 are mutually supportive and aim to: i) improve the legal and policy framework of the forestry sector at national and provincial levels; and ii) strengthen the capacity of the Project's local partners and beneficiaries to implement forestry policies.

Objective 3 activities contributed to the following indicators during this period:

- ID1: Number of people trained: **1,148**
- ID2: Number of institutions with improved capacity: **1**
- ID3: Number of laws, policies/ plans, regulations, or standards developed: **13**
- ID7: Projected tCO2 reduced by adopted policies: **11,770,108**

In FY23, the Project adjusted its approach to supporting the improvement of forestry policies. Instead of focusing on a "bottom-up approach," which provides consolidated and analyzed evidence from the field to support policy recommendations, the Project started working with Vietnam's top policymaking bodies, such as the Central Economic Commission (CEC) and the Central Propaganda and Education Commission (CPEC) of the Party's Central Committee[4] to provide recommendations through these bodies. As a result, the Project's recommendations are likely to be adopted in a high-level policy document on the country's strategic forestry development objectives, that, if accepted by the high-level government lawmakers, may be reflected in specific sectoral policies that flow down to the line ministries. The Project plans to continue to apply this approach in FY24, involving other highly influential policymaking bodies, such as the Commission for Science, Technology and Environment of the National Assembly, to review and improve key forestry policies.

In FY 21 and FY22, the Project achieved very good results from its law enforcement support, including supporting provinces to develop provincial forest law enforcement action plans (LEAPs), supporting national Forest Protection Departments (FPDs) to develop and pilot an innovative Forest Violation Database Management System (FVDMS), building capacity of forest rangers and other law enforcement agency staff, and raising awareness on forest protection and management for grassroot-level officers and local communities. In FY23, the Project built off its past success to take results to the next level, including: i) supporting provinces to implement their LEAPs; ii) scaling up nationwide FVDMS deployment to all provinces with forests in Vietnam; iii) strengthening the knowledge and skills of forest rangers and other law enforcement staff to prevent, detect, investigate, and handle forest violations and crimes; and iv) supporting awareness raising events on forest protection and forest law enforcement, not only to local communities and grassroots-level government staff, but also to local middle- and higher-level managers.

In summary, the Project's major contributions under Objective 3 in FY23 focus on:

- Strengthening the awareness and accountability of the country's top leaders to direct and monitor the implementation of forest management, protection, and development policies nationwide.
- Improving provisions that would positively affect the areas and quality of forest. These would include promoting community forest management with a strengthened role, responsibility, and accountability of communities (in cooperation with Objective 1); strengthening control over the conversion of forests and forest land to other use purposes; and redefining the total economic value of forest as bases for investment, payments for forest environmental

[4] CEC and CPEC are the focal point of the Party's Directive 13-CT/TW on "strengthening the Party's leadership in forest management, protection and development. The former (CEC) is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Directive and the latter (CPEC) is making sure that Party's organizations at all levels understand the importance of the Directive and implement it accordingly.

services (PFES), compensation and offsets; and diversifying incomes from forests through agroforestry (in cooperation with all other Objectives)[5].

- Strengthening law enforcement capacity of local partners by providing forest management and protection tools; refining provincial LEAPs; and re-enforcing existing and developing new inter-agency and inter-provincial cooperation protocols for forest protection.

OBJECTIVE 3 MILESTONES:

In FY23, the Project accomplished the following targets in its two major areas of intervention under this objective:

- Regarding policy development, the Project completed its support of four national policies, three provincial policies, and six inter-provincial coordination protocols. Notably, the Conclusion 61-KL/TW of the Secretariat of the Party's Central Committee—which was issued with the Project's technical support in August 2023—has paved the way for a reorientation of forestry development and has trigged the revision of forestry policies in the coming years. In addition, two other national policies are being developed with the Project's support and are expected to be completed by December 2023.

- As part of its support to strengthen law enforcement capacity, the Project completed the first stage of deployment of the innovative FVDMS tool with seven training events organized, 181 FPD staff trained, and 1,959 violation cases in seven Project provinces uploaded to the system from January 2022 to 2023. The second phase of deployment has already begun, to roll out FVDMS at a nationwide scale; it is expected to be completed in FY24.

- To strengthen forestry law enforcement in target provinces, the Project has helped organize 10 training events for 351 participants (including managers and staff of local FPDs, and district and commune sub-agencies and divisions); reviewed and updated two provincial LEAPs; and held 18 awareness raising events reaching 1,180 community people (including 299 females and 847 ethnic minority participants).

Achieved policy development at national and provincial levels.

In FY23, the Project completed its support to four national policies and three provincial policies, six of which have been issued and one (revised Decree 156) is awaiting final government approval (see Table below for details). In addition, there are two ongoing national policies, both supported by the Project since FY23 and both expected to be issued by December 31, 2023, including: i) Circular 28/2018/TT-BNNPTNT on sustainable forest management; and ii) Circular 32/2018/TT-BNNPTNT on forest valuation and forest frame prices. In cooperation with the Vietnam Economic Association of Agriculture and Rural Development (VIESARD) and the Vietnam National University of Forestry (VNUF), the Project also organized a policy discussion to generate comments on the revised Land Law, which is one of the most important and complicated laws, which strongly affects the implementation of Forestry Law and related policies.

[5] Improvement of national and provincial policies on PFES and CPFES is reported under Objective 5

Table 1: Completed support to policy development under Objective 3 in FY23

#	Legal documents /Policies	Contents	Level (national /provincial)	Date of issue	Issuing authorities
1	Conclusion 61-KL/TW	Continue to implement Directive 13-CT/TW on "strengthening the Party's leadership in forest management, protection and development"	National	August 17, 2023	Secretariat of the Party's Central Committee
2	Revised Circular 13/2019/TT-BNNPTNT	Revised into Circular 25/2022/TT-BNNPTNT: Provisions on planting replacement forests when converting forests to other using purposes	National	December 30, 2022	Minister of MARD
3	Revised Circular 27/2018/TT-BNNPTNT	Revised into Circular 26/2022/TT-BNNPTNT: Management and traceability of forest products	National	December 30, 2022	Minister of MARD
4	Revised Decree 156/NĐ-CP	Guide the implementation of some Articles of the Forestry Law	National	Submitted to Deputy Prime Minister on December 28, 2022	Government of Vietnam
5	Decision 161/QĐ-SNN	Technical Guideline for planting and caring seven tree species in the forest of Hoa Binh province	Provincial	April 11, 2023	Hoa Binh DARD
6	Resolution 02/2023/NQ-HDND	Support forest owners to implement the tasks of forest management and protection in Nghe An province	Provincial	July 7, 2023	Nghe An Provincial People's Council
7	Decision 1518/QĐ-UBND	Exemplary project on forest management, protection, and development in selected hydropower basins in Son La province	Provincial	August 15, 2023	Son La PPC
8	Seven new Inter-provincial Coordination Protocols for forest protection	Inter-agency coordination protocol for wood processing and exporting enterprises classification in Hoa Binh	Provincial	October 6,2022	Hoa Binh PPC
		Decision 2513/QĐ-UBND: Interagency coordination for Con Cuong district, Nghe An province	Provincial	October 10, 2022	District People's Committee of Con Cuong district (Nghe An province)
		Decision 41/QĐ-KL: Cooperation protocol between the FPD's Mobile and forest fire prevention team, District FPDs, and Management Board of Nature reserves for forest protection and management, forest fire prevention and control, and forest product management in Hoa Binh province	Provincial	March 30, 2023	Hoa Binh FPD
		Two interagency cooperation protocol between five provinces (Son La, Hoa Binh, Thanh Hoa, Phu Tho, Yen Bai)	Provincial	June 9, 2023	FPDs of Son La and 4 neighboring provinces
		One interagency cooperation protocol between Quang Tri and Quang Binh provinces	Provincial	September 22, 2023	Quang Tri and Quang Binh FPDs

"The Project-supported thematic reports provide interesting contents, capturing new and important issues that are emerging in the forestry sector. These contents make fundamental contribution for the Central Economic Commission to propose the orientation of sustainable forestry development in the coming years." – Mr. Bui Chi Kien, Official of the Central Economic Commission.

The Project's most important contribution to policy development goes to the Project's overall assessment of the implementation of **Directive 13-CT/TW** over the last five years, resulting in the Secretariat of the Party's Central Committee promulgating its **Conclusion 61-KL/TW** to "*continue to implement Directive 13-CT/TW on strengthening the Party's leadership in forest management, protection and development.*" Conclusion 61-KL/TW not only re-emphasizes the continuation of implementing Directive 13-CT/TW, but it also provides additional forest management measures, which are highly supportive to implementing the Project's objectives. The Conclusion guides the following positive actions:

- It requires Party's organizations at all levels to direct and monitor the government's tasks to improve the PFES mechanism and accelerate the preparation for C-PFES and a carbon credit market in Vietnam;
- It levels mismatches between forestry law and policies and other laws, such as the [revised] Land Law, Law on Tourism, State Investment Law, Construction Law etc.;
- It further strengthens the government's control over conversion of forests and forest land into other using purposes, thus limiting the areas of forest being taken for development projects;
- It ensures that all forest plots have owners by speeding up the process of allocating forests and forest land to communities, households, and individuals;
- It encourages "environmentally friendly enterprises," which are promoted by the Project, to make active investments in forest protection, development, and forest product processing industries; and lastly,
- It diversifies and increases incomes form forest by applying agroforestry etc.

Following up on the Party's Conclusion 61-KL/TW, the Prime Minister has directed MARD to work with MONRE to level the gaps between the [revised] Land Law and Forestry Law; review mismatches between Forestry Law and other laws; and prepare for the revision of the Forestry Law. The Prime Minister has also urged provinces with forests, including the Project's provinces, to prepare for the upcoming carbon credit market.

Mr. Tran Tuan Anh (left), Member of the Political Bureau, Head of the Central Economic Commission (CEC) and Mr. Nguyen Quoc Tri (right), Deputy Minister of MARD are making remarks at the first meeting of the Steering Committee for Assessment of Directive 13-CT/TU' on February 21, 2023. Photo credit: CEC

Supporting the submission of **Decree 156/NĐ-CP** to the Government is another important milestone of the Project's policy development support. The revised Decree strengthens forest

protection mechanisms and tightens the government's control over forests and forest land conversion while also opening up income generation opportunities from forests through environmental services, such as leasing forest environment for ecotourism and herbal plantation. The promulgation of this Decree will facilitate the implementation of a series of policies and provisions related to C-PFES in Vietnam (*see Objective 5 Milestones for details*). MARD is currently working with Ministries and agencies to clarify (with support from a consultant recruited by the Project) comments and questions from 27 members of the Government[6]. Following up on Conclusion 61-KL/TW, MARD was instructed by the Government to prepare for the review and revision of the Forestry Law—a process that will take several years to complete. Therefore, it is expected that the revised Decree will be approved within 2023.

Revised Circular 13/2019/TT-BNNPTNT (into Circular 25/2022/TT-BNNPTNT) and **revised Circular 27/2018/TT-BNNPTNT** (into Circular 26/2022/TT-BNNPTNT) contribute to the maintenance of the country's forest coverage and further improvement of forest protection. The former requires that owners of development projects (a leading contributor to forest losses or conversion of forest use purposes) must deposit sufficient budget to ensure lost forest areas are replanted. The latter applies different management and traceability mechanisms on forestry companies of Categories I (reliable) and II (less reliable), as defined by Circular 21/2021/TT-BNNPTNT to reduce the administrative burden on reliable companies and limit opportunities of wrong-doing of less reliable companies. Circular 26/2022/TT-BNNPTNT was also made compatible with the Vietnam-EU VPA/FLEGT Agreement and recently promulgated EU's Deforestation-free Regulation (EUDR).

At the provincial level, the "*Exemplary plan for forest management, protection, and development in selected hydropower basins in Son La province*" can be considered a first-of-its-kind local policy. The Plan applies some provisions of the existing legal framework, for example: direct PFES payments between service users (hydropower plants) and service providers (forest owners); and contract-based agreements between hydropower plants and communities to plant and care for newly planted and regenerated forests in small-scale hydropower basins. The Plan's benefits are wide-reaching. It strengthens the roles and accountability of communities in forest protection, provides additional income generation opportunities for communities, involves service users in the monitoring process, sets up a fair benefit sharing mechanism in basins, and reduces intermediate administrative costs.

In Hoa Binh, the province promulgated "*Technical Guideline for planting and caring seven tree species in the forest of Hoa Binh province,*" which is a significant starting point for the province to develop its intensive afforestation of large timber in the future. For the same reasons, Nghe An will develop technical guidelines for planting its endemic species as input for developing a Provincial Orientation Plan for Intensive Afforestation of Large Timber in FY24.

In Nghe An, the Provincial People's Council developed a Resolution that would partially reduce the financial burden of forest owners, especially forestry companies, to improve the management and protection of forest assigned to them in the context of the "logging ban."[7] The policy also helps increase benefits for the staff of the professional forest protection force, who are contracted by forest owners, yet, by current national policy (Decree 01/2019/NĐ-CP), enjoy very limited benefits. Nghe An's Resolution will be used as inputs for the revision of Decree 01/2019/NĐ-CP in FY24.

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[6] The number of members of the Government for the 15th National Assembly term is 27 members, including: Prime Minister; 4 Deputy Prime Ministers; 18 Ministers of ministries; 4 Heads of ministerial-level agencies.

[7] The Directive 13-CT/TW dated January 12, 2017 of the Secretariat of the Party's Central Committee requests "stop exploitation of timber from natural forest in the whole country". On November 1, 2017, with the Announcement No 511/TB-VPCP, Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc declared the Government's policy of "temporarily stop logging from natural forests", known as the "logging ban". The logging ban was re-emphasized in the Secretariat's Conclusion 61-KL/TW dated August 17, 2023. It will continues until the Government announce new policy.

To improve the quality of law enforcement for forest protection and management, and to improve forest fire fighting and prevention and forest product management in bordering areas, the Project helped develop inter-agency and inter-provincial coordination protocols. Four protocols were co-signed and promulgated in FY23 between FPDs of seven provinces, including: i) two protocols between Son La and its neighboring provinces of Hoa Binh, Thanh Hoa, Phu Tho, and Yen Bai; ii) one protocol between Quang Tri and Quang Binh provinces; and iii) one coordination protocol between provincial agencies of Nghe An province to support the process of classifying forestry enterprises according to provisions of Circular 21/2021/TT-BNNPTNT. As mentioned earlier, different management and traceability mechanisms and requirements will be applied to forestry enterprises of different categories, giving less control and administrative burden to "reliable enterprises."

In addition to the completed assignments, the Project is supporting the development of two national policies, both planned to be completed and issued in December 2023:

- Revised Circular 28/2018/TT-BNNPTNT on sustainable forest management would encourage forest owners, who are communities, households, and individuals (e.g., a key target group of the Project) to develop and implement Sustainable Forest Management Plans.
- Revised Circular 32/2018/TT-BNNPTNT on forest valuation and forest frame price will calculate the total economic values of forests by including in the forest valuation formula(s) missing factors, such as the value of forest biodiversity and environmental services.

Scaled up deployment of Forest Violation Database Management System (FVDMS)

FVDMS is part of Vietnam's digital transformation in general, and in the forestry sector in particular. Once fully rolled out, the system will provide useful information and data on forest violations for the entire country through an updated centralized digital database. Based on an approach that emphasizes "better information and data – better management," the system will contribute significantly to development of the forestry sector in Vietnam.

After developing and piloting FVDMS in two selected provinces in FY23, the Project successfully supporting the National FPD/MARD to install the system in a real-time environment (VNFOREST/FORMIS server) and to deploy it in the Project's target provinces. This milestone included: i) finalizing the centralized database; ii) finalizing the FVDMS application (software) with critical functionalities; iii) creating user accounts for system users; iv) installing the system in a real environment (VNFOREST/FORMIS server); v) conducting deployment trainings; and vi) providing technical support to provinces on its use.

Key figures: FVDMS through October 2023

- More than 140 user accounts created for FPD units (district FPDs, provincial FPDs, regional FPDs and central FPD) to sign in and use FVDMS.
- 7 FVDMS deployment events conducted, 181 technical staff from FPD units trained and used the system.
- 1,959 forest violation cases entered and monitored through the system, including 1.882 cases for individual violations and 77 cases for organizational violations.
- 16.9 billion VND (USD 735,000) issued in penalties
- Nearly 451 ha of forest areas impacted

FVDMS deployment in seven provinces is the first deployment phase before the system will be deployed to all 63 provinces (nationwide) in the coming years. To support FPDs of seven provinces to become familiar with the system and apply it in a real-time environment, the Project trained FPD staff to navigate system functionalities using dummy data inside a virtual server. The Project then supported FPD technical staff to successfully enter real forest violation data, analyze and monitor the data, and generate thematic reports from a centralized database.

USAID supports central Forest Protection Department (FPD) to officially deploy the innovative Forest Violation Database Management System (FVDMS) in seven provinces in FY23.

The USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project (the Project), in collaboration with central FPD of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), has been supporting Vietnam's forestry sector to develop and deploy a groundbreaking new system—FVDMS— that will help monitor, track, coordinate, and address forest violations nationwide. After supporting the development of the system, the Project conducted deployment trainings for FPD staff in seven provinces. More than 140 user accounts were created for FPD staff, including provincial FPDs, district FPDs, and FPD units of Forest Protection Management Boards and Special Use Forest Management Boards, enabling them to begin entering, monitoring, and analyzing forest violation data. On May 30, 2023, the central FPD issued an official letter to seven provincial FPDs of the Project's seven target provinces requesting that all FPD units update and monitor forest violation data through the FVDMS. The Project estimates that around 2,000-3,000 forest violation cases in seven provinces were entered, updated, and managed in the centralized database between January 2022 to present. In continuous collaboration with central FPD and local FPDs, the Project will continue providing technical support on the data entry process and FVDMS use. The central FPD will expand and scale up FVDMS deployment in all 63 provinces in Vietnam (nationwide) in the coming years. **So what?** Official deployment of FVDMS in seven provinces is an important step to improve nationwide forest violation tracking, coordination, and action, and is a critical step towards eventually scaling it up nationwide. FVDMS deployment will significantly contribute to increasing the functionality of forest law enforcement systems to counter forest crimes, which will help reduce deforestation, forest degradation, and carbon emissions through better protected forests.

Project specialist working with MARD technical staff to install FVMDS in the central VNFOREST/FORMIS server (real environment).

Training on FVDMS system administration for central FPD staff, as part of the system deployment process. Photo credit: Dong Nguyen

Implemented capacity building activities for enforcement officers and their organizations.

One of the Project's key interventions to strengthen the functionality of forest law enforcement systems is building the capacity of law enforcement officers and their organizations. In FY23, based on the approved LEAPs, the Project continued supporting the seven provinces to implement effectively planned activities, including:

- Providing trainings for forest rangers and other Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) officers on: i) initial handling of forestry violations for frontline staff at the grassroots level; ii) law enforcement communication awareness raising events on forest protection for local communities; and iii) training on updates of legal documents and experiences handling administrative violations in the forestry sector.

- Providing deployment trainings and events on FVDMS to facilitate entering and monitoring forest violation data.

- Conducting communication and awareness raising events for local communities and grassroots- level officers on forest protection and law enforcement covering: i) the role and importance of forests, forest protection, and sustainable forest management; ii) understanding the need for wildlife protection; iii) identifying common violations in the forestry sector; iv) handling violations and crimes in the forestry sector; v) understanding the role of communities to support law enforcement agencies to detect, investigate, and handle forestry violations; and vi) sharing real cases of forest violations and crimes.

- Supporting review and assessment workshops on provincial LEAPs and experience sharing workshops on forest protection and management, forest fire fighting and prevention, and forest law enforcement implementation.

- In FY23, the Project helped organize 28 events on forest law enforcement topics, including: seven trainings and events on FVDMS, 10 law enforcement trainings, and 11 communication and awareness raising events—reaching a total of 1,148 beneficiaries (183 female and 595 ethnic minority people).

"Thank you very much for the informative law enforcement awareness raising class. I have learned a lot about the new forest protection regulations and forestry violations. I feel scared of the violations I have made in the past [before I was aware]. Now, I am confident to share this newly acquired knowledge to my family and community members."

-Mr. Vang Lao Tong (Hmong ethnic group), Secretary of Youth Union, Bo Kieng Village, Chieng Hac Commune, Yen Chau District, Son La Province

"After attending the awareness raising class, I now understand more about the importance of forest protection to our community, on what we are allowed and not allowed to do with forests. I will go back to my village and share the training contents with my family as well as my village, and everyone can protect the forests together."

- Ms. Ho Thi Le, the woman on the right**,** Ethnic minority, Pa Cô people Fatherland front committee of Pire 2 village, A Bung commune, Dakrong district, Quang Tri province.

OBJECTIVE 3 CHALLENGES

- **Challenge 1:** Seeing and facilitating progress with policy development, especially national policies, depends on focal point agencies and the Government. Some policies, such as the revised Decree 156, require consensus from all Ministries, agencies, and members of the Government and therefore, take a very long time for the final round of appraisal and approval. **Solution:** In FY24, the Project will work more closely with high level policy-making bodies, such as the Central Economic Commission and the Commission of Science, Technology and Environment of the National Assembly. Their bodies, in turn, will help accelerate the policy process.

  Challenge 2: Budget adjustments strongly affect the Project's ability to organize capacity building events on critical forestry issues, such as experience sharing between FPDs and other LEAPs in provinces to strengthen forest law enforcement and skills for initial investigation and handling for forest crimes etc. Moreover, it is difficult to provide follow-up support on the implementation of promulgated provincial LEAPs and interagency coordination protocols due to the same limitations. **Solution:** The project will work within the constraints of the USAID obligation and will prioritize activities and support based on what funds are available and what is strategically important for the project to support.

OBJECTIVE 3 PRIORITIES FOR FY24

In FY24, the Project's Objective 3 will focus its effort on the following activities to contribute meaningfully to forestry law enforcement in Vietnam and to help reach the Project's targets in its provinces:

- Support the development of national and local policies and practices, with priority given to monitoring and assessing the implementation of the Forestry Law and its bylaws;
- Support the development of MARD's Decision on compulsorily applying FVDMS nationwide and support the deployment of FVDMS in all 63 provinces and cities with forests in Vietnam;
- Support the implementation of the provincial LEAPs in seven provinces.
- Support awareness raising events on forest management, protection, and development, with special attention to provincial middle- and top-level managers, who are, as assigned by Conclusion 61-KL/TW, accountable for forest management, protection, and development in their respective localities;
- Support capacity building activities for LE and judicial agencies on strengthening forest law enforcement; and
- Support the development and implementation of interagency coordination protocols between FPDs and other law enforcement agencies.

OBJECTIVE 4: IMPROVE FOREST PRODUCTION AND FOREST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Objective 4 aims to help forest owners/farmers and partners in seven provinces improve forest management practices. By improving planting materials and introducing proper techniques for developing plantation forests and forest management, the Project will support harmful emissions reductions.

OBJECTIVE 4 MILESTONES:

Under Objective 4, the Project accomplished four major milestones during FY23 that will contribute to the Project's overall targets:

- First, the Project provided capacity building on forest silviculture and certification techniques for smallholder farmers/producers and local partners;
- Second, the Project provided technical assistance to nurseries to improve the quality and upscale production capacity of planting material;
- Third, the Project assisted smallholders/producers and local partners with forest monitoring and improved their forest management practices;
- Fourth, the Project assisted smallholders/producers and local partners in achieving certification of plantation forests.

Objective 4 activities contributed to the following indicators during this period:

- ID1: Number of people trained: **11,157**
- ID2: Number of institutions with improved capacity: **18**
- ID3: Number of laws, policies/ plans, regulations, or standards developed: **1**
- ID4: Funds mobilized: **$21.3 million**
- ID5: Number of people receiving livelihood co-benefits: **25,547**
- ID6: Greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduced, sequestered, or avoided (tCO2): **2,590,201**
- ID7: Projected ton CO2 avoided from adopted policies: **431,770**
- ID8: Hectares under improved management: **58,840.8**
- ID10: Number of enterprises supported: **4**
- ID12: Number of people supported to adapt to climate change: **9,632**
- ID13: Number of people implemented risk-reduction practices: **7,801**

The Project provided capacity building on forest certification and silviculture techniques for smallholders/producers and local partners.

After signing PAs with local partners and selecting nurseries, in FY23, the Project conducted training sessions for nurseries, farmers' groups and local partners who signed PAs with the Project to enhance their understanding of regulations on nursery management, and requirements and techniques for forest management practices and certification The sessions covered cross-cutting topics, such as: nursery management, tree planting, tending/pruning, thinning, harvesting, work safety, forest mapping and inventory, environmental impact assessments (EIA), social impact assessments (SIA), high conservation value (HCV), and technology and production of improved quality of planting material (IQPM), among others. The goal of the training was to prepare participants to produce IQPM and implement SFM, and to enable them to apply proper plantation management techniques toward having their forests certified.

In FY23, the Project conducted a total of 243 training events for 11,157 participants (42.9% female, 35.1% ethnic minority) in all seven Project provinces. The training themes and events are reflected in the table below.

Table 2: Training events in the Project provinces

Training theme	Province	# of Training events	# of Participants
Farmers' group establishment	NA, QN	36	1,714
Silviculture/certification/SFM	HB, QN, TH, NA, QT	161	8,212
M&E for farmers' groups	TH, NA, QN	8	172
QGIS forest mapping	HB, TH, NA, QN	11	78
Study tour	HB, QN, QT,SL,TH	5	122
Cinnamon management of farmers' groups	LC	17	802
Nursery management	SL, HB, QT	3	45
Assessment of thematic topic for SFM planning	HB, NA	2	12
Total		243	11,157

The Project's technical assistance helped local partners, nurseries, and smallholder producers/farmers achieve several key results this year, as reflected in the milestones below.

The Project provided technical assistance to nurseries to improve quality and upscale production capacity of planting material

After selecting 42 nurseries in six provinces to help improve the quality of planting material in FY22, this year, the Project provided technical assistance to 33 nurseries to promote the production of IQPM, with plans to expand assistance to more nurseries in FY24. The technical assistance includes capacity building on nursery management and the production of IQPM to enable smallholder producers to increase the productivity and yield of their plantation forests.

In FY23, the Project provided 91 kg of registered acacia seeds to 11 nurseries in Hoa Binh and Thanh Hoa. These seeds will produce 4.004 million IQPM to establish around 2,000 ha of acacia plantation forests. Currently, two nurseries in Hoa Binh and Thanh Hoa have already produced more than 1.224 million acacia seedlings, which were used to establish 612 ha of plantation forests. The Project also provided 2,000 kg cinnamon seeds to four nurseries in Lao Cai—all of which are under germination and will produce four million seedlings to establish 1,333 ha of cinnamon plantation after three-to-four months from now.

The Project also provided 134,100 acacia hybrid tissue culture original germplasm and 190,000 acacia hybrid bottled tissue culture plantlets to 23 nurseries in Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Quang Tri, and Quang Nam. The provided germplasm and plantlets were used to establish hedge orchards in the four mentioned provinces, which will produce 25.928 million IQPM, which are sufficient for establishing approximately 12.964 ha of plantation forests annually. In parallel with the provision of material for IQPM production, the Project also conducted technical training for nurseries on IQPM production to ensure the quality of the produced IQPM.

The details of assistance per province are shown in the table below:

Table 3: Assistance to nurseries per province

Province	Technical assistance to nurseries						
	Number of nurseries	Acacia hybrid tissue culture original germplasm (plantlets for hedge orchard)	Acacia hybrid bottled tissue culture plantlets (Plantlets for hedge orchard)	Cinnamon seeds (kg)	Acacia mangium seeds (kg)	Acacia hybrid bottled tissue culture plantlets (plantlets for direct IQPM production)	Generator (unit)
Lao Cai	4	-		2,000			

Hoa Binh	6	-			31		
Thanh Hoa	5	5,000	50,000		60		
Nghe An	7	31,100				100,000	
Quang Tri	7	90,000	100,000				
Quang Nam	4	8,000	40,000				4
Total	**33**	**134,100**	**190,000**	**2,000**	**91**	**100,000**	**4**
IQPM to be produced by the Project-assisted nurseries		10,728,000	15,200,000	4,000,000	4,004,000		
Area to be established with the use of IQPM produced by the Project-assisted nurseries (ha)		5,364	7,600	1,333	2,002	50	

During FY23, with technical assistance from the Project, four community groups in Lao Cai selected 25 ha of cinnamon to transform into "seed production stands" (as cinnamon seed sources). The objective of the transformation is to produce quality cinnamon seeds supplying to nurseries to produce improved quality seedlings which will be supplied to cinnamon growers, thereby expanding the cinnamon cultivation areas in Lao Cai. In FY23, with the technical assistance of the Project, Lao Cai FPD issued four Decisions (for five years period) on approving cinnamon "seed production stands" for four community groups with a total of 25 ha in September 2023. From now, the seed production stands will produce approximately 20,000 kg of seeds per year, enabling the production of 40 million cinnamon improved-quality seedlings. This quantity seedlings will be sufficient to develop 13,330 ha of cinnamon plantation in Lao Cai, and even for nearby provinces, starting from January 2024.

The Project assisted smallholders/producers and local partners with forest monitoring and improving forest management practices

To improve forest management practices, the Project continued to provide technical assistance to smallholders/producers and partners in six of the Project provinces, except Son La, to enhance their capacity to better manage forests and establish sustainable forest management practices. The Project's technical support covered the preparation and implementation of SFM plans for forest owners, including forest management planning, forest planting, thinning, tending, and the application of remote sensing (RS) and Quantum Geographic Information System (QGIS) technology to better map and monitor forests. After the RS and QGIS training, the producers and partners were able to apply the learned technology in their patrolling, detection of forest fires, forest encroachment, identification of diseases, updating forest changes, and the protection of biodiversity. Data collected by RS and QGIS provides input for periodically adjusting and updating SFM plans and for better implementing forest management practices.

In FY23, through these interventions, the Project helped 573 households in the six provinces and three Protection Forest Management Boards (PFMB) in Thanh Hoa and Nghe An improve management practice for 48,715.14 ha of forests, including 92.40 ha by thinning, 146.61 ha by tending, 804.92 ha by replanting, 47,646.21 ha (of PFMBs) better managed with support of RS and QGIS technology and protecting activities. The Project also helped farmers in Lao Cai establish 25 ha of cinnamon seed production stands with the aim of producing improved cinnamon seedlings for smallholder growers. More details per province are presented in the table below.

Table 4: Forest area under improved management practices per province

Province	Household (HH)	Area under improved forest management practices (ha)					
		Thinning (ha)	Tending (ha)	Replanting (ha)	Seed production stand (ha)	Implementation of SFM plan (ha)	Total area (ha)
Lao Cai	6	-	-	5.00	25.00		30.00
Son La	-	-	-	-			-
Hoa Binh	367	13.00	-	500.27			513.27
Thanh Hoa	106	49.67	91.30	74.65		24,828.39	25,044.01
Nghe An	47	13.23	55.31	75.00		21,876.82	22,020.36
Quang Tri	21	4.00	-	75.00			79.00
Quang Nam	26	12.50	-	75.00		941.00	1,028.50
Total	573	92.40	146.61	804.92	25.00	47,646.21	48,715.14

Applying post-harvest techniques of unburnt site/ vegetation treatment not only protects the environment and reduces carbon emissions, but it also increases acacia productivity (by 16-23%, based on different models). In FY23, the Project initiated a pilot of the unburnt post-harvest technique targeting 2,000 ha of acacia plantation forests in Quang Tri province to persuade smallholder producers/farmers to adopt this approach. The Project engaged the Association of Smallholder Forest Certification Groups of Quang Tri (SFCG) through a contract to provide capacity building and guidance to farmers on implementing unburnt treatment techniques. SFCG initiated its work in April 2023, conducting field surveys to identify the areas and groups that require support. They are currently conducting training on the unburnt treatment method to farmer households, with plans to develop an unburnt site action plan for the entire province of Quang Tri. The Project also applied this method to Nghe An province to establish 23 ha (for seven piloting households) applying unburnt post-harvesting residue practices. If successful, the Project will upscale the approach in the other Project provinces.

In response to damage caused by heavy storms in Quang Nam, the Project initiated and is working with the Hillridge Company to demonstrate internal insurance schemes (IIS) in collaboration with the Hiep Thuan Cooperative. Together with the Hillridge, the Project prepared a memo for satellite-based Weather Insurance (SbWI) and submitted it to the Regional Legal Office and Contracting Officer to review and endorse.

Project assisted smallholders/producers and local partners in achieving certification of plantation forests.

Certified plantation forests

The Project continued to provide technical assistance to farmers' groups and local partners with signed PAs to implement SFM to help them get their plantation forests certified. This support included training on farmers' group establishment, certification, SFM standards, silviculture, forest management monitoring, development of group management procedures, work safety, first aid, forest mapping and inventory, and data collection for forest management planning.

As a result of the Project's support in FY23, three FSC certification groups were granted SFM certificates covering a total area of 10,125.66 ha, including 2,823.3 ha from 1,072 members of a farmers' group represented by Biomass Fuel Vietnam Co. Ltd (BMFV) in Nghe An (certificate issued on February 27, 2023); 1,195.5 ha from 221 members of a farmers' group represented by Hiep Thuan Agriculture Cooperative in Quang Nam (certificate issued on August 3, 2023); and 6,106.86 ha from 4,414 members of a farmers' group represented by Hoa Binh Biomass Investment Joint Stock Company (BVN Hoa Binh) in Hoa Binh (certificate issued on July 3, 2023).

After being trained by the Project, the representatives of farmers' groups continued to provide TA to farmers' groups managing certified plantation to continue to implement SFM, maintain certification

status, and expand plantation area for certification in nearby districts. The Project's continued assistance helps maintain market-based relationships between wood processors and smallholders/producers and ensures the availability of certified wood raw material to produce wood products for export. The plantation area certified in FY23 per province is shown in the table below.

Table 5: Plantation forests certified

Group name	Province	Group member	Certified area (Ha)
Biomass Fuel Vietnam Co. Ltd. (Representing for Smallholder Group in Anh Son District, Nghe An Province)	Nghe An	1,072	2,823.30
Hiep Thuan Agriculture Cooperative (representing smallholder group in Quang Nam province)	Quang Nam	221	1,195.50
HOA BINH BIOMASS INVESTMENT JOINT STOCK COMPANY (Representative Lac Son; Bai Hamlet, An Nghia Commune, Lac Son district, Hoa Binh Province)	Hoa Binh	4,414	6,106.86
Total		5,707	10,125.66

Plantation forest certification in progress

Enabled by the Project's capacity building and continued coaching, the local partners worked closely with farmers to continue establishing additional certification groups, expand potential certification area, and help them implement SFM toward certification. In addition to the 10,125.66 ha of certified plantation forests, in FY23, the local partners also established an additional 157 farmers' groups with 8,789 members and registered 21,463 ha of plantation forests for certification in the provinces of Hoa Binh, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Quang Tri and Quang Nam. The local partners and farmers' groups are now implementing forest management practices, such as preparing and implementing SFM plans, monitoring forest management activities, managing solid waste, preparing sites for replanting, protecting buffer zones along rivers, streams and around the lakes, applying procedures to group management and preparing documents and evidence for forest certification audit. The Project anticipates that the plantation forests of all additional farmers' groups will be certified in 2024.

Summary of area under improved forest management practice

In summary, in FY23, the Project helped local partners and farmers' groups improve forest management practices for 58,840.80 ha of forests. The detail of forest area improved per province is shown in the table below.

Table 6: Summary of improved forest management area

NO	Provinces	Improved forest management practices (ha)		Total (ha)
		Silviculture/monitoring/SFM plans	Certified plantation forests	
1	Lao Cai	30.00		30.00
2	Son La	-		-
3	Hoa Binh	513.27	6,106.86	6,620.13
4	Thanh Hoa	25,044.01		25,044.01
5	Nghe An	22,020.36	2,823.3	24,843.66
6	Quang Tri	79.00	-	79.00
7	Quang Nam	1,028.50	1,195.5	2,224.00
	Total	48,715.14	**10,125.66**	58,840.80

"In the production of acacia hybrid cuttings, ensuring the genetic quality of the hedge orchard used to produce cuttings is very important because it greatly affects the quality and productivity of plantations. Thanks to the support from USAID, Duc Uyen Company has received 50,000 original bottled tissue culture plantlets and tissue culture germplasms. This is a batch of original germplasms of better quality than those the Company previously purchased itself. This will help Duc Uyen continue to improve the quality of planting material (PM), ensure competitiveness with PM from outside the province and especially will help local planters access good quality PM, with clear origins to use for afforestation/ reforestation. This will contribute to increasing productivity and yield of plantation forests, minimizing the risk of pests and diseases, and improving income from plantations."

- Mr. Tran Anh Duc, Director of Duc Uyen Co., Ltd; Village 3, Song Tra commune, Hiep Duc district, Quang Nam province

OBJECTIVE 4 CHALLENGES

Challenge: The biggest challenge the Project encountered in FY23 under this objective is related to procuring and providing planting materials and technical equipment for delivery to beneficiaries and selected nurseries to promote the production of IQPM. Due to the large amount of planting materials needed for delivery to scattered households and nurseries, the Project's technical team faced a challenge in matching delivery plans (in terms of acacia planting seasons) between suppliers and beneficiaries/recipients based on each of their respective production/planting seasons and weather conditions.

Solution: The Project continues working closely with provincial partners, suppliers, and beneficiaries to adjust IQPM delivery plans to avoid the mismatch related to the acacia planting seasons between suppliers and beneficiaries/recipients.

OBJECTIVE 4 PRIORITIES FOR FY24

In FY24, the project will prioritize the following activities:

- Continue providing intensive technical assistance to nurseries to produce IQPM, enabling smallholder/producers to access IQPM.
- Continue implementation of the 13 signed partnership agreements, working closely with partners to continue implementing agreed activities to help farmers and local partners improve forest management practices and to obtain certification of their plantation forests.
- Promote initiatives that assist wood processors in using/producing low carbon products.

USAID supports Nghe An to reduce emissions by piloting post-harvest residue management model in acacia plantation.

Nghe An province has the largest forest area in Vietnam, of which, more than 157,200 ha is acacia plantation. Like other parts in Vietnam, acacia plantation owners in Nghe An traditionally burn post-harvest residues (stumps, leaves, bark, etc.) to prepare land for replantation. Unfortunately, this unsustainable practice has emitted more than two million tons of CO2/year (on the average, 78 tons CO2/ha/year[1]. Despite these drawbacks, most farmers continue to burn post-harvesting residues because they have never seen a practical non-burning post-harvesting residue model as a reference for their own plantations.

To promote this sustainable technique, USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project (the Project), in collaboration with Biomass Fuel Vietnam Company (BMFV), established a pilot model of sustainable acacia plantation management in Nghe An. The Project provided technical training on silviculture and non-burning post-harvesting residue techniques for 4,500 plantation owners. The Project also delivered 55,000 tissue culture plantlets of acacia hybrid AH7 to plant 23 ha (for seven piloting households) applying non-burning practices. The Project worked closely with BMFV to provide additional technical assistance and modest financial support to enable farmers to treat post-harvest residue without burning it,[1] in addition to the pilot households' own resource contributions for planting and tending.

The initial results from the pilot model are promising; the trees in the model grow well, averaging 1.6 meters in height after five months of planting with minimal weeds underneath, saving the plantation owners time and money on weed control. The land surface uses residual plant material, which reduces soil erosion. The organic residuals are in the decomposition stage, gradually returning nutrients to the soil to provide plants. With these initial achievements, the Project will not only expand this model to at least 250 ha in early FY24, but it will also collaborate with Nghe An Forest Protection Subdepartment (FPD) to assess the economic and financial benefits, and then institutionalize this best practice before applying it to the whole province. The successfully tested model is demonstrating a sustainable plantation approach that can be observed first-hand by other farmers and replicated elsewhere (with a legal regulation to be issued by Nghe An FDP). After it is scaled up to the whole province, this initiative will not only help reduce two million tons of CO2/year, but it will also increase financial profits for local acacia plantation owners in Nghe An, leading to improved livelihoods and contributing to USAID's and Vietnam's reduced emissions targets

Acacia non-burning plantation model –20 days after planting; *Photo credit: Bon Pham*

Acacia non-burning plantation model 150 days after planting. Trees stand at around 1.6 meters tall. *Photo credit: Bon Pham*

The Dao people improve their incomes from production of cinnamon seedlings.

Coming to the Dao village, Nam Det commune, Bac Ha district, in Lao Cai province, many people know Dang A San's family because of their contribution to the local cinnamon market. In that Dao village, people used to rely solely on rice and corn fields for their sustenance, growing just enough to eat. Later, with the changing land and forest allocation policy, the local government convinced people in the village to grow cinnamon and establish cinnamon plantations for better livelihoods.

Recognizing the high demand for local cinnamon seedlings, Mr. San had the idea to produce cinnamon seedlings and sell them to village households to help local growers access to improved quality seedlings. He learned nursery techniques from commune extension workers and began sowing and producing cinnamon seedlings from February 2019. Initially, he produced 50,000 cinnamon plantlets with the aim of expanding his family's cinnamon area and providing small supplies for village households. But after seeing growth of the local cinnamon movement and increasing market potential, he and his family decided to invest in expanding their area of cinnamon seedling production and upscaling the capacity of seedling production up to one million seedlings per year.

The USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project (the Project) trained Mr. San (and 20 other growers/producers like him) on nursery management and improved his sowing and producing techniques. In 2022, Mr. San's household signed a memorandum of understanding with the Project to expand their production scale and to improve the quality of their cinnamon seedlings in accordance with regulations on plant variety management.

To date, Mr. San's nursery annually produces more than one million cinnamon seedlings from Lao Cai FPD-certified cinnamon seeds, 200 kg of which was provided by the Project. Mr. San happily shared, "*With technical assistance and quality seeds provided by the Project, my nursery can now ensure both the quantity and quality of cinnamon seedlings, enough to supply seedlings to people in Nam Det commune and in neighboring communes. The seedlings are even sold to people in other districts in Lao Cai province, such as Bao Yen, Bao Thang, Van Ban.*"

Project Officer guides Mr. Dang A San in cinnamon seedling production techniques, Dao village, Nam Dat commune, Bac Ha district, Lao Cai province. Photo by Dang Quoc Huy.

OBJECTIVE 5: MOBILIZE DOMESTIC RESOURCES FOR FOREST MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION

Under Objective 5, the project aims to strengthen the current mechanism for Payment for Forest Ecosystem Services (PFES) by making it more accurate and efficient and developing further mechanisms to mobilize sustainable funding for forest protection and development, such as payments for carbon sequestration and storage services. To achieve those targets, the project: 1) works

closely with the GoV to develop, revise, or promote laws and policies that enable PFES; 2) equips concerned national and provincial Forest Protection and Development Funds with tools and strengthens their capacity to implement PFES mechanisms; and 3) works with provincial governments and communities to better understand the benefits of PFES and managing revenues.

Objective 5 activities contributed to the following indicator during this period:

- ID1: Number of people trained: **850**
- ID2: Number of institutions with improved capacity: **2**

This year, the Project accomplished three major milestones that contributed to overall targets. These successes will set the Project on course to meet its key deliverables in the next year:

- Support policy development: the Project completed its support for the revision of Chapter V of Decree 156/2018/NĐ-CP, which establishes the PFES mechanism and guides the implementation of PFES, including C-PFES, which is regulated with a new Article in the revised Decree. As mentioned in the milestones of Objective 3, which also support the revision of Chapters I – IV of Decree 156/2018/NĐ-CP, the final draft of the revised Decree has been submitted to the Deputy Prime Minister, who has circulated it to Members of the Government for comments.
- Support building PFES implementation capacity:
    - The project demonstrated the Q5PFES tool for producing annual PFES maps and demonstrated it to more than 40 provincial Forest Protection and Development Fund leaders. Once the Project hands over the tool to the Vietnam Forest Protection and Development Fund (VNFF), they will issue a letter encouraging provinces to use the tool due its reliability in producing quality PFES maps, and the VNFF will accept all PFES map results produced by this tool.
    - The project developed and completed testing the PFES Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) platform with priority indicators. The platform is now deemed ready for piloting in seven provinces and VNFF. In October 2023, the PFES M&E platform is operational at an official website[8] and has also been transferred and installed in the server of the Department of Forestry (under MARD).
- The project held a first-of-its kind training on emission trading system to help policy makers, emission companies, and provincial funds better understand how the Vietnam mandatory carbon market will work once launched. In addition, the Project provided a series of training events to local government staff and community to raise their awareness on the importance of PFES, C-PFES and strengthen their PFES implementation capacity.

CPFES has gained further momentum when the Government Office[9] agreed to get comments from Members of the Government[10].

The Forestry Law and the current Decree 156/2018/NĐ-CP, which guides the implementation of some Articles of the Forestry Law, recognize C-PFES as one of the paid environmental services. Nevertheless, none of these legal documents guides in detail how to carry out C-PFES.

[8] Software for PFES monitoring and evaluation DVMTR8 (nvff.vn)

[9] The Government Office (or Office of the Government) is a ministerial-level agency of the Government, an assisting apparatus of the Government and the Prime Minister. The Government Office has the function of providing general advice and coordination to help the Government and the Prime Minister (including Deputy Prime Ministers) organize general activities of the Government, lead, direct and administer. activities of the Government and the state administrative system from central to grassroots, ensuring unity, smoothness, and continuity of the national administration.

[10] The number of members of the Government for the 15th National Assembly term is 27 members, including: Prime Minister; 4 Deputy Prime Ministers; 18 Ministers of ministries; 4 Heads of ministerial-level agencies.

Consequently, C-PFES cannot be implemented in practice. This year, with the Project's technical support, MARD included a new and separate Article, which specifically provides for C-PFES mechanism, in the revised Decree 156/2018/NĐ-CP and submitted it to the Government, who in turn circulated it to all Members of the Government for comments. As to the end of FY23, MARD has been working closely with Offices of the Members of the Government, Office of the Government and all Ministries and Agencies to clarify their comments on the contents of the draft revised Decree (with Chapter I – IV supported by Objective 3 and Chapter V supported by Objective 5). The revised Decree 156/2018/NĐ-CP acts as a "check point" for C-PFES. Once it is approved, it will open the legal corridor for the development of a series of bylaw documents and technical guidelines, which will make C-PFES operational and will mobilize considerable financial resources for forest management, protection, and development.

MARD will continue to revise and hold further meetings with relevant Ministries in the next fiscal year. The Project will continue supporting MARD, as requested, to clarify how C-PFES mechanism proposed in the revised Decree can be better harmonized with other legal requirements as well as address comments from other Members of the Government.

In addition, the Project will also support VNFF to conduct feasibility studies and evaluate potential of other PFES payment sources such as aquaculture, industrial water, forest lease, etc. The results of the assessment will be used by MARD to update the PFES norms in FY24.

The project supported the testing and piloting of the Q5PFES tool, now ready for national roll-out.

Q5PFES is a plugin tool that supports the provincial Forest Protection and Development Fund to develop the Map of Payment for Forest Environmental Services (PFES). This plugin was developed to help provincial funds be able to use open-source (free) QGIS software instead of annual license paid MapInfo to produce PFES map under Article 61 of Decree 156/2018/ND-CP about detailed instructions on the implementation of the Forest Law, the Payment for Forest Environmental Services a. The main functions include: i) correct data from forest cover change map developed by provincial forest protection department (FPD) ii) Update forest status, forest owners of each forest plot iii) update forest area receiving PFES payment of the year; iv) developing the Map of Payment for Forest Environmental Services; v)export list of PFES receivers; vii) provide data to calculate payment amounts for each forest owners; vii) manage and monitor forest owners.

In the last year, the Project supported VNFF to hold an event introducing the Q5PFES tool to all 40 provincial fund leaders, with the goal of ensuring that the tool will be utilized by individual provincial units. Afterwards, technical staff from 27 provincial funds were trained on how to use this tool. The Hoa Binh provincial fund staff had used the tool to produce 2023 PFES map of while the other provincial funds have used knowledge from the training to correct and convert forest cover change data of FPDs produced by MapInfo to QGIS and ready to produce 2024 PFES map. The last training for 13 provincial funds in southern Vietnam will be carried out in 2024 and VNFF will officially introduce the tool by official letter to all provincial funds for 2024 PFES maps.

The application of Q5PFES tool is a clear example of how the Project supports MARD, and specifically VNFF, in "*digital transformation*", which is one of the priority tasks given by the Government of Vietnam to all of its administrative organizations. In turn, the application of Q5PFES remarkably increases the transparency in PFES and forest monitoring. Q5PFES has strong connection with the PFES M&E platform, which is another important milestone of Objective 5 in FY23 to gather data from annual PFES maps and automatically input to the PFES M&E platform instead of through manual data entry.

PFES M&E platform with priority indicators is running well and stable on DOF server and ready for piloting by seven provincial funds and VNFF.

The PFES M&E platform is another contribution of the Project to the digital transformation process of MARD, particularly in the field of PFES monitoring and evaluation. It is the objective of the Project that this platform is applied nationwide, and thus can be considered as one of the Project's important legacies.

The PFES M&E platform, through long discussions including new requests from VNFF to make the platform more user friendly, is now ready to be piloted. This milestone comes after several test sessions between DAI, VNFF, and the developers were completed throughout the year. In September 2023, the platform was successfully installed within the server of the DOF with no issues identified. Two addresses for the platform on DOF's server for official data entry[11] and at a sub-address[12] for training purposes. After practicing on the sub-address, provincial funds will use main address to start entering annual PFES data.

Communications, awareness raising and capacity building for effective PFES implementation.

In addition to the three key milestones mentioned above, the Project has developed communication and training materials and organized a series of training events for a wide range of beneficiaries, ranging from national and provincial Forest Protection and Development Funds, provincial government to community members and emission companies.

One of the most important training events, which were highly appreciated by all stakeholders, were the training series on *carbon trading market*. A total of 232 people, including policy makers, fund officers, forest rangers, forest owners, and companies in from national agencies and seven provinces were trained in FY23. Using simulation software, the Project also provided training to develop and operate the carbon market in their respective provinces. Other training events focused on QGIS, Q5PFES, updated policy related to PFES and communication skills for provincial fund staff, forest owner as organizations. In total, 618 people (88 female) attended the Project training events in FY23.

"As a person using the Q5PFES tool, I see this is a very useful tool for annual PFES map development. The Q5PFES tool helps me get data from forest cover change maps more conveniently, and on time. PFES maps can standardize and reduce errors in information of forest plots."

Nguyen Van Hien- Head of Technical Unit, Hoa Binh provincial fund

OBJECTIVE 5 CHALLENGES

Challenge: The commitment of seven provincial funds to allocate sufficient staff time to enter data for indicators continues to present a big challenge. The weekly requirements for data entry on the M&E platform will increase the Funds' workload, which may be unsustainable in the future. Therefore, the provincial funds might delay updating data. **Solution:** The Project sees the pilot phase in the first two quarters of Year 4 as critical to determine whether the DOF server is compatible with data inputted by the provinces into the platform. Thus, the team will appropriately

[11] At http://gsdg.vnff.vn/

[12] At https://taphuan.gfdapp.net/

assess its suitability before the platform can be demonstrated nationally across Vietnam. The Project will also encourage VNFF to conduct regular enforcement, to create a new habit for provincial funds to regularly update data. However, in order to fulfill this enforcement role, VNFF will need to officially require provinces to update data.

OBJECTIVE 5 PRIORITIES FOR FY24

Building on the progress made during FY24, in FY24, the Project will focus on the following:

- Identify potential of forest carbon for trading for 7 provinces and developing guideline, carbon standards when Decree 156 is approved.
- Complete pilot (training, data entry) for 1st version of PFES M&E platform and demonstrate to other provincial funds out of 7 provinces of the Project.
  Complete the update of the rest of indicators in the PFES M&E platform integrating PFES map.
- Carry out study of payment level of PFES to match with current electricity and clean water price.

IV. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING (MEL)

PROJECT MEL SYSTEM AND ACTIVITIES

The Project developed and operated a comprehensive MEL system to help achieve its goals. The system was designed based on the USAID collaboration, learning, and adaptation (CLA) framework with supporting tools to allow strong collaboration between the Project and partners in activity planning, implementing, monitoring, and reporting. The system enables Project staff and the management team to continuously learn from progress, barriers, and lessons for adaptive management.

The Project categorizes MEL activities into three groups: quality assurance, progress monitoring and learning, and adaptive management. In FY23, the key activities in each group are summarized in the Exhibit 4 below

Exhibit 4: Summary of the Project MEL system/ activities

Quality assurance is one of the most important activities that the Project's MEL team focuses on throughout implementation. The MEL team established a reporting system that allows field staff to periodically report MEL data and evidence to the MEL and management teams. To ensure data quality, at the beginning of the year and during implementation, the MEL team conducted trainings for project staff and partners. A MEL guideline was developed to provide a quick reference during implementation. The MEL team conducts monthly and quarterly reviews to minimize errors and to validate evidence for all activities against the performance indicators and to provide detailed feedback on data quality. Lessons learned are discussed with each technical team in quarterly review meetings to avoid the same mistakes. The MEL team also developed and shared a summary dashboard of results with project staff.

- **MEL training for project staff and partners:** To ensure all project staff have a consistent understanding of USAID's MEL requirements and the Project's MEL system, at the beginning of the fiscal year, the MEL team organized a half-day refresher training to provide knowledge to all staff on indicator measurement, supporting documentation, roles and responsibilities, tools, the data collection form, and particularly, how to ensure data quality. In addition, the team provided relevant staff and Project partners with mini training sessions focused on specific indicators, detailed data collection forms, common mistakes to avoid, and practical experiences. As part of the Project's effort to improve the MEL capacity of all staff, in Q3 of this year, the MEL team organized a three-day training for field staff from seven provinces who are in charge of direct activity implementation and data collection in Project sites. The training equipped field staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively monitor and evaluate Project activities and outcomes, and to facilitate learning and knowledge-sharing within the team. The training covered topics, such as the MEL system (indicators, database, evidence, planning, and reporting) and effective working tools (i.e., Excel for data analysis and visualization, online survey tool, working with SharePoint, etc.) with a set of practical sessions. After the training, participants demonstrated strong motivation and confidence to apply their new skills in their MEL-related tasks.
- **Update MELP, MEL guideline, tools, and templates**: In FY23, the MEL team updated the MEL plan in the following areas: i) adjustment of some indicators' definitions; ii) revision of indicator targets and disaggregation; and iii) addition of two new standard indicators on climate

change adaptation (CCA). The purpose of this update was to better reflect the actual Project interventions and to be more suitable with the nature of activities.

The MEL team developed a guideline with detailed data collection forms and methodologies for each indicator. The guideline helps project staff understand the indicator definitions, data disaggregation, type of evidence to be collected, frequency of data collection, and task/responsibility of technical staff in the data collection process for each indicator. With an increased number of activities carried out by subcontractors in the field in FY23, the MEL team updated its monitoring and verification procedures, which involved more collaboration from the field staff, to ensure the validity and quality of these activities. Data collection forms were adapted for this group of activities to better capture important information more sufficiently.

In addition, the team developed a template for organizational capacity development plans (OCDP) with clear guidance to establish profile, assess the needs and baseline capacity, and plan for supporting organizations. Technical staff used the form to actively study organizational gaps, plan for support, set measurable criteria, and conduct baseline scoring for specific capacity areas of an organization, providing rationale for appropriate activities to improve organizational development capacity.

The team also developed a sampling guideline and survey form in collaboration with technical staff for several indicators. Before survey implementation, the MEL team provided support calculating sample size and designing sampling methods to ensure the representativeness of the surveyed populations. The MEL team provided trainings to staff involved in data collection in the field and provided support on data analysis and report writing to highlight findings and recommendation on the intervention.

The MEL team worked closely with technical staff to customize data collection forms for each activity. The forms are regularly updated during the implementation process to be suitable with the nature of activities. For example, due to the variety of interventions co-contributing to some performance indicators, particularly Indicator 5 (beneficiaries) and Indicator 8 (improved forest management), one fixed form for each indicator does not reflect the nature of all interventions. Thus, the MEL team worked closely with the technical team to customize and update data collection forms for each activity contributing to the indicators. The customized forms were then shared with technical staff with detailed guidance to ensure their correct and effective usage.

- **Monthly and quarterly review of data quality and project indicator achievement progress:** Based on the indicator achievement plan and milestones agreed with technical team, the MEL team reviewed all data collected from staff and partners to ensure quality. The MEL team provided immediate feedback for improvement on any data issues identified and organized meetings with each Objective to review indicator progress against FY23 and LOP targets. After the meetings, the MEL team summarized the status and agreed on follow-up actions with technical teams as a reference for implementation and for the next quarterly review meeting. This periodical activity helps technical teams refocus activities to achieve indicator targets and the Project's objectives.

Learning, reporting, and planning systems were developed to track progress and to support Project staff and the management team to continuously learn from activities, achievements, implementation barriers, and context. The key tools that aid monitoring and learning include MEL information system, activity progress reporting system, consultancy tracking tools, spatial analysis tool of the Project intervention areas, and a field activity coordination tool.

- This year, the team developed a simplified **MEL information system** in the Microsoft Excel platform to provide an overview of MEL information and summary analysis of the Project results and progress. The system facilitates collaborative data collection, automated analysis, and reporting. The database, data analysis, infographic, and dashboard were regularly updated and shared with Project staff and partners. In FY23, the MEL team upgraded the Project's MEL information system, adding the workplan, reference materials, adjusted indicator definitions and

targets, and reports. Infographics and dashboards were also refined for more convenient Project staff use. The MEL team held a mini training session to introduce the system to Project staff and guide them on how to effectively access MEL-related information. The system is now being used widely among the Project and has received positive feedback from users. The MEL team will update the system on a regular basis to ensure the timeliness of the information and to adapt to the Project staff's needs.

In addition, through recommendation from USAID's Data Quality Assessment (DQA) team, the Project developed a database of trainees who received training through the Project's interventions. The database will be the primary source of further quantitative analysis and reports. It is the primary input for calculating two new indicators on increasing resiliency to climate change.

- **Activity progress reporting system:** The MEL team developed an online reporting system that allows technical staff and field staff at the provincial level to update activity progress quarterly. The dashboard summarizes achievements and progress disaggregated by objectives and provinces and can be shared with partners (PPMU, CPMU) instantly. This allows the Project's management team to have close collaboration with government partners to monitor activity progress and deliverables.
- **Collaborative planning tool:** The MEL team took the lead on the collaborative planning process. Project activities were proposed by PPMUs based on the needs of location organizations/ communities. A series of planning meetings and workshop were organized between Project staff and partners to share lessons learned and refocus activities. The MEL team developed a results-based planning tool to facilitate collaborative planning. The tool helps the Project team understand the connection between planned activities and indicator targets, and it highlights indicator achievement gaps and suggests priorities to achieve Project indicators.
- **Monthly planning and coordination tool** was developed for collaboratively planning for activity implementation and to better monitor activity progress in the field. The MEL team is using the tool to facilitate the planning process with involvement from provincial staff, technical staff, and government partners. This tool not only supporting the management team to remain closely aware of progress, but it also facilitates coordination between the Project teams and partners, such as CPMU and PPMU, for more effective implementation.
- **Consultancy tracking tool:** To better manage progress and consultants' deliverables, the MEL team developed a consultant's tracking tool by adding a standardized data entry form and compiling data into an interactive dashboard. The tool helps notify relevant staff and the management team on upcoming deliverable deadlines and helps to keep track of the activity progress of active consultants. The tool allows input from different teams and partners while restricting access to only relevant information to each team to protect privacy of some information.

The Project uses an **adaptive management strategy** by building continuous feedback loops into Project activities and strategy to determine the need for course correction. The MEL team conducted several activities to facilitate the adaptive management process, including pause and reflect activities, monthly and quarterly lesson learned and feedback meetings, midterm reviews, and context monitoring for adjustment of the Project implementation strategy.

- **Pause & Reflect (P&R) and feedback loop:** the Project organized Pause & Reflect activities to help Project staff review implementation progress, activity planning, and indicator achievement progress against indicator targets committed in the MELP. The activities include monthly staff meeting, monthly data quality review, and quarterly indicator achievement review, mid-year, and annual planning and implementation workshops. Through these activities, the MEL team provided feedback to the technical and management teams to adjust activity implementation and intervention strategies. Examples of adaptive actions are immediate adjustments on planning and reporting process, improvements on data quality control

(particularly activities implemented by subcontractors), adjustment of staff's roles and responsibility for more effective implementation and refocusing activities on lagging indicators.

- **Internal mid-term review:** in FY23, the MEL team, in collaboration with other Project teams, organized the mid-term review meeting for Project upper management staff. This event aimed to review cumulative progress to date and identify priority activities until December 2024 to achieve LOP indicator targets and review the Project's budget. The event was also an opportunity to strengthen coordination among Project teams through open discussions on technical and operations implementation challenges and to propose respective solutions. After the meeting, priority activities with specific follow-up actions were agreed across the Project, which provided a clear strategy for more efficient implementation in the upcoming periods.
- **Context monitoring:** when the Project received a fund obligation from USAID that was lower than expected, the MEL team supported the Project's management team to adjust the implementation strategy in line with the budget availability. Some of the activities included coordinating with provincial teams and the technical team to develop a detailed quarterly plan that is suitable with the available budget for each province; identifying activities that need to be immediately postponed until the availability of budget; identifying priority activities that contribute to lagging indicators for input to the workplan; and facilitating a work planning process that allows the team to develop workplans with different budget scenarios. These activities helped the management team respond to requests from USAID and inquiries from government partners.

PROGRESS AGAINST TARGETS

By the end of FY2023, the Project surpassed LOP targets for 6 indicators in the list below:

- ID1: 34,010 people trained, achieved 134% of the target
- ID2: 109 institutions improved capacity, achieved 156% of the target
- ID3: 57 policies/plans developed, achieved 168% of the target
- ID4: 33.36 million USD mobilized, achieved 267% of the target
- ID5: 61,356 people receiving livelihood co-benefits, achieved 101% of the target
- ID10: 45 CFEs supported, achieved 129% of the target

The following indicators are on track for achievement of the LOP targets:

- ID6: 5,407,714 tCO_2 emission reduced, sequestered, or avoided, achieved 69% of the target
- ID7: 14,926,873 tCO_2 avoided from adopted policies, achieved 33% of the target
- ID8: 138,603 ha forest under improved management, achieved 53% of the target
- ID11: 1,769 adults perceived land tenure right as secured

The two new indicators for increasing resilience of climate change impact are achieved as follow:

- ID12: 13,564 people supported to adapt to climate change
- ID13: 10,984 people implemented risk-reduction practices.

More details of the progress are described in Annex 1.

V. INTEGRATION OF CROSSCUTTING ISSUES

GENDER EQUITY & SOCIAL INCLUSION (GESI)

In FY23, the Project continued to integrate GESI into several activities. The Project ensured and promoted the participation of and benefits to target groups, especially the most vulnerable and disadvantaged for equitable rights distribution.

GESI MILESTONES

The Project achieved two key GESI milestones this year, including the following:

- First, the Project enhanced the business planning capacity of women, especially women-owned or women-led small and growing businesses.
- Second, the Project supported local people, community forest management boards, CPMU members to better implement GESI interventions of the Project.

Enhanced capacity for women, especially women-owned or led small and growing conservation-friendly enterprises.

In FY23, the Project improved competencies on business planning for 382 people (288 females, 122 ethnic people) in business planning and market access. When working with small-scale CFEs that were owned/led by women, and interest groups led by women, the Project concluded that most CFEs did not have (strong) experience in understanding and analyzing market demand, market segments, planning production outputs, nor in setting product prices. In other words, setting business objectives and developing strategies were new to most of them. This prevented CFEs having an effective, solid business plan, and from communicating externally to mobilize funds for business development. To support CFEs, especially women-led entities, in improving their business performance, the Project developed practical training materials, conducted 18 training courses on the topics of business planning, market access, and financial access, and implemented follow-up activities, including business mentoring. The trainings enhanced participants' competencies in business planning and environmentally friendly value chain approaches. After the trainings, women developed 36 plans for their CFEs, which detailed market and competitiveness analysis, marketing, logistics, operations, and financial projections. CFEs shared the plans with their staff to create a shared vision within the organization and detailed them into quarterly business strategies.

The project also supported 20 CFEs to refine and submit business ideas for products utilizing local forest materials for a women's entrepreneurship contest under Women's Economic and Environment Empowerment Initiative (WEEmpower). Of the 20 submissions, five received 1st and 2nd place awards at provincial level, three were awarded 2nd and 3rd prizes at the regional level, and three won consolation prizes at the national level.

USAID supports women to overcome gender stereotypes to become change agents and successful entrepreneurs.

Of 536,000 SMEs in Vietnam, only 20 percent are owned by women, and most are micro-sized. Women entrepreneurs in Vietnam face social expectations that limit the time they can allocate to starting or growing successful businesses. Access to coaching and finance can change everything. With support from the USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project, women in forest-dependent areas received training and were inspired to submit their business ideas for a women's entrepreneurship contest under Women's Economic and Environment Empowerment Initiative (WEEmpower) that called for businesses that utilize local materials.

Ms. Pham Thi Hong Le, founder of Que Tra My Minh Phuc Cooperative, won 2nd prize at the regional Women's Entrepreneurship Contest for her innovative product that uses a circular economy model to turn cinnamon essential oil waste into dishwashing liquid. Le shared, ***"My Cooperative develops products from local materials, helping to restore and preserve indigenous cinnamon varieties, contributing to forest protection, creating livelihoods, and increasing income for cinnamon growers. We work with ethnic minorities to cultivate and collect cinnamon following GACP-WHO guidelines. Thanks to the Project for supporting us in developing new products and expanding our market reach. The Project's support and prizes received from the contest motivate me to move forward towards earning 5-star OCOP certification."***

Ms. Ha Thi Thom, Thai ethnic minority director of the Mai Chau Agro-Forestry and Medicinal Plant Cooperative in Hoa Binh province, won 3rd prize at the Regional Women's Entrepreneurship Contest for her proposal to conserve native medicinal plants through ecotourism, which she developed through skills gained from Project training.

Ms. Thom shared, ***"Since my village is in a tourism area of Mai Chau district, Hoa Binh province, I propose to cooperate with local tourism agencies to offer typical products of visiting the native and valuable medicinal plant sites and using traditional medicinal plant products of Thai people. That is what I have learned from the USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project's trainings and coaching."***

Supported local people, community forest management board, CPMU members, and GESI network to better implement GESI integration and interventions for the Project.

The Project organized four GESI training courses to improve the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of 93 officers (36 females, 68 ethnic people) from CPCs, District FPDs, forest patrolling groups, and CFMBs, to help them better integrate GESI into CFM plans. By discussing and analyzing real-life situations, and challenges in gender equality that prevent women and ethnic people from forest protection and management activities, participants came up with interventions to narrow equality gaps and approaches and integrate GESI into CFM plans. Specifically, the participants in Son La identified activities in community forest management that female can share with e.g., the women union at the village will oversee producing seedlings for forest restoration and they will also participate in short patrolling route or participating in tree planting and vine removal.

Training participant, Ms. Lu Thi Anh shared, ***"Before, we only thought about protecting the forest and did not think about the importance of, nor how to develop, a CFM plan. In the discussion today, we had a chance to reflect and highlight measures to bring both economic incentives to the community, and long-term benefits to the forest."***

Ms. Lu Thi Anh, pictured in front and center, was a participant in the Project's GESI training course for Forest Protection Department staff. Photo credit: Thang Vu.

GESI PRIORITIES FOR FY24

One of the Project's guiding principles is to ensure that GESI is mainstreamed and fully integrated throughout the project design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation processes. In FY24, the Project will: (i) work with Department of Forestry to discuss and agree on GESI support to them after the dissolution of VNFOREST; (ii) continue to improve competencies and practices of MBFP, CPMU on GESI, and gender responsiveness, women leadership. The Project will also continue to integrate GESI in the development of the CFM manual (under Objective 1), conduct business planning, start-up for CFEs owned and led by women (under Objective 2, 1, 4), and support communication activities, when appropriate.

COMMUNICATIONS & KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT (CKM)

During the first three years of implementation, the Project generated valuable knowledge and lessons learned. To enhance CKM objectives, and in light of the Project's current resource scarcity that limits the hiring of new personnel to support critical CKM actions, the Project recently restructured its existing human resources into a newly formed "CKM Unit" comprised of one CKM Lead (external consultant/ STTA), one Communications Manager (full-time Project communications

staff), and three part-time Project staff with split roles fulfilling other duties, including a Communications Officer, Knowledge Management Specialist, and Knowledge Management Associate. Together, this CKM Unit is working together to capture and share Project achievements with key audiences.

Effective communication of the Project's successes, lessons learned, and knowledge is critical to achieving the Project's core objectives and to promoting sustainable forest management practices. To fit with the Project's current financial resource limitation, a CKM strategy was produced to guide the CKM Unit in prioritizing key CKM actions to better tell the Project's story and share learnings at this critical stage of implementation. By identifying high-impact, low-resource communications actions, CKM will boost Project visibility and share knowledge with target audiences based on priority topics, target groups, and channels that are feasible within the Project's current resource scarce scenario. The Project seeks to strengthen its communications material production and utilize outreach channels (focused on priority topics) to boost visibility–both within and outside of Vietnam–and to demonstrate USAID's contributions to Vietnam's forestry sector through Project actions. In terms of knowledge management, the Project looks to systematically capture, store, and organize Project knowledge in a way that can be easily accessible to target stakeholders. Successfully implementing a targeted CKM strategy will ensure that the Project's legacy lives beyond the implementation period as well as the sustainability of USAID's contributions to improving forestry conservation and better forest management in Vietnam.

CKM MILESTONES

During FY23, under the Communications and Outreach Plan, and CKM Strategy, the Project accomplished six major milestones that contributed to overall targets.

1. Increased visibility of Project achievements and learnings both within and outside of Vietnam.
2. Validated and demonstrated USAID's contributions to forestry in Vietnam.
3. Raised awareness about sustainable forest management issues in Vietnam, regionally, and globally.
4. Promoted replication of sustainable forestry best practices by sharing knowledge and lessons learned among forestry stakeholders.
5. Promoted adoption of proven sustainable forest management processes and approaches by developing and disseminating practical tools (i.e., toolkits, manuals, templates) based on Project learnings.
6. Continued building capacity for 70 members of the SFM Communicator Network, which contributed to organizing events, communications and awareness raising activities.

Produced and submitted quality Project content and results to USAID.

In FY23, the Project captured Project results, milestones, and early outcomes, which were presented to USAID in **49 Weekly Updates** with **62 Bullet Points**; and **four stories**. To reach this milestone, the Project engaged all team members for contributions and inputs. In addition to sharing Project information and learning, this milestone also contributed to building trust and a teamwork spirit among Project staff and partners.

Earned coverage in international, national, and local media and on social media.

In FY23, the Project earned social media and traditional media news coverage, which contributed to boosting the Project's visibility –both within and beyond Vietnam—and helped promote sustainable forestry-related messages. In total, the Project and/or its activities were mentioned **56 times** on international, national, and local media and partners' websites, in one film on medicinal plants value

chain (presented at Project events, and on YouTube), and in three social media posts on USAID's Facebook platform (64,000 Followers) that resulted in **224 direct engagements**, and one post on DAI's Twitter/X platform (26,100 Followers) that was **viewed 444 times**.

Established and built capacity of the SFM Communicator Network.

In FY23, the Project implemented capacity building activities for both the Project's staff and SFM Communicator Network members from all partner provinces, to engage the participation of all contributors to the Project's outreach and communications activities. Taking advantage of technical meetings, the communications team provided targeted guidance on communication for technical staff, especially those working with different stakeholders in provinces who have an opportunity to promote key messages on behalf of the Project. From June 12-16, 2023, the Project conducted two trainings on advanced communication skills for SFM Communicator Network members from seven provinces and representatives from MARD, MBFPs, and Vietnam Television Agency. A total of 55 participants (26 females, 12 ethnic minority people) joined the training, as well as five CFEs, five community representatives, and nine national and provincial journalists. The training included advanced skill refresher sessions and practical exercises, including a photography tutorial and assignment, writing tasks, and mock outreach events, to test participants' skills and capacity, and to offer a platform for constructive feedback. The Project's communication team of experts provided skills on outcome-oriented writing, planning, and implementing successful communication events, and

information on the nexus between sustainable forest management interventions, CO2 emissions reduction, and climate change mitigation. Following the training, the SFM Communications Network members are now more equipped than ever to represent the Project in their communities, convey important messages to the Project's target audiences, and collect relevant content to showcase the Project's impact.

"I was happy to attend the advanced communication skills training in Da Nang city. The training was conducted effectively to provide useful skills, knowledge, and experience for us. The skills and knowledge I learned has been supporting me to effectively improve communication skills with colleagues and partners, as well as to enhance writing skills for bullets and success stories. Besides the training, I participated in the social media platform for the SFM Communication Network, and I was impressed by photos, stories, and illegal logging cases, which our colleagues in different areas collected and shared. They are meaningful for my daily work relating to Forest Violations Database Management System (FVDMS) in particular, and in development of the forestry sector in general. I am thankful for the Project to support us with this training. I hope that similar trainings will be conducted for other people."

– Mr. Dong Nguyen, Environmental Crime Control Specialist, USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project, and attendee of advanced communication skills training in FY2023.

"In the nearly two years since signing a Partnership Agreement on fruit value chain development with the Project, I had chances to participate in several technical and communications trainings. I learned that planting and keeping fruit trees on sloped sites for as long as possible allows soil protection, reduces flash floods, reserves surface and ground water, creates a more breathable environment, and increases incomes for Thai ethnic minority people in Yen Chau district. The skills and knowledge I gained from the communication training are valuable. I will continue disseminating this Project's messages to my Cooperative members and to my community.

Mrs. Quang Thi La, Director of Na Nga Agriculture Cooperative, Chieng Hac commune, Yen Chau district, Son La province and participant in FY23 advanced communications training. Photo credit: Cintapo Tran

Supported USAID's events and visits.

The CKM Unit contributed to the Project's preparation for a USAID event, "CODEL Merkley's Lunch Discussion about USAID investments in climate change solutions in Vietnam" in Can Tho city on April 9, 2023 as well as several USAID's visits to Project sites throughout FY23.

USAID and Project presentations and discussions about USAID's investments in climate change solutions in Vietnam. Photo credit: Cintapo Tran

USAID visit to Son La province in FY23. Photo credit: Thong Nguyen

USAID participated in forest plantation events in Hoa Binh and Lao Cai provinces in FY23. Photo credit: Cintapo Tran

COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGES

Challenge: In FY23, due to the Project's current financial resource scarcity, several planned communications activities from the workplan could not be achieved this year, and some event coverage was limited due to restricted travel resulting from the tightened budget.

Solution: Some communications activities and production had to be postponed until FY24. Furthermore, with limited staff travel to Project sites this year, the team has relied even more on its field staff and the newly trained SFM Communicators Network (which has a presence in all seven provinces) to capture photos, coverage, content, and stories from Project sites and activities when core Project staff cannot attend in-person to capture such content.

Challenge: The Project intended to hire several new communications and knowledge management personnel in FY23 to help ramp up CKM efforts and produce and disseminate new knowledge and learnings at this critical stage in Project implementation. However, due to the current budget limitations, all new CKM recruits had to be paused, despite some of them being in the final stages.

Solution: To overcome this challenge as a stopgap, the Project devised a strategy to make use of its existing human resources to form a temporary "CKM Unit," engaging three existing Project staff from other roles on a part-time basis to support ongoing work of the Project's full-time Communications Manager and external communications consultant/ STTA. With the additional part-time support from existing colleagues, the Project was able to develop some new content and achieve results from its adapted CKM strategy to improve Project visibility and knowledge-sharing.

COMMUNICATION PRIORITIES FOR FY24

In the FY24, the Project will prioritize the following communications activities:

- Continue increasing visibility of Project achievements and learnings both within and outside of Vietnam by garnering media coverage via different channels, including national and local newspapers and TV stations, websites, social media channels, and reports, all of which will help communicate information about Project activities to the public. The Project will also organize a press trip to Project sites for journalists to improve coverage of forestry-related news stories.
- Continue promoting replication of sustainable forestry best practices by sharing knowledge and lessons learned among forestry stakeholders and beyond.
- Continue capacity building activities for members of the SFM Communicator Network, enabling them to continue capturing Project content, news, and results across Project sites.

SUSTAINABILITY MECHANISMS

To promote for sustainability, the Project regularly reviews its activities to determine whether interventions are sustainable and will live well beyond the Project's close. In this section, the Project provides a self-assessment based on a scale that measures how far the Project has progressed to date towards its sustainability objectives under each factor.

Table 7: Year 3 Project Sustainability Mechanism Assessment

Factor	Year 3 Assessment	Ranking, scale of 1 to 5*	ID
Institutional sustainability	The Project Implementation Manual (PIM) has been reviewed and updated to cope with and address the budget slowdown challenge. In addition, the Project continuously provided capacity building on planning, organizing, monitoring, and evaluating for GVN partners to improve institutional capacity for better manage their mandatory tasks. The Project also worked closely with these GVN partners to integrate the project's activities into the local development strategies.	4	ID1, ID2
Technical sustainability	The Project strengthened technical, business plan development and decision-making capacities to its partners, especially CFEs and local communities under the five Objectives to achieve their own agenda for improving CFM, livelihoods, law enforcement and SFM practices. However, by end of FY23, Technical sustainability has not been fully accomplished due to budget constraint, resulted in delay of providing planting materials and technical equipment to apply learned technical knowledge and accelerate full speed of implementation.	4	ID1, ID2, ID10
Economic/ Financial sustainability	The Project continued to apply the market-based conservation friendly value chain development approaches and promote PPCP concept to foster the economic/financial sustainability of Project activities beyond the life of project. As a result, 40 PAs were signed and being executed and more than 108 million were leveraged to maintain and scale up viable business models on CFM, livelihoods and SFM practices. However, due to the negative impact of Covid-19 and the Ukraine war, overall market demand has been declining, leading to unstable markets, resulting in low economic sustainability	2	ID4, ID5,
Social sustainability	The Project continued enhancing relationships with local CFEs and relevant affiliated members. The Project also conducted various GESI, including "WEEMpower" events that empower vulnerable groups (women and ethnic minorities) to improve livelihoods and better cope with climate stressors.	3	ID2, ID9, ID10

Environmental sustainability	The Project updated the Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) to reflect actual requirements field technical implementation interventions/activities. Also, the Project worked closely with its partners to carry out and monitor EMMP tasks committed for execution under the signed PAs.	4	ID3, ID6, ID8

** Significantly Achieved = 5, Achieved = 4, Slightly Achieved = 3, Not Achieved = 2, Significantly Not Achieved = 1*

VI. STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION

COORDINATION WITH USAID AND OTHER DONOR-FUNDED PROJECTS

In FY23, the Project consistently coordinated with the USAID Vietnam Biodiversity Conservation Activity (BCA), implemented by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), on overall project management and implementation and in overlapping provinces (Quang Nam and Quang Tri), particularly on law enforcement, and value chain and ecotourism development. Provincial Project technical teams met monthly at the provincial level and bi-yearly with CPMU. The two USAID projects also organized the joint national-level meeting in Cua Lo city, Nghe An province in May 2023 to update activity progress after the first seven months implementation of the FY23 and discuss upcoming workplans for the remaining of FY23.

"We highly appreciate the Project's timely technical assistance to organize various community-level consultation meetings to receive local demands for addressing CFM, livelihoods, and especially climate change issues, especially in Quang Nam province where we have negative impacts from natural disasters, such as storms and landslides."

– Dr. Pham Viet Tich, Quang Nam DARD Director cum PPMU Director, quoted from the Project's Mid-year Review Meeting in May 2023 in Cua Lo city, Nghe An province

The Project also continued coordinating with VNFOREST and MBFP on approved projects, such as GIZ- Upscaling of SFM and Certification"; the JICA's Sustainable Natural Resource Management 2 Project (SNRM2), specifically on Regulations on management and traceability of forest products, forest monitoring and CFM.

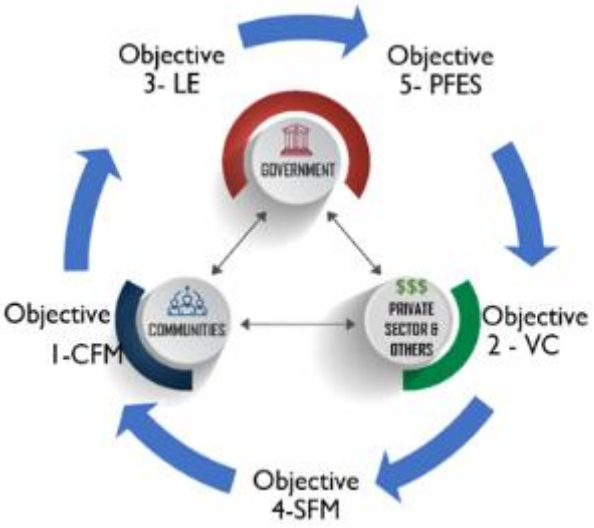
In FY24, the Project will continue to conduct regular meetings with staff from the implementing partner of GIZ, Japan Forest Technology Association, Vietnam National University of Forest (VNUF), USAID-STW, USAID-BCA, GIZ on revising national Circular 28/2019/TT-BNNPTNT and facilitate to get Decree 156 (*Guiding the implementation of some articles of the Forestry Law to tighten the regulations on converting forest uses to other use purposes*) approved.

STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

Recognizing that local communities, private enterprises and public sector possess valuable SFM skills, along with market based PPCP experience, the Project ensures local ownership through activity implementation by the private sector, community members, local NGOs, institutions, and public-sector partners. As shown in Exhibit 5, the Project worked primarily across three stakeholder groups and coordinated engagement from state agencies to the private sector, and from the national to community levels through five main Objectives of the Project

Project operations are based on shared values that put these key stakeholders' thoughts, opinions, and experiences first while building relationships based on mutual trust. Using a facilitative approach—one that is led by existing actors rather than the Project—enhanced collaboration and local ownership. The Project operated with better situational awareness and contextual understanding, which then improves project implementation and success.

Exhibit 5: Partnerships facilitated by the Sustainable Forest Management Project

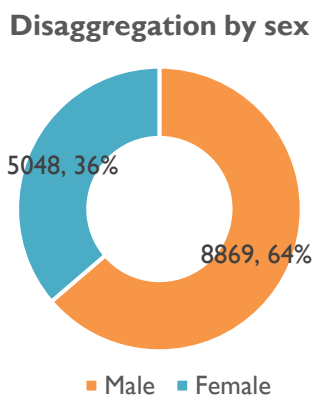


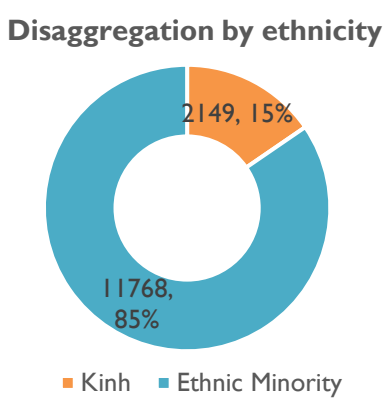
During FY23, the Project and its implementing partners conducted 382 non-capacity building events in seven Project's provinces, including: i) Village meeting to agree on the draft plan for forest management and patrolling, and the CFM Regulations strengthening; ii) Meeting to develop and implement the Forest Protection Plan for various CFM villages; iii) meeting to develop a plan for sustainable management of community forests with GESI integration in communities; iv) Planning meeting for developing bamboo and rattan value chain ; v) Market linkage activities (e.g. trade fair participation, business matching workshops) for the medicinal CFEs; vi) Survey on the ethnic minority custom law applied in the forest management, protection and use; vii) Communication and awareness raising event on LE in the forestry sector; and viii) Consultation meetings on thematic reports and SFM plans for the FSC forest certification groups.

More than 13,917 local people (36% female) participated in these events, of whom 85 percent were ethnic minorities. (See detailed information in Exhibit 6.)

Exhibit **6**: Stakeholders participated in Project non-capacity events during FY23

Number of Events	Total Participants	Male	Female	Kinh	Minority
382	13,917	8,869	5,048	2,149	11,768





VII. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

This section provides highlights and summaries of financial performance, human resources, and operational activities that took place during the last reporting period. In FY 2023, the project underwent a significant increase in activities, that necessitated additional resources in the provincial offices, a revamp of processes to maximize efficiencies while minimizing noncompliance with USAID policies and procedures.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

During the last year, the project reviewed its internal systems and identified three key priority areas for improvement as we prepared to ramp up activity implementation: monthly workplans; consultant processing and monitoring; and project financial planning, monitoring, and management. By strengthening these three key aspects, the project sought to simplify its coordination processes with the government counterpart; ensure that as the project's activities increased, there is robust monitoring of consultants; and that the project better tracks its commitments and future expenses to better make informed decisions. We provide a summary of the key updates to these processes below:

Monthly workplans with Government counterpart. One of the key changes that the project introduced in FY 2023 was the establishment of a Monthly Workplan that streamlined the approval and coordination processes between the Hanoi office, the team members in each province, and with our government counterparts. Previously, the project sought authorization from the counterpart for each activity on an ad-hoc basis, which was sufficient when the project was implementing at a slower pace. However, as the number of activities increased, it became critical for both the Project and the counterpart to be more organized and reduce the burden of preparing the necessary documentation to implement activities in a timely manner. Through the new monthly workplan, the project completes this monthly schedule of activities at the beginning of each month and sends the request to the CPMU, who then prepares authorization letters for each activity. The schedule also allows for Hanoi to delegate day-to-day management of tasks to each province, who coordinate all the necessary government authorization, communicate with the participants, and ensure that activities are implemented as planned. Furthermore, this new workplan also allows the Hanoi office to allocate resources to areas that need support for event management, and provides visibility to the government counterpart, to make it easy for them to prioritize activities they would need to be engaged on.

*Revised consultant approval process and introduction of consultant management tracker***.** As part of the annual workplan, the project expected to recruit and manage up to 145 consultants during the year. This was a significant challenge as the current recruitment process required individual approval of the Scopes of Work from the respective provincial management unit or the Central Provincial Management Unit. To ensure the timely approval, recruitment, and onboarding of consultants, the project worked with the CPMU to develop a workshop on consultants, designed to reach consensus on all pending scopes of work for the rest of the year. Through this process, the project was able to receive approval for all consultant needs, and was able to move forward with recruitment at a much faster rate. As the number of consultants increased, the project also sought to improve management and tracking of these consultants, to identify issues early. The project also sought to link the consultant tracking to its financial monitoring process, thereby allowing the project to create more accurate projections and expense tracking. As a result, the project created a Consultant Tracking System, where project staff regularly updates the status of its consultants, alerts the HR Team for pending payments or modifications to consultants, and informs Management Team of any challenges where they need to intervene.

Revised financial monitoring and payment processing. As the project increased its level of activities, the project needed stronger financial monitoring to accommodate the increased number of payments,

while ensuring that the project has sufficient resources and internal controls to minimize improper conduct. Thus, the project developed a monthly projection report, which collects information from the Technical and Operations teams at the beginning of the month to determine how much funds they will need to complete their activities, pay consultants, and other services. These projections then helped the project make better financial projections, which allowed the project to make informed decisions about investments in activities or services, based on priorities. The project also sought to increase delegation to each provincial office but applying strict controls and reduce dependence on project staff advances to minimize cases of fraud.

PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

Below, we provide a summary of key administrative activities that took place during the last year chronologically.

In November 2022, the project organized a meeting to launch the FY23 workplan after receiving approval from USAID and MARD for the annual workplan and budget. As part of its due diligence, the project worked with the CPMU to revise the Project Implementation Manual (PIM), which forms the basis of implementation for the project. The project updated policies and procedures to increase efficiencies, such as reducing government approval thresholds for consultants.

In the last year, the project moved into its new office space at Capital Place, 29 Lieu Giai, Ba Dinh district, with staff beginning to use the facilities in February 2023. The office has about 40 seats for the technical and operations team, while realizing cost savings and improving collaboration and connection within the team.

During this year, the Project successfully received the first value-added tax (VAT) refund in July 2023, for the period of April 2021 to October 2022. The process took five months to complete due to the inconsistent guidance from the Hanoi Tax Department on the template of claim form and many other supporting documents. The project had to resubmit several times to meet the requirements. Furthermore, as part of their due diligence process, the assigned Tax Officer had to screen all VAT invoices to ensure they were eligible. Finally, through consistent engagement with the Tax Department, the project addressed issues that they found and received clearance and the refund in July. By the end of the fiscal year, the project has started to collect the necessary information and conducing review to prepare for the second VAT refund claim for the period of November 2022 to June 2023.

In May 2023, the Project organized a mid-term review meeting to go through the progress of implementation over the past two years and agreed on the last quarterly activities as well as providing an orientation for the FY24 work planning exercise. However, due to the limitation in funding, the project decided to use a hybrid meeting for the FY24 planning workshop in August 2023.

In July 2023, the Home Office Internal Audit team came to Hanoi to review the project's systems and processes to ensure soundness of internal controls and alignment of the project's operations with DAI procedures and USAID regulations. The audit team worked closely with the operations team and technical team for two weeks and conducted a site visit to Hoa Binh.

In September 2023, the Project provided two awareness-raising training for its staff related to fraud and corruption for the seven Provincial project managers and trafficking in-person training for all staff. These trainings serve to ensure an ethical working culture where staff feel comfortable voicing their concerns while also flagging potential issues and providing guidance on how to address these issues. The Project also sent operations staff to participate in USAID training for implementing partners on Finance Management in June 2023.

PROCUREMENT

During the last year, the project saw an increase in procurement activities in response to some of the project's priorities. Below, we provide a summary of the key procurement that took place during the year.

In February 2023, the project received approval from USAID to procure planting materials to support activities under Objective 4. These materials were delivered from March through September, depending on the planting season of each province. Due to the seasonality of these procurements, many of the vendors who sell the varieties that the project needed required at least six to 12-month pre-orders to ensure the best quality. Thus, with planting seasons ranging from February (Lao Cai, Hoa Binh) to July or August (Nghe An, Quang Nam), it was difficult to find adequate quantities at appropriate quality.

During the last year, the project also began procuring some equipment that were aimed at addressing productivity challenges for conservation friendly enterprises. This included the procurement of a wood drying machine for a cooperative in Quang Nam and electric generators for partners in Son La.

The project also procured protective gears and supplies for forest rangers and also procured some IT equipment to support the launch of the Forest Violation Data Management System as well as the Payment for Environmental Services Monitoring and Evaluation Platforms.

Finally, the project completed the procurement of consulting firms to support ongoing activities, including issuing a second task order for Vietcraft to support technical assistance to beneficiaries in the rattan, bamboo, and leaves value chain, and a subcontract with the Association of Smallholder Forest Certification Groups in Quang Tri to support no-burning initiatives and forest certification activities in the province.

By the end of the year, the project has initiated its procurement of blanket-purchase agreements for car rental services in each province, thereby reducing future administrative efforts for project activities.

The table below provides a summary of key procurements that are more than USD 5,000 from the last fiscal year.

[redacted]

[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
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LONG-TERM STAFF RECRUITMENT

In FY23, the project identified critical support needed to facilitate activities at a much faster pace. Thus, the Project recruited and onboarded 22 full-time staff, including from partners, RECOFTC and Preferred by Nature (PbN). Of the new staff, 14 are located in the field to support provincial level implementation, and eight staff members are based in Hanoi to support technical implementation and operations. List of staff onboarded in FY 23 is presented below:

[redacted]

During the same period, nine staff members departed the Project including:

- Accountant
- Field Team Director
- Geospatial Information Specialist
- Environmental Governance Director
- Administrative and Translation Officer
- Finance Officer
- Thanh Hoa Provincial Project Officer
- National Community Forest Coordinator
- Forest Monitoring Specialist

The Project has no current plan to re-fill these positions. Instead, their work has been concurrently covered by other current staff. The table below provides a summary of the recruitment and staffing changes during FY23.

Table 9 Long-Term Recruitment and Staffing through the reporting period

Categories	Total	Hanoi	Lao Cai	Son La	Hoa Binh	Thanh Hoa	Nghe An	Quang Tri	Quang Nam
Staff on board at beginning of FY23	61	33	3	3	4	5	3	6	4
Resigned staff within FY23	9	8				1			
Staff recruited during FY23	22	8	2	1	2	4	2	1	2
Total full-time staff by end of FY23	**74**	**33**	**5**	**4**	**6**	**8**	**5**	**7**	**6**

SHORT-TERM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

During the last year, the project recruited and onboarded 82 local consultants, including consultants hired through RECOFTC and Preferred by Nature, to support technical activities under each objective. For Objectives 2, 3, and 5, the project hired 42 consultants. A total of 35 staff were onboarded for RECOFTC to support activities under Objective 1, while 5 consultants were hired to complete assignments for Objective 4.

In addition to local consultants, in FY23, the Project also brought on international technical assistance to support, technical and operational activities under the Project.

Ms. Kimberly Keeton - Strategic Communications & Knowledge Management Lead: Ms. Keeton provides ongoing communications and knowledge management leadership, ensuring that the project develops strategic communications materials and produces quality knowledge management content and activities to ensure the Project's accomplishments are well-documented and disseminated to target audiences.

Mr. Josh Margolis – Carbon Simulation Expert: In December 2022, Mr. Margolis provided technical training that simulated a carbon emission trading of credits and allowances that recreated conditions

similar to what Vietnamese policymakers and businesses might experience once the carbon market is launched in the country.

Mr. Paul Jeffery – Project Director: Mr. Jeffery provided technical guidance and support to the project during the midterm review in March 2023, as well as to participate in priority activities in Hoa Binh.

Mr. Jan Feil – Project Director, PbN: Mr. Feil's visit was to ensure overall execution, synergy, and efficient administrative support by Preferred by Nature to the project implementation activities and address tasks related to the involvement of the industry sector and to ensure the silviculture targets are reached related to training and improved plantation management.

Ms. Nathalie Faure and Mr. Ronnakorn Triraganon (Senior Program Officer and Senior Strategic Advisor, RECOFTC) Ms. Faure and Mr. Triraganon provided support for legal and policy-related activities under Objective 1, as well as to support the execution of the CFM Network.

Mr. David Ganz (Executive Director, RECOFTC): Mr. Ganz's visit was to provide inputs to the Project mid-term review on Community Forest Management activities.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: INDICATOR ACHIEVEMENT PROGRESS

The project is pleased to present its progress against the indicators for FY2023.

Main Activities/ Topics/ Disaggregation	FY2023				LOP		
	Actual Q4	Actual	Target	% to Target	Actual to Date	LOP target	% to LOP Target
Indicator 1: EG 13-1 Number of people trained in sustainable landscapes supported by USG assistance							
Total (people)	3,204	20,848	9,823	212%	34,010	25,388	134%
Disaggregated by sex							
Male	1,815	12,024	6,828	176%	20,228	17,265	117%
Female	1,389	8,824	2,995	295%	13,782	8,123	170%
Disaggregated by Objective							
O1. Community Forest Management	540	2,666	2,240	119%	4,269	5,650	76%
Male	391	2,009	1,568	128%	3,232	3,955	82%
Female	149	657	672	98%	1,037	1,695	61%
O2. Conservation Friendly Enterprises	494	4,947	3,400	146%	8,019	9,150	88%
Male	204	1,930	2,500	77%	3,419	6,300	54%
Female	290	3,017	900	335%	4,600	2,850	161%
O3. Law Enforcement/ Cross Cutting	-	1,228	115	1068 %	3,557	400	889%
Male	-	999	100	999%	2,900	350	829%
Female	-	229	15	1527 %	657	50	1314%
O4. Production Forest Management Practices	2,170	11,157	4,000	279%	17,216	10,000	172%
Male	1,220	6,369	2,600	245%	9,877	6,500	152%
Female	950	4,788	1,400	342%	7,339	3,500	210%
O5. Resources Mobilized	-	850	68	1250 %	949	188	505%
Male	-	717	60	1195 %	800	160	500%
Female	-	133	8	1663 %	149	28	532%

Description of Progress: In FY23, the main training topics under each Objective were:
- Objective 1: Trainings on Forest Inventory; Forest patrolling; Financial management skills; Sustainable NTFP management; GESI in CFM model; and awareness raising on forest land tenure right perception
- Objective 2: Trainings on Start Up and Improve Your Business (SIYB); GACP-WHO standard in medicinal plants value chain; Capacity trainings for CFEs on business plan development, monitoring, management, access to capital, and access to market; Planting, tending and harvesting technique for cooperatives in the fruit trees value chains; and Product development in the rattan, bamboo, and leaves (RBL) value chain
- Objective 3: Trainings on Awareness raising on forest protection; and Guidance on administrative violation handling and forestry laws; and Introduction and deployment of the Forest Violations Database Management System for Vietnam forestry sector (FVDMS)
- Objective 4: Trainings on Sustainable plantation management/certification for plantation owners and stakeholders; First Aid, Safety labor and Silviculture for forest owners; Plantation household group management for leader/vice leader groups; and FSC maps developing and editing for partners' technical staff
- Objective 5: Trainings on PFES policy; QGIS and Q5PFES tool to produce PFES map; PFES map synchronization and forest area changes update; Greenhouse gas emission and the domestic carbon trading market; and Communication skills on PFES awareness raising

- Cross Cutting: Training on GESI for MBFP and CPMU staff and Communication skills for CFM communicator network

Indicator 2: EG 13-2 Number of institutions with improved capacity to address sustainable landscape issues as supported by USG assistance.							
Total (institution)	65	65	21	310%	109	70	156%
Disaggregated by Objective							
O1. Community Forest Management	11	11	2	550%	24	19	126%
O2. Conservation Friendly Enterprises	33	33	15	220%	38	39	97%
O3. Law Enforcement	1	1		-	8	2	400%
O4. Production Forest Management Practices	18	18	4	450%	37	7	529%
O5. Resources Mobilized	2	2		-	2	3	67%

Description of Progress: During FY2023, the Project supported to improve capacity for following institutions:
- 11 community forest management boards on CFM planning, community's village convention on forest protection and management, and participatory forest patrolling and monitoring (Objective 1)
- 33 cooperatives and private firms on development of bamboo-rattan, medicinal plants, fruit trees, cinnamon, betel nut, and coffee and tung oil value chains (Objective 2)
- Central FPD on development and deployment of the FVDMS system; and revision of Circular 13 and Circular 27 (Objective 3)
- 1 forest protection management board, 2 private firms, 2 nurseries and 13 FSC farmer groups on timber sawing planning, high quality seedling, civil-culture technique, sustainable forest management planning, and certification (Objective 4)
- VNFF and Hoa Binh FPDF on PFES monitoring and evaluation, PFES map development and communication on PFES (Objective 5)

Indicator 3: EG.13-3 Number of laws, policies, regulations, or standards addressing sustainable landscapes formally proposed, adopted, or implemented as supported by USG assistance							
Total (policy)	18	39	15	260%	57	34	168%
Disaggregated by Objective							
O1. Community Forest Management	14	22	9	244%	26	17	153%
O2. Conservation Friendly Enterprises		2		-	3		-
O3. Law Enforcement	4	13	5	260%	25	16	156%
O4. Production Forest Management Practices		1		-	2		-
O5. Resources Mobilized		1	1	100%	1	1	100%
Disaggregated by GESI mainstream policies							
GESI mainstreamed policies	-	4	7	57%	8	15	53%

Description of Progress: The policies completed in FY23 include:
- Decision No. 1052/QDD-UBND of the Son La PPC on the approval of the plan for allocating forest and forest land being temporarily managed by CPCs to local communities and issuing forest land use right certificates for allocated communities in Muong La, Moc Chau, and Van Ho district, Son La province.
- Decision No. 3276/ QD-UBND on the approval of the forest allocation plan in 2023, in Sa Pa town
- Guideline for planting, caring 7 species of trees in plantation forest in Hoa Binh province
- Cooperation Protocol between the FPD's Mobile & Forest Fire Prevention Team and District FPD, Management Boards of Nature Reserves for forest management and protection, forest fire prevention and control, and forest product management in Hoa Binh province; Interagency Coordination Protocol among (i) Son La, Hoa Binh, and Thanh Hoa provinces; (ii) Son La, Phu Tho, and Yen Bai provinces, (iii) Quang Tri and Quang Binh on forest protection and management, forest fire fighting and prevention, forest products management, and forest law enforcement in bordering areas; Inter-agency protocol for Con Cuong district, Nghe An province.
- Master Plan for Innovation, Development of Agricultural Cooperatives in 2022 – 2026, with Vision to 2030 in

Quang Tri Province
- Sustainable forest management plan (SFMP) of Tan Ky Protection Forest Management Board
- CFM plans and forest protection plans

Indicator 4: EG.13-4 Amount of investment mobilized (in million USD) for sustainable landscapes as supported by USG assistance

Total (million USD)*	30.84	30.84	1.5	2056 %	33.36	12.50	267%
Disaggregated by Objective							
O2. Conservation Friendly Enterprises	9.53	9.53		-	12.05	4.50	268%
O4. Production Forest Management Practices	21.31	21	0.5	4262 %	21	1.50	1421%
O5. Resources Mobilized	-	-	1.0	0%	-	6.50	0%

** Results in USD were based on the actual VND-USD exchange rate on the day when the mobilized funds were approved for investment or reported.*

Description of Progress: In FY23, with support from the Project, the Master Plan for Innovation, Development of Agricultural Cooperatives and Master Plan for Tung oil product development, processing and consumption in Quang Tri provinces were approved, which contributed to a total amount of 7.6 million USD to the mobilized fund. In addition, under Objective 2 and Objective 4, SFM works with CFEs and local partners with signed PAs to jointly scale up viable business models in supported value chains and to support implementation of sustainable forest management and forest certification in Project provinces. By the end of the fiscal year, more than 23.2 million USD was leveraged from the private sector partners during their implementation of the PAs.

Indicator 5: EG.13-5 Number of people receiving livelihood co-benefits (monetary or non-monetary) associated with the implementation of USG sustainable landscapes activities

Total (people)	56,459	56,459	13,950	405%	61,356	60,900	101%
Disaggregated by sex							
Male	28,192	28,192	6,975	404%	30,668	30,450	101%
Female	28,267	28,267	6,975	405%	30,688	30,450	101%
Disaggregated by Objective							
O1. Community Forest Management	21,533	21,533	3,150	684%	21,533	12,600	171%
O2. Conservation Friendly Enterprises	9,315	9,315	6,800	137%	14,212	18,300	78%
O4. Production Forest Management Practices	25,613	25,613	4,000	640%	25,613	10,000	256%
O5. Resources Mobilized	-	-	0	-	-	20,000	0%

** Number of people is estimated based on the average household size in each province.*

Description of Progress: In FY23, the Project, under Objective 1, supported 49 villages in seven Project provinces to develop the SFM plans, forest management and protection conventions, and forest patrol plans, which facilitate a benefit sharing mechanism from CFM activities for an estimated of 21,533 members of these communities.
With support from Objective 2, a total of 9,315 people involving in cinnamon, fruit tree, bamboo-rattan, medicinal plants, betel nut, coffee and tung oil value chains benefited from linkage-groups establishment, capacity building on the value chain development, and market accessing.
Under Objective 4's intervention, about 25,613 people benefited from sustainable plantation management models, forest certification, high quality seedlings access, high-quality planting materials, plantation tending and accessing markets.

Indicator 6: EG.13-6 Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, estimated in metric tons of CO2 equivalent, reduced, sequestered, or avoided through sustainable landscapes activities supported by USG assistance

Total (ton CO2)	5,407,714	5,407,714	1,222,353	442%	5,407,714	7,820,716	69%
Disaggregated by Objective							

O1. Community Forest Management	2,817,513	2,817,513	38,000	7415%	2,817,513	214,000	1317%
O3. Law Enforcement	-	-	542,392	0%	-	3,080,150	0%
O4. Production Forest Management Practices	2,590,201	2,590,201	507,000	511%	2,590,201	3,042,000	85%
O5. Resources Mobilized	-	-	134,961	0%	-	1,484,566	0%

Description of Progress: The emission reduction this year is from the implementation of CFM plans, and implementation of participatory forest management and protection plans with forest management boards; sustainable forest management certification, demonstration of sustainable plantation management models for large-dimension timber plantation (new plantings or transformation to long term plantations, plantation tending, high-quality planting materials, and high-quality seedlings), implementation of SFM plans.
The emission reduction was calculated based on the additional carbon sequestered or reduced through improved forest management using AFOLU calculator and the total carbon stock of natural forest areas avoided from emission (calculation of carbon stock based on research data of the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (FIPI) in 2020).

Due to lack of detailed data we used the carbon stock factor of poor broadleaves forest for all natural forest area.

- Additional Carbon sequestered/ reduced under natural and plantation forest areas: 1,919,920 tCO2
- Carbon stock avoided emission under natural forest areas: 3,487,793 tCO2

Indicator 7: EG.13-7 Projected greenhouse gas emissions reduced or avoided from adopted laws, policies, regulations, or technologies related to sustainable landscapes as supported by USG assistance

Total (ton CO2)	12,201,878	12,201,878	26,645,138	46%	14,926,873	45,674,566	33%

Description of Progress: The emission reduction projected is achieved through the impacts of the following approved policies:
- Sustainable forest management plan (SFM) of Tan Ky Protection Forest Management Board (PFMB);
- Interagency Coordination Protocol among (i) Son La, Hoa Binh and Thanh Hoa provinces, (ii) Son La, Yen Bai, Phu Tho, (iii) Son La, Hoa Binh, Thanh Hoa, (iv) Quang Tri and Thua Thien Hue on forest protection and management, forest fire fighting and prevention, forest products management, and forest law enforcement in bordering areas;
- Inter-agency Protocol in Con Cuong, Nghe An;
- Cooperation Protocol between the FPD's Mobile & Forest Fire Prevention Team and District FPD, Management Boards of Nature Reserves for forest management and protection, forest fire prevention and control, and forest product management in Hoa Binh province.

Indicator 8: EG-13-8 Number of hectares under improved management expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as a result of USG assistance

Total (hectare)	138,603	138,603	80,000	173%	138,603	260,000	53%
Disaggregated by Objective							
O1. Community Forest Management	79,763	79,763	40,000	199%	79,763	140,000	57%
O4. Production Forest Management Practices	58,841	58,841	40,000	147%	58,841	120,000	49%

Description of Progress:
Under Objective 1: Areas have improved management through implementation of the CFM plan, and implementation of participatory forest management and protection with forest management boards.
- CFM: 20,384.58 hectares (18,887.15 hectares of forest area and 1,497.43 hectares of non-forest area)
- CBFM: 59,377.95 hectares (59,161.58 hectares of forest area and 216.37 hectares of non-forest area)

Under Objective 4: Areas have been improved management through sustainable forest management certification, demonstration of sustainable plantation management models for large-dimension timber plantation (new plantings or transformation to long-term plantations), plantation tending, high-quality planting materials, and high-quality seedlings, implementation of SFM plan.
- Certification: 10,125.66 ha in Lac Son (Hoa Binh), Anh Son (Nghe An), Hiep Duc (Quang Nam)
- New plantings: 829.92 ha
- Sustainable plantation management models: 239.01 hectares
- Implementation of SFM Plan: 47,646.21 hectares (47,096.08 hectares of forest area and 550.13 hectares of non-forest area)

Indicator 9: CBLD-9 Percentage of USG assisted organizations with improved performance

Total (% organization)	79	79	75	105%	77	90	86%
Numerator (# organization)	**65**				**109**		
Government Agency	4				13		
Producer Group	17				31		
Cooperative	20				25		
Private Firm	13				16		
CFM Board	11				24		
Denominator (# organization)	**82**				**141**		
Government Agency	16				33		
Producer Group	18				32		
Cooperative	21				28		
Private Firm	15				18		
CFM Board	12				30		
Description of Progress: The Project aimed to support 82 organizations in FY2023 including: 16 government agencies, 21 cooperatives, 15 private firms, 18 producer groups (13 FSC farmer groups and 5 collective groups), and 12 village management boards. Among those, 65 organizations, which account for 79% of the target organizations, have achieved significant milestones that demonstrated the performance improvement.							
Indicator 10: Number conservation friendly enterprises supported by USG assistance							
Total (enterprise)	37	37	10	370%	45	35	129%
Disaggregated by gender							
Male-Led Enterprise	14	14	8	175%	18	26	69%
Female-Led Enterprise	23	23	2	1150 %	27	9	300%
Disaggregated by Objective							
O2. Conservation Friendly Enterprises	33	33	10	330%	38	35	109%
O4. Production Forest Management Practices	4	4	0	-	7	0	-
Description of Progress: The project supported 33 CFEs on the development of bamboo-rattan, medicinal plants, fruit trees, cinnamon, betel nut, coffee and tung oil value chains (Objective 2) and 4 CFEs on sustainable production forest management such as timber sawing planning, high quality seedling, civil-culture technique, sustainable forest management planning, nurseries and certification (Objective 4).							
Indicator 11: Number of adults who perceive their tenure rights to land or marine areas as secure with USG assistance							
Total (adult)	1,769	1,769	3,000	59%	1,769	N/A	-
Disaggregated by gender							
Male	973	973	1,800	54%	973	N/A	-
Female	796	796	1,200	66%	796	N/A	-
Description of Progress: The Project targets 6,000 adults for land tenure activities. In this fiscal year, land tenure right topics were integrated in the village meetings on the project introduction, FA/FLA, and public communication events conducted by the Objective 1. Findings from the survey in FY23 indicated that 1,769 adults from 16 villages in Hoa Binh and Thanh Hoa perceived land right as secured. In the next fiscal year, the Project will continue to strengthen interventions and communication activities to further improve community's perception about this area.							
Indicator 12: EG.11-5 Number of people supported by the USG to adapt to the effects of climate change							
Total (people)	13,564	13,564	3,500	388%	13,564	4,805	282%

Disaggregated by sex							
Male	7,370	7,370	2,275	324%	7,370	3,122	236%
Female	6,194	6,194	1,225	506%	6,194	1,683	368%
Disaggregated by Objective							
O2. Conservation Friendly Enterprises	3,932	3,932	700	562%	3,932	1,270	310%
Male	1,616	1,616	455	355%	1,616	825	196%
Female	2,316	2,316	245	945%	2,316	445	520%
O4. Production Forest Management Practices	9,632	9,632	2,800	344%	9,632	3,535	272%
Male	5,754	5,754	1,820	316%	5,754	2,297	251%
Female	3,878	3,878	980	396%	3,878	1,238	313%

** The target indicated in the table is proposed target and has not yet been approved.*

Description of Progress: In FY23, the Project organized capacity-building activities for government officials, forest owners and communities, integrating providing climate information, adaptation measures and practices on forest management, and increasing resilience of commodities to extreme weather. The main training topics include:
- Adopting GACP-WHO standards in medicinal plants value chain
- Planting, tending and harvesting technique for cooperatives in fruit trees values chains
- Product development in the rattan, bamboo and leaves (RBL) value chain
- Providing high quality seedling for plantation and fruit trees to increase resilience to extreme weather
- Application of climate-smart afforestation techniques according to FSC standards
- Promotion of no burning methodology for increased climate resiliency of production forest.

The mentioned interventions have resulted in 13,564 people supported by the USG to adapt to the effects of climate change.

Indicator 13: EG.11-6 Number of people using climate information or implementing risk-reducing actions to improve resilience to climate change as supported by USG assistance

Total (people)	10,984	10,984	1,830	600%	10,984	2,538	433%
Disaggregated by sex							
Male	5,968	5,968	1,190	502%	5,968	1,649	362%
Female	5,016	5,016	640	784%	5,016	889	564%
Disaggregated by Objective							
O2. Conservation Friendly Enterprises	3,183	3,183	430	740%	3,183	770	413%
Male	1,308	1,308	280	467%	1,308	500	262%
Female	1,875	1,875	150	1250 %	1,875	270	694%
O4. Production Forest Management Practices	7,801	7,801	1,400	557%	7,801	1,768	441%
Male	4,660	4,660	910	512%	4,660	1,149	406%
Female	3,141	3,141	490	641%	3,141	619	507%

** The target indicated in the table is proposed target and has not yet been approved.*

Description of Progress: In FY23, the Project conducted an annual survey based on the database of the people received support in the ID12 to count the total number of people who applied climate information or implementing risk-reducing actions. As a result, the findings from the survey indicated that 81 percent of the interviewees, equivalent to 10,984 people from 7 provinces, have applied at least one of the actions after receiving the Project's support. The applied field includes processed medicinal plants and RBL products, development of business plans, market access, internal control skills, enhancing sustainable forest management and good silviculture practices.

ANNEX II: ACTIVITY PROGRESS (TO BE UPDATED)

Code	Activity	Location	Timeline (Oct-2022 to Sept-2023)				Expected Result	Progress Description for FY23			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		%Workload Completed	Status	Progress	Description of Progress for Q3-FY23
THP1	**Improve Community Forest Management**										
1.1	**Strengthen the capacity of Vietnamese stakeholders (GVN, VIFORA and Forest Owners) to develop and implement forest management models and approaches with participation from local communities**										
1.1.5	**Establish and operationalize the CFM Network to exchange information and lessons learned, and to promote CFM policies and practices**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**4 policy newsletters related to CFM are finalized at the central level**	**-**			
1.1.5.2	*Conduct quarterly meetings between CFM network members*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*4 policy newsletters related to CFM are finalized at the central level*	*53*	*TW: Postponed to FY24* *LC: Postponed to FY24* *SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Completed* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Postponed to FY24* *LC: Postponed to FY24* *SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT:*	*TW: The Project organized two out of four events of CFM network that focused on capturing lessons learnt and experiences on SFMP development to inform Circular 28 amendment. The remaining two events have been postponed to FY24.* *LC: Postpone to FY24 due to limited budget.* *SL: Carried out quarter 1and 2 forum; Postponed to FY24, due to budget limitation.* *HB: # Organized the CFM network meetings for the quarter I and II with 6 participants from Hoa Binh province (4 for quarter I and 2 for quarter II).* *# Postponed due to budget limitation.* *TH: Participated in quarterly community forestry network meetings with a total number of participants from the province of 20 people; Of*

									QN: Postponed to FY24	Postponed to FY24 QN: Postponed to FY24	which 16 are male and 4 are female. NA,QT,QN: Postponed to FY24.
1.1.5.3	Design, print, and distribute communications materials (booklets, brochures, posters) on CFM	TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT					Design and distribute 1,880 booklets, 8,000 brochures, and 1,240 posters	35	TW: Ongoing LC: Postponed to FY24 SL: Postponed to FY24 HB: Postponed to FY24 TH: Continued in FY24 NA: Postponed to FY24 QT: Postponed to FY24	TW: Ontrack LC: Postponed to FY24 SL: Postponed to FY24 HB: Postponed to FY24 TH: Behind NA: Postponed to FY24 QT: Postponed to FY24	TW: The Project produced various communications materials covering some topics like forest/forest land tenure, updated roles/responsibilities of communities, CFM/CBFM etc. LC: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget. SL: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget. HB: # Produced 7 posters on community management. # Postponed to FY24 due to budget limitation. TH: Printed 08 communication posters on community forest management for the first quarter CFM network meeting. NA: Postponed to FY24. QT: Postponed to April 2024.
1.1.5.4	Organize workshops/ communication events/ trainings on the role of communities in forest management, protection and development regulated in the law	NA, QT, QN					3 training workshops/events organized in TH, NA and QT for 135 participants (40% women, 30% ethnic minority)	40	NA: Completed QT: Continued in FY24 QN: Postponed to FY24	NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack	NA: Organized 01 workshop with 47 participants (41 male, 6 female, 19 ethnics) QT: Postponed to April 2024. QN: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget.

1.1.5.5	*Promote cooperation for better forest protection, forest fire controls at CFM sites between communities with neighboring communities/ districts/ provinces in collaboration with OBJ3 and/or BCA*	*~~TW,~~ SL, NA, QT*					*4 events to promote cooperation in forest protection and forest fire prevention among neighboring localities with the CFM model implemented in 4 provinces (SL, HB, TH, NA 5 community collaboration meetings/plans developed and implemented.*	*70*	*SL: Postponed to FY24 NA: Cancelled QT: Completed*	*SL: Postponed to FY24 NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack*	*SL: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget. NA: Postponed to FY24. QT: Completed the signing coordination regulations of 11 communities with 1,234 households and 4,163.59 hectares of forest with improved management.*
1.1.5.6	*Review and assess FA/FLA to communities which receiving PFES payment and propose solutions for FA/FLA to communities (linked with OBJ5)*	*QT, QN*					*Report on reviewing the current status of 9,000 ha of forest area and forest land allocated to the community in addition to the current status of payment for forest environmental services to the community; and proposing solutions to promote FLA for the community has been completed with consultation from 500 people (40% women, 30% ethnic minority)*	*90*	*QT: Completed QN: Continued in FY24*	*QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack*	*QT: A report reviewing the current status of forest areas and forest land allocated to the community and proposing solutions to promote FLA for the community was completed and consulted with relevant parties. QN: The report was drafted and to be finalized in quarter 1 FY24.*
1.1.6	**Improve communities' capacity to monitor community and/or contracted forests**	**TW, SL, TH, NA, QT, QN**						-			
1.1.6.1	*Assess the current status of community forest database and monitoring system*	*TW, SL, TH, NA, QN*					*1 general report assessing the current status of community forest database and monitoring system*	*42*	*TW: Postponed to FY24 SL: Postponed to FY24 TH: Completed NA: Postponed to FY24 QN: Completed*	*TW: Postponed to FY24 SL: Postponed to FY24 TH: Ontrack NA: Postponed to FY24 QN: Ontrack*	*TW: The Project completed recruitment of one STTA on community forest database assessment, however much of the consultation works and mobilization of the STTA on replication of FRMS/SMART has been postponed to FY24. SL: Postponed to 2024 due to budget limitation. TH: Conducted a survey to evaluate the current status of the community forest database in Quan Hoa district. NA: Postponed to FY24. QN: The report was finalized.*

1.1.6.2	*Design community forest monitoring system for community having CFM plans and adapt tools for community forest monitoring and patrolling*	*SL, TH, NA*						*25*	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Continued in FY24* *NA: Ongoing*	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Ontrack*	*SL: Postponed to FY24 due to budget limitation.* *TH: Community forest monitoring process is being developed.* *NA: Consultant team from central level conducted consultation to related parties.*
1.1.7	**Enhance ecotourism integrated with strengthened management and protection of community forests, preservation and promotion of cultural values at CFM sites**	**LC**					**One approved ecotourism project to ensure better maintenance and protection of 7,315 ha of natural forests currently assigned/contracted to communities for protection (not contributing to ID8 for FY23 yet)**	**-**			
1.1.7.1	*Support formulation of ecotourism plans for forest management boards integrated with strengthened management and protection of community forests, preservation and promotion of cultural values at CFM sites*	*LC*					*One approved ecotourism project to ensure better maintenance and protection of 7,315 ha of natural forests currently assigned/contracted to communities for protection (not contributing to ID8 for FY23 yet)*	*80*	*LC: Continued in FY24*	*LC: Ontrack*	*LC: Completed Draft Ecotourism Plan and to complete in FY24 collecting opinions from relevant parties.*
1.2	**Build community capacity to participate effectively in forest management**	**LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**						**-**			
1.2.4	**Support allocation of forest and forest land to communities (including forest and forest land inventory/field demarcation), improve communities' capacity to participate in FA/FLA more effectively and**	**LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QN**					**7 finalized/approved FA/FLA plans for a total of 18,251 ha land in 4 provinces (LC, SL, HB, TH).** **47 communities with increased capacity to develop plan for patrolling, protecting,**	**#N/A**			

	better manage forests post-FA/FLA						**and monitoring forests after FA/FLA in NA and QN.**				
1.2.4.1	*Prepare plans for forest/ land allocations or re-allocation (incl. forest inventories and field demarcation)*	*LC, SL*					*Finalize district-level FA/FLA plans*	*75*	*LC: Continued in FY24* *SL: Continued in FY24*	*LC: Ontrack* *SL: Ontrack*	*LC: Completed the construction of the Technical Design and Estimate, and received appraisal opinions from relevant parties. In preparation to submit in FY24 to the Provincial People's Committee for approval.* *SL: Finished all preparation tasks: Outline/budget estimation/plan.*
1.2.4.2	*Implement plans for forest/land allocation, provide land-use certification (incl. resource assessment and field demarcations)*	*LC, SL, HB, TH*					*Implement FA/FLA plan for the community*	*20*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *SL: Continued in FY24* *HB: Cancelled* *TH: Continued in FY24*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *SL: Ontrack* *HB: Cancelled* *TH: Behind*	*LC: Postponed to 2024 due to limited budget.* *SL: Selecting consultant team to implement this activity in the first quarter of FY24.* *HB: # Supported Mai Chau District People's Committee to finalize the forest land allocation plan.* *# Cancelled the activity of supporting Da Bac DPC and Mai Chau DPC in FLA and FA to communities because their forest land and forest are not available for allocating to communities.* *TH: - On February 10, 2023, People's Committee of Thanh Hoa province approved the FLA plan for Bang village community;* *'- On March 21, Quan Son People's Committee issued a decision to establish a district-level forest clearance working group;* *'- On March 17, the Project signed a contract with an independent consultants to support the development of a plan to implement land clearance;* *'-Recommend the People's Committee of Thanh Hoa province to approve the Land Clearance Plan;* *- August 24, 2023: People's Committee requests to recruit a survey unit, prepare technical designs - Estimates sent to the Department of Natural*

											Resources and Environment for appraisal, submitted to the Provincial People's Committee for approval.
1.2.4.4	*Build capacity for communities to participate into FA/FLA more effectively and better manage forests post FA/FLA*	*NA*					*90 representatives from 30 communities have increased capacity on surveying, patrolling, and monitoring forests.*	*100*	*NA: Completed*	*NA: Ontrack*	*NA: This activity has been completed using budget from activity code 1.2.8.1.*
1.2.5	**Develop GESI-mainstreamed Sustainable Forest Management Plans for communities at CFM demonstration sites**	**LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**14 finalized/approved CFM plans with 9,774 ha**				

1.2.5.1	*Develop preparatory plans for CFM development based on the CFM manual*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*A CFM plan is developed for 14 communities/villages in LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, and QN*	*73*	*LC: Completed* *SL: Completed* *HB: Cancelled* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Completed* *QT: Completed* *QN: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack* *SL: Ontrack* *HB: Cancelled* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*LC:* *The draft of the Sustainable Forest Management Plan was completed.* *SL: Finished preparation tasks to develop three CFM plans.* *Conducted six community consultation meeting in three villages.* *HB: # Developed SOW for consultants.* *# Cancelled the activity of supporting Da Bac DPC and Mai Chau DPC in FLA and FA to communities because their forest land and forest are not available for allocating to communities.* *TH: Moved to FY24 due to budget limitation.* *NA: Completed.* *QT: STTAs completed the CFM plan for Gia Gia village, Huong Hiep commune, Dakrong district and CPC approved the CFM plan in Q1FY23.* *QN: 02 SFM Plans for communities of Ca Lai and Pa Ong were completed.*
1.2.5.2	*Collect primary data, conduct surveys, mapping, baseline assessment for CFM Plan formulation*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Data collection/ mapping development/baseline assessment are completed for CFM communities*	*71*	*LC: Completed* *SL: Completed* *HB: Cancelled* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Completed* *QT: Completed* *QN: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack* *SL: Ontrack* *HB: Cancelled* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*LC: Completed data collection as a basis for developing a sustainable forest management plan.* *SL: Data base was collected.* *HB: Cancelled the activity of supporting Da Bac DPC and Mai Chau DPC in FLA and FA to communities as requested by PPMU.* *TH: Moved to FY24 due to budget limitation in 2023.* *NA: Completed.* *QT: Same above.* *QN: The relevant data for developing the SFM Plan was collected and completed.*

1.2.5.3	Conduct consultation meetings with local authorities/key farmers and relevant stakeholders on draft CFM plan	LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN					The drafted CFM plans are consulted with over 1,000 people (40% female, 30% EM)	71	LC: Completed SL: Completed HB: Cancelled TH: Postponed to FY24 NA: Completed QT: Completed QN: Completed	LC: Ontrack SL: Ontrack HB: Cancelled TH: Postponed to FY24 NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack	LC: Consultation meetings were held with relevant parties to develop a sustainable forest management plan. SL: Conducted two community consultation meeting at Chieng Pac commune, Thuan Chau commune and Na Ot commune, Mai Son district to select areas to integrate Objective 1 and 2. HB: Cancelled the activity of supporting Da Bac DPC and Mai Chau DPC in FLA and FA to communities as requested by PPMU. TH: Moved to FY24 due to budget limitations in FY23. NA: Completed. QT: Same above. QN: The meetings and consultations with the communities were organized.
1.2.5.4	Integrate GESI with CFM plans and regulations	LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN					CFM plans are integrated with GESI	71	LC: Completed SL: Completed HB: Cancelled TH: Postponed to FY24 NA: Completed QT: Completed QN: Completed	LC: Ontrack SL: Ontrack HB: Cancelled TH: Postponed to FY24 NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack	LC: Integrated GESI into the Plan development process. SL: Integrated the GESI on the three CFM plans. HB: Cancelled the activity of supporting Da Bac DPC and Mai Chau DPC in FLA and FA to communities as requested by PPMU. TH: Moved to FY24 due to budget limitations in FY23. NA: Completed. QT: Same above. QN: GESI was mainstreamed into the SFM plans.
1.2.5.5	Finalize CFM plans	LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN					14 CFM plans are finalized and approved	71	LC: Continued in FY24 SL: Completed HB: Cancelled TH: Postponed to FY24 NA: Completed QT: Completed QN: Completed	LC: Ontrack SL: Ontrack HB: Cancelled TH: Postponed to FY24 NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack	LC: The draft of the Sustainable Forest Management Plan was been completed. SL: Supported communities to develop 03 CFM plans, and get approval from commune people committees. HB: Cancelled the activity of supporting Da Bac DPC and Mai Chau DPC in FLA and FA to communities as requested by PPMU. TH: Moved to FY24 due to budget limitations in FY23. NA: Completed. QT: Same above. QN: 02 SFM Plans for communities were completed

											and verified by Commune's People Committee. These plans also disseminated to communities.
1.2.6	**Implement forest sustainable management interventions to improve community forest management**	**LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**4,000 people benefit from the CFM model and 33 communities have increased capacity to better protect an area of at least 18,000 ha**				**NA: Developed a Forest Protection Management Plan and supported the establishment of Community Forest Management Boards for 05/06 communities with an area of 4,529 hectares to be better managed**
1.2.6.1	*Establish, build capacity and provide basic equipment to CFM Management Board*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*At least 33 CFM committees are established and capacity is increased for CFM management*	*43*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *SL: Continued in FY24* *HB: Cancelled* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Ongoing* *QT: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Continued in FY24*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *SL: Ontrack* *HB: Cancelled* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*SL: 8 CFM boards were established and strengthened their capacities, and provide equipment for 2 of them.* *HB: # Established 4 village management boards for community-based forest management in 4 villages.* *# Provided forest patrolling equipment for 2 village forest patrolling teams in 2 villages.* *# Due to cancelling the activity of FLA and FA to communities, the above implemented support will be considered as a part of community-based forest management activity (act code 1.2.7).* *NA: 5/6 RC Management Boards have been established.* *QN: 02 community Forest Management Boards and supervision Boards were established . Its members were built capacity on forest patrolling, NTFPs use and exploitation and financial management. However, the equipment for forest protection and patrolling groups have were not provided due to limited budget in FY23.*

1.2.6.2	*Develop community forest protection and management regulations*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Establish at least 33 village conventions on forest protection and management*	*45*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *SL: Continued in FY24* *HB: Cancelled* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Ongoing* *QT: Completed* *QN: Completed*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *SL: Ontrack* *HB: Cancelled* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*LC: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget.* *SL: Supported three communities to develop 8 CFM conventions/regulations. The rest 7 CFM conventions will be developed in FY24.* *TH: Moved toFY24 due to budget limitations in FY23.* *NA: 5/6 of the village forest protection internal regulation have been developed.* *QT: Regulation on CFM has been approved by DPC on Q1 FY23.* *QN: 02 protocols on forest protection and management developed and verified by the Commune's People Committee.*
1.2.6.3	*Provide support to conduct forest patrolling, forest monitoring*	*SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Patrol reports according to the plans/regulations on patrolling and protecting community forests in 5 villages piloting CFM*	*91*	*SL: Continued in FY24* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Completed* *QT: Completed* *QN: Continued in FY24*	*SL: Ontrack* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*SL: 8 CFM patrolling teams implemented patrolling trips as planned.* *Conducted four training classes for 108 members to CFM boards/patrolling team at Muong La and Moc Chau districts.* *HB: Village forest patrolling teams conducted patrolling to monitor their village forest areas in Mai Chau, Lac Son and Da Bac districts.* *TH: Instructed two CFM community forest protection teams to carry out forest protection patrol activities on the community forest area. The number of participants is 27 people, including 23 men and 4 women.* *NA: 5/6 communities regularly carry out prevention and treatment work according to the Plan.* *QT: Completed to guide CFM members to fill information on patrol book on Feb 24, 2023 with 36 participants* *Collected evidence of forest protection of 11 communities on coordination regulations.* *QN: 02 forest protection and management groups were established with the participation of 104 members. These groups conducted community forest patrolling trips.*

1.2.6.4	*Improved communities' capacities to monitor allocated forests (coaching, implement CF monitoring)*	*SL, TH, NA, QN*					*16 communities are trained and implement activities on the forest patrolling and monitoring process*	*64*	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Completed* *NA: Ongoing* *QN: Continued in FY24*	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*SL: Postponed to FY24, due to budget limitations.* *NA: 5/6 communities improved forest monitoring capacity.* *QN: Developed contents and assessed training needs.*
1.2.7	**Improve the effectiveness of forest management and protection under community forest protection contract with forest management boards/ communities protecting forests allocated to households (CFM HG)**	**LC, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**44,090 ha forest area planned/effectively improved for contracted CFM**				**NA: 22 forest management plans have been completed for 22 communities with an area of 15,308 hectares with better management support.**
1.2.7.1	*Conduct consultation with relevant partners to reach agreement of improved effectiveness of forest management and protection under community forest protection contract with forest management boards/ communities protecting forests allocated to households*	*LC, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Establish/agree upon the coordination mechanisms to increase the effectiveness of contracted CFM for villages/communities*	*86*	*LC: Completed* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Completed* *QT: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*HB: Organized 4 meetings at commune level to consult related parties in strengthening community-based forest management work in Quyet Thang, Mien Doi, Quy Hoa communes (Lac Son district) and Mai Hich commune (Mai Chau district).* *TH: Conducted 09 meetings with 9 community groups of households collaborating on forest protection to consult and unify the coordination mechanism with 386 people, with 275 male and 111 female; with 371 people from minority ethnic groups.* *NA: Organized 30 community core group consultations to develop a Community Protection Plan.* *QT: The QT PPMU proposed to move to another area because Keo Son Cooperative and Cam Nghia commune leaders agreed not to implement this activity in the commune because the communities did not have funding to support so they did not actively patrolled and protected the forest. This activity will be carried out in FY24 and proposed to choose Khe Ha village of Huong Hiep commune*

											and Ho village of Huong Son commune. *QN: Consulted with the relevant stakeholders to develop the coordination plan to support for forest protection and management Planning.*
1.2.7.2	*Develop and implement detailed plan under community forest protection contract with forest management boards/ communities protecting forests allocated to households*	*LC, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Forest protection plan is developed for over 50 contracted village communities/forest protection groups and is confirmed by local authorities*	*65*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Ongoing* *QT: Not started* *QN: Completed*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*LC: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget.* *HB: Developed 21 plans for community-based forest management (4 for Tu Ly commune, 7 for Thanh Son commune, 5 for Mai Hich commune and 5 for Quyet Thang, Quy Hoa, Mien Doi communes.* *TH: Completed and handed over 09 patrol plans for forest protection and fire prevention plans; 09 forest protection conventions; 09 regulations on management and use of PFES money for 9 communities and household groups collaborating on forest protection in9,918 hectares of forest.* *NA: Completed 22 community forest management and forestry plans confirmed by the community, localities and relevant parties.* *QN: 06 SFM plans were completed and verified by communes' People Committees and 05 protocols on forest protection and development were developed and accepted by Communes' People Committee. Restructured the forest protection and patrolling*

										groups at 06 villages with the participation of 157 people.
1.2.7.3	*Establishing, building capacity, and developing regulation for communities/forest patrolling groups*	*LC, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*PPMUs, PFMB, Provincial FPDs*	*60*	*LC: Cancelled* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Ongoing* *QT: Not started* *QN: Continued in FY24*	*LC: Cancelled* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*HB: Organized village meetings to set up organizations (village forest management boards, village forest patrolling teams) and develop institutions (village forest management regulations) for forest management in Da Bac, Mai Chau and Lac Son districts. As a result, 19 village management boards for community-based forest management have been established and 19 village forest management regulations were developed.* *TH: Consolidated 09 Community Management Boards and 09 forest protection groups in 09 community and household cooperative groups for forest protection.* *NA: Established 22 community forest patrolling group where forest management plans elaborated.* *QT: Same as above.* *QN: 06 forest protection and patrolling groups were trained on forest patrolling, NTFPs use and exploitation and financial management. Supported the communities in the fields of patrolling, preparation of patrolling minutes and notes.*

1.2.7.4	*Provide basic patrolling equipment for the community forest patrolling groups*	*LC, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Over 50 CFM committees/groups/communities will be provided with equipment and have increased capacity to patrol and protect forests*	*35*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Continued in FY24* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Continued in FY24* *QN: Continued in FY24*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Behind* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*LC: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget.* *HB: # Established 21 village forest patrolling teams in 21 villages with approved operating regulations.* *# The Project has not yet provided forest patrolling equipment to the village forest patrolling teams due to budget limitations.* *TH: The project has procured and handed over equipment to support forest protection patrols for six (6) communities/17 communities. The total number of protection team members provided with equipment is 60 people.* *NA: 22 community prevention and control groups have been established and have developed a forest protection plan.* *QT: Same as above.* *QN: Trained on forest patrolling, NTFPs use and exploitation and financial management. Supported the communities in patrolling, preparation of patrolling minutes and taking notes. Equipment for forest protection and patrolling groups have not been provided yet due to limited budget.*
1.2.7.5	*Formulate the sustainable forest management plan integrated with ecotourism for target communities*	*LC, TH*					*3 ecotourism development plans for 1 community in LC and 2 communities in TH*	*50*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Completed*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Ontrack*	*LC: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget.* *TH: Completed and handed over two sustainable forest management plans associated with the ecotourism development plan for two communities in1,260 hectares.*
1.2.8	**Build capacities for communities which successfully developed and implemented SFM plans in CFM models**	**LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**At least 2,500 people will be trained and have increased capacity to better manage forest areas**				**NA: Organized capacity building training for 411 people. Of which 333 men, 78 women, 364 ethnic minorities (FY 2023)**

1.2.8.1	*Conduct trainings on land-use planning; participatory forest zoning for CFM planning process*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA*					*At least 245 people trained on FA/FLA techniques/assigning areas for CFM (40% women, 30% ethnic minority)*	*40*	*LC: Continued in FY24* *SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Cancelled* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack* *SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Cancelled* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Ontrack*	*LC: Completed 01 training course on Forest Investigation.* *SL: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget.* *HB: Cancelled the activity of supporting Da Bac DPC and Mai Chau DPC in FLA and FA to communities as requested by PPMU.* *TH: Moved to FY24 due to limited budget in FY23.* *NA: Organized 02 training sessions with 88 participants. Of which 75 men, 13 women, 81 ethnic minorities (implemented in September 2022, Budget of FY 2023).*
1.2.8.2	*Conduct trainings on participatory forest monitoring*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*At least 745 people trained on participatory forest monitoring/patrolling skills (40% women, 30% ethnic minority)*	*97*	*LC: Completed* *SL: Completed* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Completed* *QT: Completed* *QN: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack* *SL: Ontrack* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*LC: Completed 03 training courses in Forest Patrolling.* *SL: Conducted three training courses on CFM patrolling skills for 80 members of CMF boards and patrolling teams.* *HB: Organized trainings on forest patrolling skills for village forest patrolling teams in Mai Chau and Lac Son districts. As result, 96 people were trained, including 12 (12.5%) women and 88 (91.67%) ethnic minorities.* *TH: Completed two training classes "Forest investigation with community participation" and two "Forest patrolling" classes with a total number of participants of 176 people, of which 110 were men, 66 females; 10 people form Kinh ethnic groups, and 166 from other ethnic groups.* *NA: Conducted 03 training classes with 137 participant,. of which 112 were male, 25 female, 127 from ethnic minorities.* *QT: Completed to Organize training course on forest monitoring for 39 participants from Apr 5-6.* *QN: Provided 03 training courses on forest patrolling skills for 03 communes, 01 training on participatory forest inventory for 02 communities with the participation of 112 people (29% of women and 79% of ethnic minority).*

1.2.8.3	*Conduct trainings on financial management skills in CFM models*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*At least 460 people trained in CFM/CBFM financial management skills in participating village communities (40% women, 30% ethnic minority)*	*100*	*LC: Completed SL: Completed HB: Completed TH: Completed NA: Completed QT: Completed QN: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack SL: Ontrack HB: Ontrack TH: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack*	*LC: Completed 01 training course on community financial management skills. SL: Conducted one TOT training course on finance management to apply to CFM model for 30 trainees. HB: Organized trainings on finance management skills for village forest management boards in Mai Chau, Lac Son and Da Bac districts. As a result, 66 people are trained, including 25 (37,88%) women and 60 (90.91%) from ethnic minorities. TH: Completed two training classes "Community financial management skills" with a total of 78 participants, including 61 men and 17 women; 8 from Kinh ethnic group, and 70 from other ethnic groups. NA: Conducted 05 training classes with 274 participants, pf which 221 were men, 53 were women, and 237 were from ethnic minorities. QT: Completed to conduct training on financial management skills for Khe Ha and Gia Gia villagers from Nov 22-23, 2022 with 32 participants (7 female, 30 ethnic minority trainees). QN: provided 02 training courses on financial management for 08 communities of 03 communes with the participation of 47 people (15% of women and 94% of ethnic minority).*
1.2.8.4	*Conduct trainings on GESI in CFM planning and implementation*	*SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*At least 410 people trained on GESI knowledge in CFM/CBFM in participating village communities (40% women, 30% ethnic minority)*	*61*	*SL: Completed HB: Cancelled TH: Postponed to FY24 NA: Completed QT: Completed QN: Completed*	*SL: Ontrack HB: Cancelled TH: Postponed to FY24 NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack*	*SL: Organized three GESI training courses for 68 members of CFM boards at Thuan Chau and Yen Chau districts. HB: Cancelled the activity of supporting Da Bac DPC and Mai Chau DPC in FLA and FA to communities as requested by PPMU. TH: Moved to FY24 due to budget limitations in in FY23. NA: Conducted 01 training class with 32 participants. including 15 men, 17 women, 29 ethnic minorities (implemented in September 2022, using 2023 Budget). QT: Completed to conduct training on GESI in CFM planning from Sep 12-13, 2022 with 27*

										participants (11 female, 25 ethnic minority trainees). *QN: Combined with the training on the code 1.2.8.2*
1.2.8.5	*Conduct trainings on sustainable and effective use of NTFPs (medicinal plants, bamboo shoots, bamboo, Loi bamboo, Lung bamboo)*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*At least 520 people trained on sustainable use of NTFPs (medicinal plants, bamboo shoots, bamboo, Loi bamboo, Lung bamboo) (40% women, 30% ethnic minority)*	*57*	*LC: Cancelled* *SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Completed* *QN: Completed*	*LC: Cancelled* *SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*SL: postponed to FY24 due to budget limitation.* *HB: Organized training on sustainable and effective utilization of NTFPs for villagers in Mai Chau district with 74 people trained (including 41 women and 71 ethnic minorities). In addition, two plans for sustainable NTFPs use and management for Na Lut and Thung Khe villages were developed.* *TH: 1. Interview for survey to verify potential NTFP species in two (2) target CFM communities;* *2. Organized 2 village meetings to discuss and develop plans for sustainable use and development of NTFPs in two target CFM communities with 25 participants, of which 19 were male, female 6 people; 1 from Kinh ethnic group and 24 from other ethnic groups;* *3. Organized two training classes on effective and sustainable use of NTFPs with a total of 60 participants, of which 53 were men, 7 were women; 14 from Kinh ethnic group and 46 from other ethnic group;* *4. Completed and handed over two copies of the Plan for sustainable use and development of NTFP species to two (2) target CFM communities.* *NA: Postponed to FY24.* *QT: Completed to conduct the training on sustainable and effective use of NTFPs in Gia Gia village, Huong Hiep commune, Dakrong district from Dec 19-23, 2022 with 36 participants (15 female, 35 ethnic minority trainees).* *QN: Provided 04 training courses on sustainable NTFPs use and for 09 communities with the*

										participation of 115 people (35% of women and 96% of ethnic minority). Also supported these communities to develop plans for NTFPs use and management.
1.2.8.6	*Conduct trainings on establishing and operating ecoturism services in CFM sites*	*SL, NA, QN*					*At least 150 people trained on establishing and operating ecotourism services at CFM sites (40% women, 30% ethnic minority)*	-	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Cancelled*	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Cancelled*	*SL: Postponed to FY24 due to budget limitations.* *NA: Postponed to FY24.* *QN: Postponed to 2024 due to limited budget.*

1.2.9	**Improve awareness on CFM/CBFM, GESI, and land perception on tenure rights to forest land areas**	**LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QN**					**Increase awareness about forest land tenure rights, CFM/CBFM, and GESI for at least 3,200 people (40% women, 30% ethnic minority)**				**NA: Postponed to FY24**
1.2.9.1	*Communications and awareness on CFM/CBFM, raising to improve communities' perception on tenure rights to forest land areas as secure in seven provinces*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QN*					*Awareness-raising communication events are conducted, contributing to raising awareness for 650 people at CFM sites*	*67*	*C: Completed* *SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack* *SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*LC:* *Organized an awareness raising event "Tree Planting Tet"* *SL: Postponed to FY24 due to budget limitations.* *HB: Organized 5 communications and awareness raising events on CFM/CBFM in Mai Hich and Thanh Son communes to improve communities' perception on tenure rights to forest land areas as secure in seven provinces with 501 participants, including 191 women (38,12%) and 491 ethnic minorities (98%).* *TH: Organized 02 communication activities to raise legal awareness on forest protection and forest land tenure for 19 communities, with a total number of participants of 76 people, including 65 men and 11 women; 12 from Kinh ethnic group and 64 people from other ethnic groups.* *NA: Postponed to FY24.* *QN: Postpone to FY24 due to limited budget.*
1.2.9.2	*Conduct experiential learning tours on CFM focusing on forest patrolling/monitoring, and ecotourism linked with forest protection*	*SL, TH, NA, QN*					*6 tours are conducted with 180 participants*	*38*	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Completed* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*SL: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget.* *TH: Organized a study tour to an effective community management model in Thua Thien Hue province with 34 participants, including 32 men and 02 women; 5 people from Kinh ethnic group.* *NA: Organized a study tour for community forest management experience in Lao Cai province with 32 participants. Of which 28 were men, 4 were women, and 24 from ethnic minorities.* *QN: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget.*

1.2.9.5	*Conduct baseline and endline surveys*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QN*					*Baseline & endline reports on the perception of people using foresst land*	*33*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*LC: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget.* *SL: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget.* *HB: Conducted baseline and endline surveys as planned. Draft of report on survey results is being prepared.* *TH: Final survey on understanding of forest land tenure rights in 6 communities for 197 adults, including 102 men and 95 women; Kinh ethnic group has 02 people and 195 people from other ethnic groups.* *NA: Postponed to FY24.*
THP2	**Increase Conservation-Friendly Enterprises in Forest Dependent Communities**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**									
2.1	**Task 2.1. Identify Target Value Chains, Barriers, and Opportunities**	**TH, QT**						**-**			
2.1.2	**Develop a plan to develop and upgrade value chains**	**QT**					**Develop 1 copy of the development plan for Trau trees combined with processing and consumption in 2 districts of the province.**	**-**			
2.1.2.4	*Support the development of a project to develop the production, consumption and processing of Tung oil tree (Vernicia montana) in 2 districts (Huong Hoa and Dakrong) from 2022-2026, with orientation to 2030.*	*QT*					*Develop 1 copy of the plan to develop Mu oil trees to harvest, process, and consume in 2 districts of the province.*	*100*	*QT: Completed*	*QT: Ontrack*	*QT: The PPC approved the plan on Q1 FY23*
2.2	**Task 2.2: Strengthen Conservation-Friendly Value Chains in SFM Landscapes**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH,**									

		NA, QT, QN								
2.2.2	**Support the development of bamboo, rattan and leaves (RBL) value chain**	**TW, SL, HB, TH, NA, QN**					**Increased capacity of 10 entities; 650 people trained; Improved livelihoods of 900 households; mobilized $720,000 USD; 1 policy developed**	**-**		
2.2.2.2	*Strengthen capacity for bamboo production and processing cooperatives/enterprises; provide tools and equipment's for cooperatives/enterprises*	*SL, HB, TH, NA, QN*					*Increased capacity of 10 entities*	*68*	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Completed* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Continued in FY24*	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Ontrack*	*SL: Conducted capacity building session for Tre Xanh cooperative, knitting groups and some departments.* *Postponed some activities to 2024, pending on budget approval.* *HB: # Increased capacity for two entities, including PFD and Sub-Department of Rural Development.* *# Increased capacity for four cooperative groups participating in the bamboo value chain.* *# Supported cooperative groups in Mai Chau district in developing products.* *# Increased capacity for cooperative groups participating in the bamboo value chain with 7 core members from Mai Hich commune trained.* *# Organized training on weaving techniques for members of bamboo and rattan weaving cooperative groups in Cun Pheo commune (Mai Chau district) and Nhan Nghia commune (Lac Son district) with 25 members trained.* *TH: 04 bamboo cooperative groups have their capacity in market access and group management improved.* *NA: Improved the capacity of 1 company (Duc Phong company) and 4 cooperative groups to produce and trade products from bamboo and rattan.* *Supported Duc Phong Company to improve and evaluate the Business Social Responsibility Compliance Certificate (BSCI).* *QN: 3 producer groups have improved their capacity to produce rattan, bamboo and areca*

											products. Equipment support activities moved to year 2024.
2.2.2.3	Training for farmer groups, cooperatives, and enterprises on sustainable cultivation and harvesting techniques in compliance with forest protection and Deforestation-Free principles	SL, HB, TH, NA, QN					650 people trained (45% women, 50% ethnic minority)	75	SL: Not started HB: Completed TH: Completed NA: Completed QN: Completed	SL: Behind HB: Behind TH: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QN: Ontrack	HB: # Organized trainings on weaving techniques for member of weaving cooperative groups to produce bamboo craft products for tourists. As a result, 18 people trained; including 7 women and 18 ethnic minorities. # Organized a kickoff meeting for the task order 2 with 29 participants; including 11 women and 25 ethnic minorities. # Organized a training on improving livelihood for local people based on community-based tourism and bamboo value chains. As a result, 23 people trained; including 8 women and 23 ethnic minorities. # Organized training on community-based tourism development for bamboo and rattan weaving cooperative groups in Mai Hich commune (Mai Chau district) with 20 members trained. TH: More than 400 turns of people have improved

											their capacity to develop and perfect products according to customer requirements. *NA: 495 turns of people have improved their capacity to develop and finalize products according to customer requirements.* *QN: Training on sustainable landscapes and exploitation of rattan material areas for 793 participants.*
2.2.2.4	*Provide support to cooperatives, enterprises, and groups in resource mobilization, product development, development of supply/raw material areas, promotion of market expansion, PPCP, policy dialogues*	*SL, HB, TH, NA, QN*					*Provide support to 5 entities, provide livelihood support to 900 households; mobilize $720,000 USD*	*67*	*SL: Not started* *HB: Continued in FY24* *TH: Completed* *NA: Completed* *QN: Continued in FY24*	*SL: Behind* *HB: Behind* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*HB: Connected and supported the Bui Traditional Craft Village Cooperative to sign a contract with Lacquer World Company with a contract value of VND 12 billion (USD 500,000).* *TH: Introduced and selected potential customers for cooperative groups according to orders (Msafina International Co., Ltd., Trung Nam Hung Yen Co., Ltd.)* *NA: Introduce and select potential customers for cooperative groups to cooperate in production according to orders.* *QN: Connecting export companies and potential customers for companies, producer groups to develop the consumption markets (Mo Cau cooperative is sending product samples).*
2.2.2.5	*Organize oversea study tours for experiences regarding the development of market-oriented RBL value chains*	*SL, HB, TH, NA, QN*					*Representatives from provinces*	*15*	*SL: Cancelled* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Postponed to FY24*	*SL: Cancelled* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Behind* *NA: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*HB: Due to budget adjustment of USAID.* *TH: The consultant went on a field trip to survey the current situation and development orientation of bamboo in Thanh Hoa.* *NA: Postponed to FY24.* *QN: This activity is moved to 2024 due to the reduced budget.*

									QN: Postponed to FY24		
2.2.2.6	*Technical support for OCOP center of Dong Giang district*	*QN*						*30*	*QN: Continued in FY24*	*QN: Ontrack*	*QN: Vietcraft is currently working with the locality to prepare to establish a cooperative and expected to build OCOP point in December 2023.*
2.2.2.7	*Support the development of Viet Nam Bamboo master development plan for the period of 2023-2027*	*TW, TH*					*1 policy developed*	*100*	*TW: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack*	*TW: The Project recruited 1 short-term consultant to support MBFP in developing a project proposal for the "Vietnam Bamboo Sustainable Development for the period of 2024-2027". This proposal has been approved by SFM, CPMU and MBFP. MBFP is currently coordinating with the consultant to send proposals to potential donors (GIZ, JICA, KOICA,...) for funding.*
2.2.3	**Support the implementation and development of medicinal plants value chain (Dang ginseng, prickly pear, Anxilla tree, fenugreek, ginger, medicinal plants of the Red Dao ethnic group, turmeric, etc.)**	**LC, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**Increase capacity of 12 entities; 2,070 people trained; Improve livelihoods of 1,265 households; mobilize $940,000 USD**	**-**			
2.2.3.1	*Support the development and implementation of projects on developing medicinal herbs in the area*	*QT*					*The 2023 project implementation plan is developed*	*100*	*QT: Completed*	*QT: Ontrack*	*QT: Completed activities as planned in FY23 and continue to support in FY24.*

2.2.3.2	*Strengthen institutional capacity of organizations, farmer interest groups/cooperatives, and enterprises; and improve the management and operating capacity of these groups*	*LC, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Increased capacity of 12 groups/cooperatives and enterprises*	*93*	*LC: Continued in FY24* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Completed* *QT: Completed* *QN: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*LC: Conduct trainings for CFEs and households* *HB: # Supported Huong Xuan Cooperative in new products development, including shampoo and soap.* *# Supported cooperatives (Huong Xuan, Bao Hieu, Tan Lac Son and Ban Dao - Thong Nhat cooperatives) in developing contracts with affiliated farmers.* *# Trained 653 people (CFEs, farmers) on GACP-WHO (Good Agricultural Collection and Practices) on organizational management, monitoring, access to finance and market access.* *# Improved livelihood for 1,245 forest dependent people* *# leveraged US$218,000 for landscape development # developed and upgraded 04 products* *# Set up a medicinal plants interest group in Mai Hich commune with 18 members in total; including 5 women and 9 ethnic minorities.* *TH: 01 company and 9 affiliated cooperatives have improved capacity in building production and business strategies according to market needs and building production plans to meet bank loan criteria.* *NA: # Trained 447 people (CFEs, farmers) on GACP-WHO (Good Agricultural Collection and Practices) on organizational management, monitoring, access to finance and market access.* *# Improved livelihood for 1,041forest dependent people* *# leveraged US$274,000 for landscape development* *# developed and upgraded 05 products* *QT:* *# Trained 514 people (CFEs, farmers) on GACP-WHO (Good Agricultural Collection and Practices) on organizational management, monitoring, access to finance and market access.* *# Improved livelihood for 847 forest dependent people*

									# leveraged US$295,000 for landscape development *# developed and upgraded 03 products* *# Provide supports to CFEs: writing proposal for fund leverage from the government programs on collective economics, and rural development* *# supported GACP-WHO certification for 05ha medicinal plants.* *QN:* *# Trained 344 people (CFEs, farmers) on GACP-WHO (Good Agricultural Collection and Practices) on organizational management, monitoring, access to finance and market access.* *# Improved livelihood for 711 forest dependent people* *# leveraged US$247,000 for landscape development* *# developed and upgraded18 products for CFEs* *# consulted on GACP-WHO certification for Dong Tra Cooperative and Viet Linh Company.*

2.2.3.3	Training for medicinal plants producers (cooperatives/enterprises) on sustainable cultivation, care, and post-harvest processing techniques, associated with principles of forest protection and development	LC, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN					2,070 people trained (40% women, 60% ethnic minority)	94	LC: Continued in FY24 HB: Completed TH: Completed NA: Completed QT: Completed QN: Completed	LC: Ontrack HB: Ontrack TH: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack	LC: Completed training on forest regeneration and developing sustainable medicinal plants under canopy. HB: # Organized a ToT training on GACP-WHO for cooperatives, enterprises and officers from related agencies in Hoa Binh province with 28 people trained, including 15 women and 16 ethnic minorities. # Organized a training on collecting medicinal plants from the forests in sustainable manners for cooperated households of Huong Xuan Cooperative with 42 people trained, including 29 women and 33 ethnic minorities. # Organized a training on Ehretia asperula Zoll.&Mor planting techniques for cooperated households of Huong Xuan Cooperative with 16 people trained, including 4 women and 6 ethnic minorities. TH: Trained on cultivating medicinal plants under the forest canopy, on GACP-WHO principles on medicinal plants cultivation-collection-and pre-processing, and building medicinal plants nurseries for nearly 300 turns of people. NA: # Completed 01 TOT training course on GACP -WHO for CFEs, and local government agencies. QT: # Organized 6 training courses on organic microbial composting for CFEs. # Completed 01 TOT training course on GACP -WHO for CFEs, and local government agencies. QN: # Completed 01 TOT training course on GACP -WHO for CFEs, and local government agencies.
2.2.3.4	Support farmers/cooperatives/enterprises in accessing high-quality medicinal seedlings and equipment to develop sustainable supply areas.	LC, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN					670 households supported	53	LC: Postponed to FY24 HB: Continued in FY24 TH: Postponed to FY24 NA: Postponed to FY24 QT: Postponed	LC: Postponed to FY24 HB: Ontrack TH: Postponed to FY24 NA: Postponed to	LC: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget. HB: # Provided 11,000 seedlings of Celastrus hindsi/xạ đeni) to 15 households of the medicinal plants farmer cooperative group in Mai Hich commune. TH: Provided 30,000 seedlings of Ophiopogon Japonicus (mach mon dong) for 11 households in Lang Chanh. QT: Postponed to FY24 due to budget availability.

							to FY24 *QN: Continued in FY24*	*FY24* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*Planned to be implemented in April 2024.* *QN: Cinnamon seedlings were purchased and handed over to the growers. Purchasing equipment is postponed due to budget availability.*

2.2.3.5	*Support medicinal plants companies/cooperatives/groups in accessing resources; developing and promoting products, policy dialogues, PPCP associated with the OCOP program*	*LC, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Support 595 households; mobilize $940,000 USD*	*95*	*LC: Continued in FY24* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Completed* *QT: Completed* *QN: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*LC: Supported to develop product label design and product traceability.* *HB: # Connected Huong Xuan Cooperative and Bao Hieu Agro-Forestry Cooperative with four medicinal plant enterprises.* *# Supported Huong Xuan Cooperative to participate in Foodexpo to promote their products.* *# Worked with related agencies; including Hoa Binh Provincial Cooperative Alliance, Department of Industry and Trade, Bank for Social Policies, to identify potential resources.* *# Developed success story of Huong Xuan Cooperative to use for market access.* *# Supported Huong Xuan Cooperative and Bao Hieu Cooperative to join Medipharm Fair in Hanoi for product promotion and market access purposes.* *# Supported Tan Lac Son Cooperative to get loan of USD 11,000 from Fund for Cooperative Development of Hoa Binh province.* *# Mobilized capital from 4 cooperatives for landscaping, and production expansion.* *TH: Support CFE in R&D for new products and improving more environmentally friendly packaging for products.* *Support CFE in making production and business plans to meet the requirements of banks/credit institutions.* *NA:* *# Supported CFE in business planning to meet the requirements of banks/credit institutions.* *# Supported CFEs to participate in Food Expo 2023 in Ho Chi Minh City and Medipharm 2023 International Exhibition in Hanoi.* *QT: # supported proposals for 5 star OCOP assessment.* *QN: # Supported CFEs to participate in Food Expo 2023 in Ho Chi Minh City and Medipharm 2023 International Exhibition in Hanoi.* *# Organized a trade connection session with*

											companies and businesses inside and outside the province
2.2.3.6	*Set up a dedicated area for promoting products and demonstrating indigenous Red Dao knowledge in processing and using traditional medicine*	*LC*					*01 model*	*100*	*LC: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack*	*LC: (1) Completed inception report on Plan for setting up a dedicated area for promoting products and demonstrating indigenous Red Dao knowledge; (2) Assess resource conditions (land, legal, culture…) to set up a dedicated area.*

	recipes to cure illnesses and improve community health										
2.2.4	**Support the development of cinnamon value chain**	**LC, TH**					**Increased capacity of 3 CFEs; 250 people trained; Improved livelihoods of 250 households**	**-**			
2.2.4.1	*Strengthen institutional capacity for farmer interest groups/cooperatives on cinnamon production and trade (e.g. business plan, internal regulation, by-laws etc.)*	*LC, TH*					*Increase capacity of 7 groups (250 people)/ 3CFEs (on cooperative governance and financial management)*	*95*	*LC: Continued in FY24 TH: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack TH: Ontrack*	*LC: Established 5 organic cinnamon groups in Nam Dang commune, Van Ban district. TH: Established 02 cooperative groups for organic cinnamon production in Xuan Le commune, Thuong Xuan district with 104 members.*
2.2.4.2	*Training for members in cinnamon farmer interest groups/cooperatives/enterprises on the sustainable cultivation, care and post-harvest processing techniques associated with principles of forest protection and development*	*LC, TH*					*250 people have increased capacity (30% women, 50% ethnic minority)*	*90*	*LC: Continued in FY24 TH: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack TH: Ontrack*	*LC: Silvicultural technical guidance for 5 organic cinnamon groups in Van Ban. TH: Organized 02 training courses on growing and caring for organic cinnamon for 104 participants in Xuan Le commune, Thuong Xuan district.*
2.2.4.3	*Support cooperatives in accessing high-quality seedlings and developing sustainable cinnamon supply areas with the principle of ZERO-deforestation*	*LC, TH*					*250 households improve supply areas*	*-*	*LC: Cancelled TH: Postponed to FY24*	*LC: Cancelled TH: Postponed to FY24*	*TH: to collect with the nursery, seedling suppliers.*
2.2.4.4	*Support cooperatives/enterprises in improving business capacity, connecting with markets, and promoting products*	*LC*					*Increase capacity for 2 groups/cooperatives*	*80*	*LC: Continued in FY24*	*LC: Ontrack*	*LC: Support trainings on market access, financial access, business planning for CFEs.*
2.2.4.5	*Provide consultation on converting to biomass thermal technology applications in production*	*LC*					*1 CFE will use biomass thermal technology in production*	*-*	*LC: Cancelled*	*LC: Cancelled*	

2.2.4.6	*Provide equipment to improve production efficiency*	*LC*					*1 CFE is provided with equipment to improve production efficiency*	*70*	*LC: Postponed to FY24*	*LC: Postponed to FY24*	*LC: Postpone to FY24 due to budget availability.*
2.2.4.7	*Organize a workshop with participation of CFEs, farmers, local authority to update on organic standards/requirements and CFEs, farmers' compliance to those standards/requirements*	*LC*					*A workshop/dialogue on organic cinnamon growing areas, organic certificate, production capacity of CFEs/farmers on organic cinnamon*	*100*	*LC: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack*	
2.2.5	**Support the implementation and development of betel nut tree value chain**	**QN**					**Provide support to 2 cooperatives; 70 people trained, 70 households with improved livelihood**	**-**			
2.2.5.1	*Strengthen institutional capacity of interest groups/cooperatives and improve the management and operating capacity of existing cooperatives*	*QN*					*Provide support to 2 cooperatives*	*100*	*QN: Completed*	*QN: Ontrack*	*QN: Tien Phuoc Dried Betel Cooperative participated completely on training courses such as: Good Housekeeping (GHK); SYB; supervisory organization management, Market assessment, credit assessment.*
2.2.5.2	*Training on cultivation, care, and post-harvest processing techniques for producers*	*QN*					*70 people trained (70% women)*	*100*	*QN: Continued in FY24*	*QN: Ontrack*	*QN: Completed 2 training courses on Betel cultivation for farmers.*
2.2.5.3	*Training, provide vocational training on design and product design improvement (attach IQC with Viet Craft)*	*QN*					*1 vocational class, 5 new/improved models*	*100*	*QN: Completed*	*QN: Ontrack*	*QN: Completed the design of 10 handcrafted areca nut products.*
2.2.5.4	*Provide support with connecting to the market and product promotion (attach IQC with Viet Craft)*	*QN*					*1 activity to connect with the market*	*80*	*QN: Continued in FY24*	*QN: Ontrack*	*QN: Supported Quang Nam Agricultural and Industrial Cooperative to participate in product introduction in Ho Chi Minh City.*
2.2.5.5	*Provide equipment to improve production efficiency*	*QN*					*2 CFEs are provided with several machines and equipment according to the plan*	*30*	*QN: Postponed to FY24*	*QN: Postponed to FY24*	*QN: Due to budget limitations, this activity has been moved to FY24 for implementation.*
2.2.5.6	*Provide consultation to switch to more environmentally friendly technology applications*	*QN*					*2 CFEs are selected to receive several machines and equipment*	*100*	*QN: Completed*	*QN: Ontrack*	*QN: Tien Phuoc Dried Betel Cooperative has installed a pressure cooker and refrigerated storage containers.*

2.2.5.7	*Improve organizational and institutional capacity for cooperatives*	*QN*					*2 selected CFEs will have increased capacity in cooperative management, financial management and internal control*	*100*	*QN: Completed*	*QN: Ontrack*	*QN: Support CFEs to build and implement the purchase contracts with farmers providing raw materials.*
2.2.6	**Support the development of Tung oil tree (Vernicia montana) value chain**	**QT**					**3 Tung tree (Vernicia montana) collection agencies are set up; 180 people trained; 1 nursery garden is built**	**-**			
2.2.6.1	*Provide training to farmer interest groups on sustainable cultivation, harvesting and post-harvested processing techniques towards certification schemes*	*QT*					*180 people trained (35% women, 70% ethnic minority)*	*30*	*QT: Postponed to FY24*	*QT: Postponed to FY24*	*QT: Postponed to April 2024.*
2.2.6.2	*Provide assistance on developing Tung oil tree (Vernicia montana) nursery gardens*	*QT*					*1 nursery garden built*	*30*	*QT: Postponed to FY24*	*QT: Postponed to FY24*	*QT: Postponed to April 2024.*
2.2.6.3	*Provide support on post-harvest processing and market connections between groups of farmer interest groups and agencies/cooperatives and businesses*	*QT*					*3 agencies established and connected with cooperatives and enterprises*	*50*	*QT: Continued in FY24*	*QT: Ontrack*	*QT: Supported Chan May cooperatives to complete the development of production chain linkage plans according to Decree 98 of the Government.*
2.2.7	**Support the development of the Arabica coffee value chain**	**QT**					**Increased capacity of 2 cooperatives; 50 people trained; Improved livelihoods of 50 households**	**-**			
2.2.7.1	*Strengthen institutional capacity of coffee cooperatives*	*QT*					*Increased capacity of 2 cooperatives*	*100*	*QT: Completed*	*QT: Ontrack*	*QT: Completed capacity building support for two coffee cooperatives, Son Nguyen and Khe Sanh.*
2.2.7.2	*Provide technical support (including some key equipment) to Arabica coffee cooperatives*	*QT*					*2 cooperatives received technical assistance; 50 people*	*100*	*QT: Completed*	*QT: Ontrack*	*QT: Completed training courses on producing compost from coffee for 50 households of 2 cooperatives.*

	in producing compost from coffee pods						*trained (40% women, 40% ethnic minority)*				
2.2.7.3	*Provide technical assistance and strengthen capacity for cooperatives/communities on sustainable regeneration of Arabica coffee plantation areas with intercropping techniques (fruit trees) and provide tools and equipments for CFEs*	*QT*					*2 cooperatives received technical assistance; 50 households regenerated coffee using intercropping techniques (fruit trees)*	*50*	*QT: Postponed to FY24*	*QT: Postponed to FY24*	*QT: Postponed to April 2024.*
2.2.7.4	*Provide technical assistance to coffee cooperatives/enterprises to develop and promote coffee products linked with OCOP program*	*QT*					*2 cooperatives received technical assistance*	*100*	*QT: Completed*	*QT: Ontrack*	*QT: Supported Khe Sanh and Son Nguyen cooperatives to complete the development of production chain linkage plans according to Decree 98 of the Government.*
2.2.7.5	*Organize an investment promotion conference linking the consumption of Arabica coffee products*	*QT*					*3 cooperation agreements on coffee consumption are signed*	*100*	*QT: Completed*	*QT: Ontrack*	*QT: Successfully organized a conference on July 7 with 50 delegates participating in promoting the signing of contracts worth 20 billion VND.*
2.2.8	**Support the development of fruit trees value chain (mango, longan, banana)**	**SL**					**Increase capacity of 2 CFEs, 240 people trained; improve livelihood of 240 households**	**-**			
2.2.8.1	*Strengthen institutional capacity of cooperatives/enterprises in fruit production and business*	*SL*					*Increase capacity of 2 CFEs*	*90*	*SL: Completed*	*SL: Ontrack*	*SL: Conducted 01 training course on IPHM for 25 core farmers of two cooperatives.*
2.2.8.2	*Support fruit cooperatives in product development, trade promotion, market connection, and integration with government programs (e.g. OCOP)*	*SL*					*1 event is organized*	*50*	*SL: Postponed to FY24*	*SL: Postponed to FY24*	*SL: Postponed to FY24 due to budget availability.*
2.2.8.3	*Technical training on planting, taking care of, and pre-processing mangos and longans*	*SL*					*6 training courses with 3 topic: (1) post-harvest pruning, (2) taking care [of the fruits], (3) wrapping the mangos*	*100*	*SL: Completed*	*SL: Ontrack*	*SL: Organized 4 training courses on mango tending and one class on harvesting for152 members of two cooperatives.*

2.2.8.4	*Training on composting and using microbial fertilizers*	*SL*					*2 training courses for 60 members/affiliated households of 2 CFEs (Na Nga, Quyet Tam)*	*100*	*SL: Completed*	*SL: Ontrack*	*SL: Organized 4 training courses on bio fertilizer producing for 124 members of two cooperatives.*
2.2.8.5	*Provide equipment and tools to improve production and business efficiency*	*SL*					*Several equipment has been agreed on: lawn mower, vacuum, etc.*	*80*	*SL: Postponed to FY24*	*SL: Postponed to FY24*	*SL: Postponed to FY24 due to budget availability.*
2.2.8.6	*Provide training and consultation on converting to the application of biomass thermal technology in production*	*SL*					*Advise members/affiliated households of CFEs*	*-*	*SL: Cancelled*	*SL: Cancelled*	
2.2.8.7	*Increase organizational and institutional capacity for cooperatives*	*SL*					*Increase capacity on cooperative management and financial management for 2 CFEs*	*100*	*SL: Completed*	*SL: Ontrack*	*SL: Supported trainings on market access, financial access, business planning for CFEs.*
2.2.11	**Trainings on sustainable value chain development methods in forest-dependent communities for forest rangers and CFEs with a focus on women-led CFEs (with GESI integration)**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**90 people trained (50% women, 20% ethnic minority)**	**-**			
2.2.11.1	*Organize trainings on sustainable value chain development and private sector engagement approaches with the integration of Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) for forest rangers*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*24 CPMU/PPMU staffs understand the value chain development approach and engage the private sector in value chain development*	*-*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN: Postponed to FY24*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN: Postponed to FY24*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN: Activity is temporary delayed due to budget availability. This activity will be implemented in FY24.*
2.2.11.2	*Organize trainings on sustainable value chain development and private sector engagement approaches with GESI integration for women-led Conservation Friendly Enterprises (CFEs) with GESI integration*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*31 people trained (50% women, 20% ethnic minority)*	*-*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN: Postponed to FY24*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN: Postponed to FY24*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN: Activity is temporary delayed due to budget availability. This activity will be implemented in FY24.*

2.2.11.3	*Capacity assessment for cooperatives and CFEs participating in value chains in the project areas*	*QT*					*Develop 01 plans for innovative development of agricultural cooperatives*	*100*	*QT: Completed*	*QT: Ontrack*	*QT: The plan has been approved by PPC on Decision 3159/QĐ-UBND dated Dec 12, 2022.*
2.2.11.4	*Organize trainings for CPMU, PPMUs and partners regarding Asset Based Community Development*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*35 people trained*	*100*	*TW: Completed LC: Completed SL: Completed HB: Completed TH: Completed NA: Completed QT: Completed QN: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack LC: Ontrack SL: Ontrack HB: Ontrack TH: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack*	*SL: Invited two cooperative directors to participate in the ABCD training at Lao Cai province. HB: Organized trainings for PPMUs and CFEs regarding Asset Based Community Development (1 from PPMU and 3 from CFEs trained). TH: Organized trainings for PPMUs and CFEs regarding Asset Based Community Development (1 from PPMU; 1 from Thanh Hoa WU and 2 from CFEs trained). NA: Completed training for 6 participants from Nghe An province (4 men, 2 women). QT: Completed the ABCD training course in Hoi An with 8 participants from CFEs, relevant agencies. QN: The training was provided for the partners and SFM staff.*
2.2.14	**Coordinate with VBSP and Women's Union to support the implementation of the "Women's Economic & Environmental Empowerment Initiatives" in implementing value chains**	**LC, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**240 women-led/managed groups/CFEs or individual women understand how to create business plans; 450 women/groups/CFEs have access to finances**				
2.2.14.1	*Support enterprises/cooperatives participating in value chains (focusing on women-led enterprises/cooperatives) in accessing preferential capital from VBSP to promote Women's Economic & Environmental Empowerment Initiatives*	*LC, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*240 women-led/managed groups/CFEs or individual women understand how to create business plans; 450 women/groups/CFEs have access to finances*	*90*	*LC: Completed TH: Completed NA: Completed QT: Completed QN: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack TH: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack*	*TH: Organized 02 training courses on SIYB for 60 people (54 women). NA: 02 days training completed for 29 women coming from Cooperatives, CFEs from districts of Nam Dan, Do Luong, Que Phong, Quy Chau, Cua Lo, Quynh Luu , Con Cuong and Yen Thanh, Nghe An province. QT: Organized a Business Start-up training course with 21 students who are WU members Developed 4 business plans, 3 OCDP and two*

											proposals submitted for SIYB competition at provincial level.
2.2.14.2	*Select potential business models to support their development*	*LC, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*8 models selected*	*66*	*LC: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Completed* *QT: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*TH: - Supported to develop of 08 business plans* *- Supported 11 female idea/product owners to compete in the "Startup ideas and products" contest in 2023 organized by Thanh Hoa Provincial Women's Union: 5 ideas/products won typical excellent awards; 2 ideas/products won excellent awards; 4 promising winning ideas* *- Supported 1 author to participate in the 2023 Women's Startup Contest and won a regional consolation prize* *NA: - Support to develop of 08 business plans* *- Support 1 author to participate in the 2023 Women's Startup Contest and won third prize at the regional level.* *QT: Postponed to April 2024.*
2.2.15	**Support the development of Component 1 under Project 3: Agriculture and forestry economic development related to forest protection and income generation for local communities (National target program for socio-economic development in ethnic minority and mountainous areas for the period of 2021-2030)**	**TW**					**Climate change adaptation plan for forestry commodities**	**-**			

2.2.15.1	*Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA) and the adaptation action plan; capacity building trainings on climate change adaptation measures for CFEs and partners*	*TW*					*Climate change adaptation plan for forestry commodities*	*100*	*TW: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack*	
THP3	**Increase Functionality of Law Enforcement Systems for Forest Crimes**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**						**-**			
3.1	**Support Law Enforcement to Maintain Forest Integrity Through Analysis and Action Planning**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**						**-**			
3.1.1	**Prepare and implement the Law Enforcement Action Plan for 7 provinces**	**LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**Implement 7 Law enforcement action plans**	**-**			
3.1.1.2	*Support the implementation of the Law Enforcement Action Plan in 7 provinces*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*7 Law enforcement action plans are implemented;*	*83*	*LC: Completed SL: Continued in FY24 HB: Completed TH: Completed NA: Ongoing QT: Continued in FY24 QN: Continued in FY24*	*LC: Ontrack SL: Ontrack HB: Ontrack TH: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack*	***LC**: Implemented following the provincial LE action plan. **SL:** Implemented following the provincial LE action plan. **HB**: Organized a review meeting on provincial LE action plan of HB province. **TH:** The consultant has completed the survey and final draft plan to upgrade Xuan Lien Nature Reserve into Xuan Lien National Park. The plan is under review to submit for approval. - Organized a conference on annual forestry assessment and the 50th establishment of Thanh Hoa province's forest ranger force with 135 participants - Organized training courses to improve the capacity of forest rangers on law enforcement and forestry law.*

										NA: *Implemented following the provincial LE action plan.* ***QT:*** *Implemented FY23 plans to reach 75% of planned progress. Will continue to implement in FY24.* ***QN:*** *The activities under action plan have been implementing and mainly focused on capacity building for staff of FPD and sub FPDs at district level*
3.1.2	**Analyze existing tools on law enforcement and information management to understand the effectiveness and barriers, and encourage usage (of the tools). Prepare capacity building plans in project areas; Identify tools and support software development**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**				**Develop, finalize, and deploy 1 system (training for 205 people/7 provinces). Equipment will be provided for provincial/district FPDs/forest rangers**				
3.1.2.2	*Develop the Forest Violations Database Management System (FVDMS) to strengthen law enforcement in the forestry sector*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*				*The system is developed, completed, and operated (205 people trained in 7 provinces)*	*100*	*TW: Completed* *LC: Completed* *SL: Completed* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Completed* *QT: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack* *LC: Ontrack* *SL: Ontrack* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	***TW:*** *The FVDMS is developed and deployed officially in seven provinces; Deployment trainings conducted; Real violation data in the seven provinces entered and monitored through the system.* ***LC:*** *Deployment training on the Violation Database Management System in Vietnam (FVDMS) for technical staff of the Forest Protection Department and forest ranger districts (33 participants) conducted. Forest violation data has been entering and monitoring through the FVDMS.* ***SL:*** *Deployment conference on the Violation Database Management System in Vietnam*

								QN: Completed		*(FVDMS) for technical staff of the Forest Protection Department and forest ranger districts conducted. Forest violation data has been entering and monitoring through the FVDMS.* ***HB**: Deployment training on the Violation Database Management System in Vietnam (FVDMS) for technical staff of the Forest Protection Department and forest ranger districts (15 participants) conducted. Forest violation data has been entering and monitoring through the FVDMS.* ***TH:** Deployment training on the Violation Database Management System in Vietnam (FVDMS) for technical staff of the Forest Protection Department and forest ranger districts conducted. Forest violation data has been entering and monitoring through the FVDMS.* ***NA**: Deployment conference on the Violation Database Management System in Vietnam (FVDMS) for technical staff of the Forest Protection Department and forest ranger districts (27 participants) conducted. Forest violation data has been entering and monitoring through the FVDMS.* ***QT:** Deployment training on the Violation Database Management System in Vietnam (FVDMS) for technical staff of the Forest Protection Department and forest ranger districts (31 participants) conducted.* ***QN:** Deployment training on the Violation Database Management System in Vietnam (FVDMS) for technical staff of the Forest Protection Department and forest ranger districts (40 participants) conducted. Forest violation data has been entering and monitoring through the FVDMS.*
3.1.3	**Provide capacity building for forest rangers, police, and other agencies in detecting and investigating violations related to suspected forest crimes, including**	**LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**390 people trained**			

	providing support in evidence building using user-friendly field inspection tools.										
3.1.3.2	*Conduct capacity building activities (develop training agendas, curricula and materials; conduct training courses) for specialized LEAs, FPDs, forest rangers for CFMs*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*390 people trained*	*57*	*LC: Completed* *SL: Continued in FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Completed* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*LC: Ontrack* *SL: Ontrack* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	***LC**: Training on handling violations in the field of forestry for forest rangers of the Forest Protection Department and forest ranger districts (32 participants).* ***SL**: Conducted one training course on updates the new points with administrative violation handling in the forestry sector for 40 forest rangers.* ***HB**: Organized a training: " Updates of legal documents on administrative violations handling in forestry sector" for officers from FPD, district FPDs with 32 people trained.* ***TH:** The project organized 2 fire prevention and fighting drills in early April 2023* ***NA**: Conducted a training course on initial handling of forest law violations in the forestry sector for 37 trainees from the Provincial FPD (35 men, 2 women).* ***QT:** Postponed, because of budget limitation.* ***QN:** Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget.*
3.1.4	**Conduct social behavior analysis to improve communication, raise awareness, and provide environmental education for stakeholders involved in forest protection and management**	**SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**620 people trained**				
3.1.4.3	*Train LEAs and related stakeholders on using social media communication tools*	*SL, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*125 people trained*	*20*	*SL: Cancelled* *TH: Completed* *NA: Cancelled* *QT: Cancelled* *QN: Cancelled*	*SL: Cancelled* *TH: Completed* *NA: Cancelled* *QT: Cancelled*	***TH**: The budget for this activity has been transferred to activity 3.1.4.4 and this social media training class will not be held.* ***NA:** Cancelled* ***QT**: Cancelled*

										QN: Cancelled	
3.1.4.4	*Conduct GESI-integrated SBCC/BCC, awareness raising, environmental education events*	*SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*495 people trained*	*80*	*SL: Completed HB: Completed TH: Completed NA: Postponed to FY24 QT: Completed QN: Postponed to FY24*	*SL: Ontrack HB: Ontrack TH: Ontrack NA: Postponed to FY24 QT: Ontrack QN: Postponed to FY24*	***SL**: Implemented 03 training courses to raise awareness on forest management and protection for grassroots officials in 03 communes Chieng Hac and Tu Nang, Yen Chau district; Tan Lap, Moc Chau district. There were 128 participants, including 21 women and 125 ethnic minorities.* ***HB**: Organized awareness raising events on strengthening forest law enforcement in Da Bac district with 200 trained in total, including 60 women and 197 ethnic minorities.* ***TH:** Organized 3 awareness raising knowledge for grassroots events in Thuong Xuan and Ba Thuoc districts for 125 people.* ***NA:** Postponed to FY24.* ***QT**: Completed to organize 4 events in A Bung, Ta Rut, Hai Son and Hai Chanh from 4-7/4. commune of Abung 39 participants; Ta Rut 46 participants; Hai Chanh 64 participants; Hai Son 16 participants QN: Postpone to 2024 due to limited budget*
3.1.5	**Cross-cutting - Communication: Dissemination of the Project's results**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**70 network members trained**				
3.1.5.1	*Develop and print SFM Communication Materials (E-Newsletters, Policy Brief, Photo Book, Yearly Forestry Report 2022)*	*TW*					*2 e-newsletters, 1 policy brief, 1 photobook, annual report of the forestry sector in 2022*	*50*	*TW: Ongoing*	*TW: Behind*	*TW: Focus on producing the electronic communication materials such as success stories, blog, bullet, social medial post. The printed materials will be implemented in FY24.*
3.1.5.2	*Develop and print SFM promotional materials (T-shirts, backpacks, 2023 new year calendars)*	*TW*					*Design and print shirts, backpacks, and calendars*	*50*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: 50% of promotional materials are produced, the other is postponed to FY24.*

3.1.5.3	Organize trainings for SFM Communicators Network members; Network members support to implement communication activities in provinces	TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN					70 network members trained	88	TW: Completed LC: Completed SL: Completed HB: Completed TH: Completed NA: Completed QT: Postponed to FY24 QN: Completed	TW: Ontrack LC: Ontrack SL: Ontrack HB: Ontrack TH: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack	TW: Completed. Two trainings were conducted for 70 members of the SFM Communicator Network in Da Nang. LC: Establishment of sustainable management communication network (10 members). SL: Sent three DAI staff and seven members of the provincial communication network to communication skill training at Da Nang city. HB: Organized a training on communication skills for the communicator network with 10 participants from Hoa Binh, including 4 women. TH: This activity combined with Act. Code 1.1.5.2. NA: Nghe An Province sent 07 people to attend the SFM communication skills training course in Da Nang from June 12-14, 2023 (4 men, 3 women). QT: Postponed, because of budget limitation. QN: Communication Network members involved in the training on communication skills.
3.1.5.5	Organize photo trips to collect representative images of project activities in provinces for news/articles, newsletters and other publications	TW					Photos, information, and data are collected to produce communication/outreach materials	50	TW: Not started	TW: Behind	TW: Completed.
3.1.5.7	Organize 1 Press trip for Journalists to SFM Project sites	TW					30 journalists participated in press trip at SFM Project sites	-	TW: Postponed to FY24	TW: Postponed to FY24	TW: It's delayed to FY24.
3.1.5.8	Produce a documentary film on SFM activities	TW					1 documentary (10-12 min) on Project results	20	TW: Postponed to FY24	TW: Postponed to FY24	TW: It's delayed to FY24.
3.1.5.9	Disseminate the SFM technical knowledge materials to nationwide	TW					Information about project activities are advertised	20	TW: Postponed to FY24	TW: Postponed to FY24	TW: It's postposed to FY24.
3.1.5.10	Design SFM E-Learning Tool link to MBFB's website	TW					A E-learning system developed. Project documents, photos, and videos are updated on E-Learning	20	TW: Postponed to FY24	TW: Postponed to FY24	TW: It's delayed to FY24.
3.1.5.11	Produce a set of Vietnam Forest Photos and a Vietnam Forest Video	TW					01 Photo set (200 photos) of beautiful forest landscape of Vietnam and 01 video clip (10	20	TW: Ongoing	TW: Behind	TW: It's delayed to FY24.

							min) Vietnam Forest is produced				
3.1.5.12	*Communication campaign on International Forest Day (21/3) for Youth Union*	*TW*					*01 communication campaign (500 native species plantation and Dialogue on SFM) on International Forest Day (21/3) for 100 members of Youth Union*	*100*	*TW: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack*	*TW: Completed.*
3.1.6	**Cross-cutting - Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)**	**TW, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**450 people trained, 5 GESI Action Plans are developed at 5 provinces, and implemented at 6 provinces**				
3.1.6.1	*Support VNFOREST in developing and implementing the GESI Action Plan in FM for the 2021-2025 period and organize a consultation workshop to finalize the plan*	*TW*					*Deploy GESI Action Plan activities for VNFOREST (120 people trained)*	*-*	*TW: Cancelled*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: VNFOREST was restructured and no longer exist. This year the Project supported MBFP a training course on GESI and Leadership.*
3.1.6.3	*Support provinces in developing and implementing GESI action plan in FM at the provincial level*	*SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*6 GESI Action Plans for each province is developed and deployed in 6 provinces (330 people trained)*	*17*	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Completed* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Cancelled* *QN: Cancelled*	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Cancelled* *QN: Cancelled*	*SL: Postponed to FY24 due to budget limitation.* *TH: Organized a training for 20 district and commune level officials. Total 20 people, including: Male: 14 people, Female: 6 people.* *NA: NA requested to cancel this activity.* *QT: Cancelled because of budget limitation.* *QN: The activity was cancelled because GESI has been integrated already into the annual workplan by provincial partners.*
3.1.7	**Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)**	**TW**						**-**			

3.1.7.1	*Develop the data management and reporting information system including monitoring of project intervention areas*	*TW*					*MEL data management system is developed including the project intervention areas*	*100*	*TW: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack*	*TW: Coordinated the reporting process using the monthly activity progress reporting system by province. The process has been smooth and was able to province timely information for the Project monthly meeting.* *Developed a dashboard for the consultancy progress tracking tool for quick visualization and convenient sharing of information with stakeholders.* *Completed the update of the SFM MEL information system (excel based) and officially introduced the System to Project staff through an internal MEL training. The System has been utilized widely among the Project.*
3.1.7.3	*Conduct surveys, and collect data and supporting documents for MEL indicators*	*TW*					*Baseline data and evidence documents for project indicators are collected*	*100*	*TW: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack*	*TW: Monitored the implementation progress of the organizational capacity development plans developed. Completed the annual performance review for these organizations and collected relevant evidence.* *Worked with technical teams to develop the specific data collection plans, update data collection forms and list of required evidence for indicators, and collected data and evidence as planned.* *Conducted surveys for ID11 and ID13 and completed data analysis for reporting.*
3.1.7.5	*Conduct internal data quality assessment and activity progress monitoring*	*TW*					*Short reports are sent to technical staff to improve data quality*	*100*	*TW: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack*	*TW: Conducted monthly data review and verification, and provided timely feedbacks to technical staff for data quality improvement.* *Conducted a mid-year review meeting with technical staff and CPMU/PPMUs to review achievement progress in the first two quarters, and update upcoming activity plan based on actual implementation.* *Updated the data entry tool for trainee database to be more practical, then coordinated the data entry process across 7 provinces.* *Conducted supportive supervision trips to Project sites to provide direct coaching on the reporting templates and data collection tools to ensure the data quality, and to verify reported data.*

3.1.7.6	*Update MEL plan, methodology and data collection tools*	*TW*					*MEL plan is updated and approved*	*90*	*TW: Ongoing*	*TW: Ontrack*	*TW: Updated the data collection process, indicator definitions and targets to align with the achieved progress and actual implementation.* *Added 02 new indicators on climate change into the MEL plan.* *Added definitions and proposed targets of 02 new indicators on climate change into the MEL plan.* *Updated version of the MEL plan has been completed and submitted to USAID for review and approval.*
3.1.7.7	*Provide MEL and EMMP training for project staff and partners*	*TW*					*Project staff are trained again*	*100*	*TW: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack*	*TW: Worked closely with technical staff, field staff and IQC partners to provide timely guidance and coaching on indicator-related requirements and reporting process during the implementation.* *Organized an internal MEL training for Project staff in 7 provinces to clarify the requirements related to the MEL system, indicators, and introduce several effective working tools.* *Conducted training sessions for data collectors for the ID11 and ID13 survey.*
3.1.7.8	*Develop / Update Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) and collect data and evidence for EMMP compliance*	*TW*					*EMMP is updated*	*90*	*TW: Ongoing*	*TW: Ontrack*	*TW: Completed updating the Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) for FY23 and submitted to USAID for approval.* *Provided training to new staff and partners on EMMP.* *Collected data and evidence on EMMP compliance during the activity's implementation.*
3.1.7.9	*Conduct assessments on the impact of the Project activities contributing to CO2 emissions reduction*	*TW*					*Report on the Project impact*	*-*	*TW: Cancelled*	*TW: Cancelled*	
3.1.8	**Activities that support project management**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**									

3.1.8.1	*Provide office equipment for PMUs*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Office equipment is acquired, distributed, and used.*	*30*	*TW: Postponed to FY24* *LC: Postponed to FY24* *SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Postponed to FY24* *LC: Postponed to FY24* *SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*The project provided 2 desktops and 2 printers for CPMU office for better management. The request to purchase vehicles and motorbikes for CPMU, VNFF and 7 PPMUs was approved by USAID in May 2023 but the Project has postponed the process to FY24 due to the limitation of funding.*
3.1.8.2	*Provide support for office equipment maintenance costs*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Office equipment is maintained and serviced for use*	*90*	*TW: Continued in FY24* *LC: Continued in FY24* *SL: Continued in FY24* *HB: Continued in FY24* *TH: Continued in FY24* *NA: Continued in FY24* *QT: Continued in FY24*	*TW: Ontrack* *LC: Ontrack* *SL: Ontrack* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*The equipment which is used by SFM and PPMUs has been tracked in the inventory system. The project has conducted an inventory check quarterly to ensure the equipment is safe and in use. Maintenance service has been provided for some equipment after checking the status.*

									QN: Continued in FY24		
3.1.8.4	*Provide partial support for PMUs' office costs for effective project management*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Several office operating costs are covered to ensure the office is operating well*	*90*	*TW, QT: Continued in FY24 LC, SL, TH, QN: Continued in FY24 HB: Continued in FY24 NA: Continued in FY24*	*TW: Ontrack LC: Ontrack SL: Ontrack HB: Ontrack TH: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack*	*The SFM teams in field share space with PPMU (except for Quang Tri), thus the project has shared some running costs with PPMU such as electricity, water, internet and stationery, etc. This is to ensure the smooth running of the project in the field.*
3.1.8.3	*Update Project Implementation Manual (PIM)*	*TW*					*PIM is updated and used*	*80*	*TW: Continued in FY24*	*TW: Ontrack*	*TW: The Project Implementation Manual (PIM) has been revised and updated on April 23. Now it is with DARD for final review and approval.*
3.1.8.5	*Meetings and workshops related to project management (meetings to deploy activities, planning meetings, technical meetings, capacity building, etc.)*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Events are agreed upon and organized as planned*	*100*	*TW: Completed LC: Completed SL: Completed HB: Completed TH: Completed NA: Completed QT: Completed QN: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack LC: Ontrack SL: Ontrack HB: Ontrack TH: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack*	*The project organized several meetings both at the central level and provincial level. They were work planning meetings in December to announce the approved FY23's WP and budget, the preliminary meeting in May to review the result of 9 months of implementation and directions for last 3 months in FY23 and a hybrid meeting in August to agree on FY24's WP.*
3.1.9	**Cross-cutting - GIS**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**One tool is developed, 23 people are trained**				

3.1.9.1	*Construct a tool with innovation technologies including satellite imagery and remote sensing for analyzing forest cover change*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Forest cover change monitoring tool and reporting system are developed at the central level for VNFOREST*	*22*	*TW: Cancelled* *LC: Cancelled* *SL: Cancelled* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Cancelled* *NA: Cancelled* *QT: Discontinued* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Cancelled* *LC: Cancelled* *SL: Cancelled* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Cancelled* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: The project intended to make a replication of the SERVIR system in Vietnam with the USAID-funded SERVIR-SEA project and reached an agreement in principle. SERVIR-SEA requested for USAID approval. Due to the limited funding, this activity was cancelled.* *HB: Discussed the replication of the SERVIR system in Vietnam with the USAID-funded SERVIR-SEA project and reached an agreement in principle. Preparing for USAID approval and additional agreement with ADPC to process the next steps.* *TH: Discussed and agreed with the USAID regional project SERVIR-SEA on system implementation of the SERVIR-SEA project in Vietnam. Waiting for USAID's approval and preparing to implement the next steps with ADPC.* *QT: Finalize an agreement between DAI and ADPC (Implementer of SERVIR-SEA). Will be Implemented the system in province.* *NA, QN: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget.*
3.2	**Support Improved Enforcement Practices in SFM Landscapes**	**TW, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**									
3.2.1	**Conduct assessment of Customary laws and Support the development of national and local policies and practice**	**TW, SL, HB, NA, QT, QN**					**2 policies are proposed at the central level and 4 policies are proposed at the provincial level**				
3.2.1.1	*Conduct assessment of Customary laws in Son La, Quang Nam and propose an improved forest governance model with participation of ethnic communities*	*TW*					*1 report is completed*	*95*	*TW: Ongoing*	*TW: Behind*	***TW:*** *Results of field survey in Son La and Quang Nam were combined with the Customary Law report developed in FY22 to provide inputs to: 1) the thematic report on "Cultural and social values of forest; applying customary laws in forest management", which in turn provides inputs to 2) the assessment of Directive 13-CT/TW and the development of the Conclusion 61-LK/TW on "strengthening the Party's leadership in forest*

											management, protection and development" (issued on August 17, 2023). *The thematic report "Cultural and social values of forest; applying customary laws in forest management" is, however, being refined and finalized. Expected completion: November 2024.*
3.2.1.3	*Identify and support development of other needed policies and practices*	*TW, SL, HB, NA, QT, QN*					*5 policies are suggested, of which 1 is a central-level policy (Decree 156) and 4 are provincial policies*	*140*	*TW: Completed* *SL: Completed* *HB: Completed* *NA: Completed* *QT: Cancelled* *QN: Continued in FY24*	*TW: Ontrack* *SL: Ontrack* *HB: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Cancelled* *QN: Ontrack*	***Completed: 04 national policies, 03 provincial policy. Completed but delayed: 01 provincial policy.*** ***TW:*** *The Project completed its support to 04 national policies in FY23: 1) the revised Decree 156 (submitted to the Deputy Prime Minister on December 28, 2022); 2) Conclusion 61-KL/TW (issued by the Secretariat of the Party's Central Committee on August 17, 2023); and 3) Circular 13/2018/TT-BNNPTNT (revised into Circular 25/2022/TT-BNNPTNT: Provisions on planting replacement forests when converting forests to other using purposes). These documents are highly importance to the development of the forestry sector; and 4) Circular 27/2018/TT-BNNPTNT (revised into Circular 26/2022/TT-BNNPTNT on "management and traceability of forest products".* ***SL:*** *With the Project's support, Son La PPC issued the "Exemplary project on forest management, protection and development in selected hydropower basins in Son La province". (Decision 1518/QĐ-UBND dated August 15, 2023).* ***HB:*** *Hoa Binh DARD, on 11 April 2023, issued Decision 161/QĐ-SNN and promulgated the Technical Guideline for planting 7 popular species of tree in the production forest of Hoa Binh province. It is expected that the Guideline will help improve the quality of plantation forest in Hoa Binh*

											province, especially of the plantation of long-term species, thus increase the forest's capacity of CO2 sequestration and storage and enhance the opportunities of forest owners in enjoying PFES. ***NA:*** *Completed the development of 01 Resolution to support specialized forest protection forces for state forest owners (Resolution 02/2023/NQ-HDND dated July 7, 2023 of Nghe An Provincial People's Council).* ***QT:*** *The activity is cancelled for no new instruction from the Provincial People's Committee of Quang Tri province.* ***QN****: Completed in Q1 FY24: FPD issued Decision 495/QĐ-UBND dated October 3, 2023 on recognizing he Melaleuca Cajeput trees as the superior trees in Quang Nam.*
3.2.1.4	*Support the revision of Circular 27/2018/BNN-PTNT*	*TW*					*1 Circular is amended and issued*	*100*	*TW: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack*	*TW: Circular 27/2018/TT-BNNPTNT was revised into Circular 26/2022/TT-BNNPTNT on "management and traceability of forest products" on December 30, 2022.*
3.2.1.5	*Support the assessment of the Forestry Law (period 2019-2022); review selected bylaw documents and monitor the implementation of these legal documents*	*TW*					*Report that assesses, proposes adjustments, amends, and supplements the Law [on Forestry] and related sub-laws*	*60*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*The review of the Forestry Law was postponed to FY24 to match with the orientation presented in Conclusion 61-KL/TW of the Secretariat of the Party's Central Committee. In addition, when the revised Land Law is passed by the National Assembly, seven Laws, including the Forestry Law will be revised to be harmonized with each other. The Project will initiate its support then.*
3.2.1.6	*Support the review of legal documents that regulate the tasks and authorities of forest protection forrces*	*TW*					*Report on policy review, propose a plan to make adjustments*	*15*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*At the end of FY23, VNFOREST (now FPD) decided to postpone the revision of Decree 01/2019/NĐ-CP (on forest protection forces) to 2024. The Project will start its support when the Government permits MARD and FPD to revise this Decree.*

3.2.1.7	*Organize technical meetings for policy discussion to support the policy development/revision of VNFOREST*	*TW*					*4 technical workshops on forestry policies; 140 delegates (35 delegates per session)*	*100*	*TW: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack*	*TW: The Project organized from 1 to 3 technical meetings and workshops to discuss each forestry policy it supported in FY23. Representatives of policy making bodies, research institutes, (I)NGOs, forestry support projects, experts from Hanoi and many provinces attended the technical meetings and comments to the policies supported by the Projects (such as Directive 13, Conclusion 61, Decree 156, Circulars 13, 27, 28).*
3.2.1.8	*Support the review and revision of Circular 28/2018/TT-BNNPTNT*	*TW*					*1 draft circular is amended and issued*	*70*	*TW: Ongoing*	*TW: Ontrack*	*TW: In general, national policies (e.g., Decrees, Circulars) are approved in December annually. Therefore, support of the Project to national policies stretches from one FY to another. The draft revised Circular 28 was published for public comments in August 2023. Final version is expected to be approved in December 2023.*
3.2.2	**Improve inter-agency coordination among LEAs**	**SL, HB, TH, NA, QT**					**2 protocols are updated, developed, and issued (SL, QT)**				
3.2.2.1	*Develop inter-agency coordination protocols for 7 provinces*	*SL, HB, TH, NA, QT*					*2 protocols are updated, developed, and issued (SL, QT)*	*100*	*SL: Completed* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Ongoing* *QT: Completed*	*SL: Ontrack* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack*	***SL**: Supported to develop and sign two interagency coordination protocols between the FPD of Son La province and four other bordering provinces (Hoa Binh, Thanh Hoa, Phu Tho, Yen Bai).* ***HB**: 1. Hoa Binh FPD issued Decision 41/QĐ-KL and promulgated a "Cooperation Protocol for forest protection, forest fire prevention and control, and management of forest products" applied for the Mobile and Forest Fire Prevention and Control Team, district FPDs and Management Boards of Nature Reserves in Hoa Binh province.* *2. Inter-agency coordination protocol for wood processing and exporting enterprises classification in Hoa Binh were co-signed by nine concerned provincial departments and agencies of Hoa Binh in October 2022.* ***NA**: District People's Committee of Con Cuong district (Nghe An province) issued Interagency*

											coordination for Con Cuong district, Nghe An province (Decision 2513/QĐ-UBND) ***QT**: The inter-agency coordination protocol between Quang Binh and Quang Tri FPDs developed and signed in September 2023.*
3.3	**Build Capacity of the Environmental Judicial System to Prosecute Environmental crimes**	**TW, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**									
3.3.1	**Provide training for prosecutors and enforcement officers**	**SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**150 people trained**				
3.3.1.2	*Support capacity building for prosecutors and enforcement officers of judicial agencies (courts, procuracy, police ...)*	*SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*150 people trained*	*25*	*SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN: Postponed to FY24*	*SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN: Postponed to FY24*	*SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN: Postponed to FY24, due to budget availability.*
THP4	**Improve Production Forest Management Practices Activities**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**						**-**			
4.1	**Promote sustainable timber production by small-scale forest owners**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**						**-**			
4.1.4	**Implement capacity building for nursery gardens**	**LC, SL, HB, TH,**					**Increased capacity for 3 nursery gardens; 120 people trained; 23,600 ha**	**-**			

		NA, QT, QN					**of planted forests using good seeds**				
4.1.4.1	*Conduct training on nursery management for managers and key staffs on high-quality seedlings, cutting, and tissue culture production*	*SL, HB, NA, QT, QN*					*90 people (31 women)*	*62*	*SL: Completed* *HB: Completed* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Continued in FY24* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*SL: Ontrack* *HB: Ontrack* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*SL: Trained for 12 participants on forest tree seed management, which from districts FPDs, nursery owners and nursery managers, including 3 women and 4 ethnic minorities,* *HB: Organized a training on nursery management for FPD, district FPD staff and nursery owners. As a result, 19 people trained, including 5 women and 8 ethnic minorities.* *QT: Organized a training course on seed management/production at the nursery for 14 officers/workers of Sepon Company* *QN: Postpone to 2024 due to limited budget*
4.1.4.2	*Provide supplies and materials to selected nurseries for improving quality and productivity of the nurseries*	*LC, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Improved capacity of 42 nursery gardens (36 sprinkler irrigation systems, 6 generators; 2,000 cinnamon seeds; 260 kg Australian Acacia seeds; 138,000 original germplasm of Acacia hybrid; 600,000 Bottled tissue culture Acacia hybrid); 20,600 ha of newly planted forests using improved varieties*	*73*	*LC: Completed* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Completed* *NA: Continued in FY24* *QT: Continued in FY24* *QN: Continued in FY24*	*LC: Ontrack* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Behind* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*LC: Delivered 2,000kg of cinnamon seeds to 2 cooperatives and 2 nurseries in Bac Ha and Van Ban.* *HB: # Provided 192 kg of acacia seed to 15 nurseries.* *# Did not identify forest areas planted by acacia seedlings produced from the supported acacia seed because the acacia was provided to nurseries behind the schedule.* *# The Project has not provided watering equipment to nurseries due to budget adjustment of USAID.* *TH: - Providing 60kg of Acacia mangium seeds to 05 selected nurseries.* *- Provide 50,000 bottled tissue culture plantlets to 01 selected nursery* *- Providing 5,000 original germplasm Acacia hybrid for cuttings to 01 selected nursery."* *NA: Provided 31,100 Acacia hybrid seedlings to 7 nurseries to build leading tree gardens to provide varieties for afforestation production.* *QT: Provided 90,000 high quality original seedlings and 100,000 tissue seedlings to 7 nurseries. Continued support in 2024* *QN: Completed handover of 04 generators, 40,000 Bottled tissue culture plantlets to produce original*

											germplasm and 10,000 original tissue seedlings to nurseries. According to the 2023 plan, we will continue to hand over 30,000 original tissue seedlings to the nursery in FY24.
4.1.4.3	Provide technical training on high quality planting materials	SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN					30 people trained (30% women)	33	SL: Completed HB: Cancelled TH: Completed NA: Postponed to FY24 QT: Not started QN: Completed	SL: Ontrack HB: Cancelled TH: Ontrack NA: Postponed to FY24 QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack	SL: Training for 12 participants on producing forestry seed, which from districts FPDs, nursery owners and nursery managers, including 3 women and 4 ethnic minorities, HB: Nurseries have no need on acacia hybrid tissue cultures production. TH: Organized 08 selected nurseries to visit and study the Acacia seed production model at the statue and the Acacia hybrid tissue production process in Ba Vi - Hanoi and Hoa Binh. NA: postponed to 2024 QT: Postpone to April 2024 QN: Organized a study tour for 4 nurseries and PPMU, Quang Nam FPD to learn experience in seedling production and nursery management in Dong Nai from April 24-26 with 6 participants
4.1.4.5	Support and develop technical guide for the selection of	LC					15 households will grow cinnamon; 20 ha of selected	100	LC: Completed	LC: Ontrack	LC: Support in selection and technical guidance on care and thinning; prepare documents and submit

	Cinnamon mother trees area for seed production based on available good quality Cinnamon forest						*varieties of cinnamon; establish 3,000 ha forests from selected seed sources*				*them for appraisal; There has been a decision to recognize seed sources for 25 hectares*
4.1.5	**Improve practices on sustainable forest management (SFM)**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**55 household groups are established/consolidated; 1,955 people trained; 4,700 beneficiaries; 40,910 ha forest; mobilize $4,050,000 USD**	**-**			
4.1.5.1	*Establish/reinforce plantation household groups*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*55 plantation household groups are established/consolidated (1,600 participants)*	*99*	*LC: Continued in FY24* *SL: Completed* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Completed* *QT: Completed* *QN: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack* *SL: Ontrack* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*LC: Established 6 groups of organic cinnamon, trained silvicultural techniques for 6 groups, guided preliminary processing techniques on cinnamon product for 2 groups* *SL: Completed The plan to protect, harvesting and develop the bamboo material area associated with the product value chain in Thuan Chau district (including development Map and Appendices), organized one Consultation workshop to the Develop the Plan, the Plan were concurred by Thuan Chau DPC. Total bamboo forest in Plan are 2,515 ha, including Protection forest and Production forest in 11 communes* *HB: Established 10 farmers' groups in Tan Lac district with 712 members, including 435 women and 704 ethnic minorities.* *TH: Coordinated with Biomass Fuel Nghi Son company to establish 13 forest certification groups in Nhu Thanh district* *NA: 9,461 (target 300) people have been trained to participate in classes to establish and strengthen 47 FSC forest planting households groups in Anh Son, Tan Ky, Do Luong (BMFV) and in Thanh Chuong (BVN).* *QT: The Forest Certification Association has supported the establishment of 1 new branch and consolidated 4 certified afforestation branches* *QN: 2 partners (Hiep Thuan and Thien Hoang) have established 2 new forest certification groups representing 12 farmers' groups of forest owners*

										collaborating to implement FSC forest certification (1.096 participants)
4.1.5.2	*Trainings on groups management for groups' leaders (and integrate with GESI training)*	*HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*135 people trained (50 women)*	*80*	*HB: Not started* *TH: Completed* *NA: Completed* *QT: Completed* *QN: Completed*	*HB: Behind* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*HB: Due to BVN Company has not established farmers' groups as planned.* *TH: Conducted training on management, monitoring and evaluation for group leaders and deputy group leaders of 13 forest certification groups in Nhu Thanh district.* *NA: Implemented 3 CCR group management training courses for group leaders/deputies established in Thanh Chuong, Anh Son, Do Luong and Tan Ky districts for 103 (target 30) people (97 men, 6 women)* *QT: The Forest Certification Association met/trained 5 branches with 28 participants* *QN: The project supported Hiep Thuan Cooperative and Thien Hoang Company to provide training on group management for heads of 12 household groups with 48 participants.*

4.1.5.4	*Organize trainings on sustainable plantation management/certification for plantation owners (and integrate with GESI training)*	*SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*1,450 people trained (480 women)*	*83*	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Completed* *QT: Completed* *QN: Completed*	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*SL: Postponed to 2024, waiting for donor to approve the project budget.* *HB: # Organized a training on silviculture techniques for heads of the certification groups in Lac Son district. As a result, 132 people trained with 16 women.* *# Organized a training on sylviculture techniques for members of farmers' groups in Tan Lac district with 712 people trained, including 435 women and 704 ethnic minorities.* *TH: Organized 28 training classes on sustainable forest management, Forest Certification with 1,620 people trained.* *NA: 9,461 people have been trained to participate in classes to establish and strengthen 47 FSC forest planting households groups in Anh Son, Tan Ky, Do Luong (BMFV) and in Thanh Chuong (BVN).* *QT: The CCR Association has trained 178 participants on sustainable forest management. Organized sustainable management training for 100 participants of household groups affiliated with QT Paper Materials Company* *QN: Conducted training on sustainable forest management for... households affiliated with Thien Hoang Company and Hiep Thuan Cooperative (241 participants)*

4.1.5.5	*Organize trainings on SFM planning and implementation for forest owners (organization and integrate with GESI training)*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*220 people trained (71 women)*	*36*	*LC: Cancelled SL: Postponed to FY24 HB: Completed TH: Completed NA: Completed QT: Cancelled QN: Cancelled*	*LC: Cancelled SL: Postponed to FY24 HB: Ontrack TH: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Cancelled QN: Cancelled*	*SL: Postponed to 2024, waiting for donor to approve the project budget. HB: Organized a training on forest change monitoring techniques for organizational forest owners (BVN Hoa Binh and Hoa Binh Forestry Company and Song Da PFMB) by QGIS with 10 people trained, including 1 woman and 6 ethnic minorities. TH: Training on silvicultural techniques and sustainable forest management for 338 contracted plantation households to plant forests at 3 PFMBs Lang Chanh, Thuong Xuan, Thach Thanh. Training on using QGIS and QFIELD for 22 officers from 4 PFMBs Nhu Thanh, Lang Chanh, Thach Thanh, Thuong Xuan. Deploying a forest management and monitoring system using satellite images and mobile phones for all technical and management ministries under the 2 Protection Management Boards Nhu Thanh and Lang Chanh NA: Conducted 4 training classes on sustainable forest management for 206 people (156 men, 50 women) from 2 PFMBs of Thanh Chuong and Tan Ky districts to implement sustainable forest management plans*
4.1.5.6	*Demonstrate sustainable plantation management models for large dimension timber plantation (new plantings or transformation to long term plantations)*	*HB, NA, QT, QN*					*60 ha forests are newly planted or converted*	*88*	*HB: Completed NA: Completed QT: Completed QN: Completed*	*HB: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack*	*HB: # Set up 2 models of transformation to long term plantations (Acacia mangium) with 13ha of forest in total. # Handed over seedlings to a forest owner to set up a model of new plantation (tissue culture Acacia hybrid plantlets) with 4ha of plantation. NA: The total of forest area transformed for large timber forest plantation is 13.23 hectares and 55.31 hectares of forest are tended for sustainable forest management. QT: 4 hectares of large timber conversion forest model has been accepted. QN: 12,5 hectares of large timber conversion forest model has been accepted.*

4.1.5.7	*Provide support of high quality planting materials to groups members*	*LC, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*350 ha forests are newly planted, 700 beneficiaries*	*100*	*LC: Completed* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Completed* *QT: Completed* *QN: Completed*	*LC: Ontrack* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*LC: Provided 15,000 high quality cinnamon seedlings to 6 households in Van Ban* *HB: Provided 1,100,594 Acacia mangium seedlings and Acacia hybrid tissue culture plantlets to 365 households with 500.27 ha of forest planted.* *TH: Provided Australian Acacia mangium seedlings to 43 plantation households in Ngoc Lac district, with 75 hectares,* *NA: Delivered 155,000 Acacia hybrid tissue culture plantlets to 20 households to build a large timber plantation model, equivalent to 75 hectares of plantation forest (25 hectares more than planned).* *QT: Supported high quality seedlings for 20 households that are members and households affiliated with Keo Son Cooperative to plant 75 hectares of new land.* *QN: Supported high quality seedlings for 23 households that are members and households affiliated with Hiep Thuan Cooperative and Thien Hoang forestry company to plant 75 hectare.*
4.1.5.9	*Produce a video clip on SFM/FSC certification*	*HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Produce and release 5 videos for 5 provinces*	*56*	*HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Completed* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Cancelled* *QN: Continued in FY24*	*HB: Cancelled* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Cancelled* *QN: Ontrack*	*TH: Produced 01 video on sustainable forest management/FSC certification for Thanh Hoa province* *NA: postponed* *QN: Completed script and scenes. Expected completion in October 2023*

4.1.5.10	*Organize study tours for representatives of plantation owners to visit the successful models/sites of large timber /other trees plantation*	*SL, HB, NA, QT, QN*					*150 participants in the study tour*	*80*	*SL: Completed* *HB: Completed* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Completed* *QN: Completed*	*SL: Ontrack* *HB: Ontrack* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*SL: Organized a study tour to learn about Bamboo sustainable forest management for 33 participants from commune staff and Bamboo forest owners, including 1 women and 33 ethnic minorities,* *HB: Organized a study tour to learn about sustainable forest management for 34 participants from district FPDs, commune staff and forest owners, including 3 women and 33 ethnic minorities,* *NA: postponed* *QT: Organized a study tour for provincial/district management units, representatives of forest owners, forestry cooperatives, nurseries and wood processing companies to visit nurseries and export wood processing companies. in Binh Dinh and Quang Nam from March 26-31 with 27 participants* *QN: Organized a study tour for provincial/district management units, representatives of forest owners, forestry cooperatives, nurseries and wood processing companies to learn experience in planting large timber forests and FSC in Quang Tri from March 01-02 with 22 participants*
4.1.5.12	*Support piloting plantation insurance for forest owners*	*TH, QN*					*Research and test plantation insurance model*	*80*	*TH: Completed* *QN: Continued in FY24*	*TH: Ontrack* *QN: Ontrack*	*TH: Forest plantation insurance regulations have been developed and submitted to the SFM Office for approval* *QN: The insurance model has been completed, awaiting approval from USAID to sign an insurance contract with Bao Minh Insurance company (with technical support from Hillridge)*

4.1.5.13	*Develop/update SFM plan*	*SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Develop/update SFM plans for 2 PFMBs and 46 households groups/ 40,000 ha, 3,000 people benefitted*	*87*	*SL: Completed* *HB: Completed* *TH: Completed* *NA: Completed* *QT: Continued in FY24* *QN: Completed*	*SL: Ontrack* *HB: Behind* *TH: Ontrack* *NA: Ontrack* *QT: Behind* *QN: Ontrack*	*SL: Completed The plan to protect, harvesting and develop the bamboo material area associated with the product value chain in Thuan Chau district (including development Map and Appendices), organized one Consultation workshop to the Develop the Plan, the Plan were concurred by Thuan Chau DPC. Total bamboo forest in Plan is 2,515 ha, including Protection Forest and Production forest in 11 communes* *HB: # Organized a training on developing forest status maps for BVN Company with 5 participants, including 1 woman and 2 ethnic minorities.* *# Training/coaching on assessment of thematic topics for SFM planning for BVN Company with 8 participants, including 1 woman and 3 ethnic minorities.* *TH: - Supported the assessment of thematic topics for SFM planning for the forest certification group in Nhu Thanh district;* *- Guided and support BMFN company staffs to make a FSC Maps of the forest certification group in Nhu Thanh and Nhu Xuan* *NA: Supported the development and implementation of a sustainable forest management plan for two PFMBs, Tan Ky and Thanh Chuong, with an area of 25,026 hectares under sustainable forest management.* *QT: CCR Association has supported 85 households with 536.08 hectares to build sustainable management plans and has evaluated participation in FSC certification.* *QN: Completed the development of sustainable forest management plans for 2 forest certification groups, Hiep Thuan and Thien Hoang (3.518 ha planted forest and 1,200 ha natural forest) with 12 groups of forest owners;*

4.1.5.14	*Provide support forest owners in plantation tending*	*HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*500 ha of planted forests are taken care of; 1,000 beneficiaries*	*37*	*HB: Cancelled TH: Completed NA: Completed QT: Continued in FY24 QN: Cancelled*	*HB: Cancelled TH: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Cancelled*	*HB: Cancelled due to its content included in act code 4.1.5.4 TH: - Supported 48 forest households to tending 91.3 hectares of planted forests under 2 years old by pruning branches and trunks. - Supported the transition of 49.17 hectares of small-timber plantation to big-timber plantation by thinning method for 15 forest planting households. NA: Completed taking care of 55.31 hectares of forest in Anh Son district, Thanh Chuong QT: Postpone to April 2024 QN: Canceled activities due to budget cuts. Not implemented in 2024.*
4.1.5.15	*Develop management software/application for production and use of planting material/plantation with improved management practice*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Develop and test apps to manage production and use of forestry/plantation tree varieties*	*25*	*LC: Postponed to FY24 SL: Postponed to FY24 HB: Postponed to FY24 TH: Postponed to FY24 NA: Postponed to FY24 QT: Postponed to FY24 QN: Continued in FY24*	*LC: Postponed to FY24 SL: Postponed to FY24 HB: Postponed to FY24 TH: Postponed to FY24 NA: Postponed to FY24 QT: Postponed to FY24 QN: Behind*	*LC: Develop forestry seed management system for production and use of planting material/plantation with improved management practice SL: Postponed to 2024, waiting for donor to approve the project budget. TH: Postponed to FY24 NA: The total forest area supported with pruning is 55.31 hectares QT: Develop forestry seed management system for production and use of planting material/plantation with improved management practice and will continue inn FY24 QN: Develop forestry seed management system for production and use of planting material/plantation with improved management practice and will continue inn FY24*
4.2	**Support and promote increased demand from processing factories for certified timber**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT**						**-**			
4.2.2	**Develop promotion and information material about certification and CoC certification**	**TW, LC, SL, HB,**					**Print and distribute 11,500 brochures. Develop 1 textbook on**	**-**			**NA: The content has been built and will be used online**

		TH, NA, QT					**SFM/CoC, print 300 books**				
4.2.2.1	*Develop certification promotional brochure*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT*					*Print and distribute 11,500 brochures to forest owners and wood processing enterprises*	*86*	*TW: Completed LC: Completed SL: Continued in FY24 HB: Completed TH: Completed NA: Ongoing QT: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack LC: Ontrack SL: Ontrack HB: Ontrack TH: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack*	*TW: done LC: done HB: done TH: done QT: done SL; done*
4.2.2.2	*Developing teaching curriculum/textbook on sustainable forest management and CoC for forestry training universities in the country*	*TW*					*Develop a textbook on SFM/CoC, print 300 books*	*-*	*TW: Continued in FY24*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Selected STTA to evaluate 10 case studies for developing SFM and FMC, including an Inception report, 10 case studies about SFM and FMC, and an outline textbook.*
4.3	**Build market linkages between forest owners and wood processing enterprises**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**						**-**			
4.3.2	**Build market linkages between forest owners and wood processing enterprises**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**60 participants in the market connection forum; 147 attendees at the SFM Conference**	**-**			

4.3.2.1	*Organize the 1st "SFM and FSC Dialogue/Forum" between representatives of plantation owners, Wood processing companies, FDI wood companies, VIFOREST, VNFOREST and local authorities*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Wood processing businesses and forest owners are connected. (60 participants)*	*97*	*TW: Completed LC: Completed SL: Completed HB: Completed TH: Completed NA: Completed QT: Completed QN: Completed*	*TW: Completed LC: Ontrack SL: Ontrack HB: Ontrack TH: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack*	*TW: Organized the 1st "SFM and FSC Forum" between representatives of plantation owners, Wood processing companies, FDI wood companies, VIFOREST, VNFOREST and local authorities in VNUF* *LC: LC participants attended the Forum organized at University of Forestry; 1 Wood Processing Company, 1 PPMU member, 2 DAI LC staff* *SL: Sent one VFBC project representative to participate in the SFM forum at Vietnam forestry university.* *HB: Organized the 1st "SFM and FSC Dialogue/Forum" between representatives of plantation owners, wood processing companies, FDI wood companies, VIFOREST, VNFOREST and local authorities. 6 participants from Hoa Binh, they are forest owners, wood processing companies, FPD.* *TH: Invited relevant parties in Thanh Hoa province to attend a workshop on sustainable forest development in Hanoi (Activity carried out by SFM Hanoi)* *NA: Nghe An Province sent 06 people to attend the Forum in Hanoi in December 2022 (4 men; 2 women)* *QT: Seven participants attended the forum organized on Dec 8, 2022 at VNUF (one female)* *QN: Five participants attended the forum organized on Dec 8, 2022 at VNUF (one female)*
4.3.2.2	*Advise the PPC to organize an investment promotion conference in the field of forestry (forest planting and processing for export) to invite businesses and connect domestic and foreign investments.*	*SL, QT*					*Contract/cooperation agreement/MOU is signed between forest owners and bamboo/wood processing enterprises*	*20*	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Postponed to FY24*	*SL: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Postponed to FY24*	*SL: Postponed to 2024, waiting for donor to approve the project budget.* *QT: Postpone to 4/2024*
4.3.2.3	*Organize the first conference on deployment/implementation of SFM and forest certification*	*TH, QN*					*Organize conference/workshop on SFM/forest certification; increased understanding on SFM/forest certification for*	*55*	*TH: Completed* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*TH: Ontrack* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*TH: - The project organized a workshop on SFM and CoC in Thanh Hoa province with 60 people participated.* *QN: Postponed to 2024 due to limited budget*

	between forest owners, wood processors and local authorities						*related stakeholders (90 participants)*				
4.3.2.4	*Establish provincial Timber and Forest Product Association*	*QT*					*Timber and Forest Product Association is established*	*25*	*QT: Discontinued*	*QT: Cancelled*	*QT: Canceled activities because the Provincial People's Committee has not yet agreed on the establishment of the Wood Association*
4.3.2.5	*Organize provincial workshop to share experiences in implementing and maintaining forest certification*	*NA*					*Forest owners/household groups have better understanding on how to implement and maintain forest certification; 50 participants*	*-*	*NA: Postponed to FY24*	*NA: Postponed to FY24*	*NA: postponed*
4.3.2.6	*Organize international study tour to exchange experience in Acacia plantation management and production of high quality planting material*	*TW, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*7 participants*	*13*	*TW: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Developed SOW to select STTA for organizing international study tour to exchange experience in Acacia plantation management and production of high-quality planting material* *HB: postponed to FY24* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: postponed to FY24* *QT: Postpone to 2024*
THP5	**Mobilize Domestic Resources for Forest Management and Protection SFM Pre-Implementation Activities**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**									
5.1	**Pilot and Roll out C-PFES at Provincial and National Levels**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**									

5.1.1	**Assess the status of the PFES, CPFES payment mechanism development, update the status of domestic carbon market related activities related to CPFES and consider amending and updating the proposal on the draft pilot the submitted C-PFES roadmap based on the Government's roadmap accordingly and increase feasibility to benefit both payer and payee if necessary to support future project**	**TW**					**The amended Decree 156 incorporating CPFES is submitted to GVN**	**-**			
5.1.1.1	*Evaluate current situation of CPFES, PFES mechanism development, update activities related to domestic carbon trading related to CPFES, review, revise, update pilot CPFES decision submitted to GVN so that it is suitable and feasible for both payers and receivers if necessary*	*TW*					*1 draft decree is developed*	*100*	*TW: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack*	*TW: Draft revised version of Decree 156 submitted to Government Office.*
5.1.2	**Evaluate potentiality for carbon payments**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**Feasibility research report and documents supporting the amendment of Decree 156**	**-**			

5.1.2.1	*Carry out CPFES feasibility study (potential buyers, potential payers, willingness to pay)*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Decree 156 will integrate CPFES for carbon payments. 1 technical report on the potential of national carbon transfer transactions, which will be submitted with Decree 156 documents. 7 reports from 7 provinces on the potential of carbon transfer transactions.*	*13*	*TW: Completed LC: Postponed to FY24 SL: Postponed to FY24 HB: Postponed to FY24 TH: Postponed to FY24 NA: Postponed to FY24 QT: Postponed to FY24 QN: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Ontrack LC: Postponed to FY24 SL: Postponed to FY24 HB: Postponed to FY24 TH: Postponed to FY24 NA: Postponed to FY24 QT: Postponed to FY24 QN: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: The project intended to make a replication of the SERVIR system in Vietnam with the USAID-funded SERVIR-SEA project and reached an agreement in principle. SERVIR-SEA requested for USAID approval. Due to the limited fund, this activity was cancelled. HB: Discussed with some forestry experts on how to have a comprehensive assessment of carbon potential but cost effective for provinces so that they can apply to update when they need after the Project finishes. TH: Discussed with a number of forestry experts how to assess carbon potential in a cost-effective manner so that the province can apply updates as needed after the project ends. Developed and completed technical requirements for the assessment. assessment activities will be taken place after April 2024 LC, SL, NA, QT, QN: postponed to 2024 due to limited budget.*
5.1.2.2	*Carry out feasible study on domestic MRV system*	*TW*					*Technical report on the potential of national carbon transfer transactions and the potential of building domestic MRVs for the revision of Decree 156*	*100*	*TW: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack*	*TW: Activity is integrated into report of Activity 5.1.2.1.*
5.1.3	**Conduct willing-to-pay assessment and solutions to motivate companies to pay to reduce carbon emissions**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**Central level: Participating companies will contribute to the draft of Decree 156. Provincial level: Companies participating in the implementation of Decree 156**				
5.1.3.1	*Meetings with potential companies*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Central level: Participating companies will contribute to the draft of Decree 156. Provincial level: Companies*	*-*	*TW: Cancelled LC: Cancelled SL: Cancelled HB: Cancelled TH:*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN: Cancelled*	*HB: Due to VNFOREST decided not to consult with potential companies on drafting the Decree 156. NA: This activity has been cancelled. QT: Cancelled because VNFOREST decided not consult companies for Decree 156.*

							participating in the implementation of Decree 156		*Discontinued* *NA: Cancelled* *QT: Cancelled* *QN: Cancelled*		
5.1.4	**Set up and functioning of a C-PFES informal network of relevant stakeholders including governmental bodies, scientists, emitters, international organizations. The network will be maintained during the development and implementation of carbon payment mechanism.**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**Increased awareness for members on CPFES and domestic carbon trading mechanism.**				
5.1.4.1	*Set up C-PFES informal network including relevant stakeholders of CPFES and domestic carbon trading.*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Provinces and stakeholders will share their experiences in implementing CPFES*	*33*	*TW: Continued in FY24* *LC: Postponed to FY24* *SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Continued in FY24*	*TW: Postponed to FY24* *LC: Ontrack* *SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Initial discussion were held with VNFOREST, VNFF. However, the activity is postponed to FY24.* *HB: Met with DOSTIC and VNFF, Vice general director of VNFOREST about establishment of forest carbon network however DOSTIC and VNFF suggested that the network should be official not just in the scope of the project. However, to establish the official network it will take longer time. VNFF hesitated to have unofficial network and prefer to wait for DOF.* *TH: Having a meeting with Department of International Cooperation and the General Deputy Director of VNFF on establishing a CPFES network, however, both wanted to establish an official network instead of a network with a project model. To establish an official network, it will take more time. VNFF is hesitant about establishing an informal network and wait for the opinion of the Director of Forestry.* *Continue working with VNFF to persuade so that even without establishing a formal network, there will be several events to share knowledge and*

										information for carbon market activities where carbon can be implemented. *LC, SL, QN: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget and delayed approval of Decree 156.* *NA, QT: postponed to FY24.*
5.1.5	**Develop guidelines, plans and related policy supporting for CPFES development**	**TW**					**Specific instructions for CPFES implementation are developed**	**-**		
5.1.5.2	*Develop guidelines, mechanism for forest producers to sell carbon credits (integrate GESI)*	*TW*					*1 central level guidance on the process of registering and selling domestic carbon credits to forest owners*	*-*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Activity is postponed to FY24 because of delayed approval of Decree 156.*
5.1.5.3	*Develop guidelines on measuring, reporting, verification of CO2 carbon credits (integrate GESI)*	*TW*					*1 national level guidance on domestic MRV and MRV systems for international carbon transfers*	*-*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Activity is postponed to FY24 because of delayed approval of Decree 156.*
5.1.5.4	*Develop emission reduction registry system*	*TW*					*1 online registration system for emission reduction result of forestry sector, and forest carbon credit registry system*	*15*	*TW: Ongoing*	*TW: Behind*	*TW: DOF wants to wait until circular on guiding GHG inventory for forestry sector to then develop the platform.*

5.1.5.5	*Develop circulars guiding CPFES implementation*	*TW*					*One circular is issued*	*-*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Activity is postponed to FY24 because of delayed approval of Decree 156.*
5.1.5.6	*Develop carbon credit standards*	*TW*					*Develop 1 standard system for validating, verifying, and assessing carbon credits for domestic carbon transfers. carbon trading strategic plans for two provinces are developed.*	*-*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Activity is postponed to FY24 because of delayed approval of Decree 156.*
5.1.6	**Pilot CPFES after the approval by GVN**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**Conference on the implementation of Decree 156 at the national and provincial level**				
5.1.6.1	*Launching workshop and develop implementation plan*	*TW, LC, SL*					*Conference on the implementation of Decree 156 at the national and provincial level.* *Carbon trading strategic plan for two provinces are developed.*	*-*	*TW, LC, SL: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Postponed to FY24* *LC: Ontrack* *SL: Postponed to FY24*	*TW, LC, SL: Activity is postponed to FY24 because of delayed approval of Decree 156.*
5.1.6.2	*Piloting carbon verification and trading in province*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Forest owners and forest areas are selected to pilot the establishment of projects on credit trading transactions and credit appraisal*	*-*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN: Postponed to FY24*	*LC: Ontrack* *SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN: Postponed to FY24*	*LC, SL, HB, QN: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget and delayed approval of Decree 156.* *NA: Postponed to FY24.* *QT: Postponed to 4/2024.*
5.2	**Build awareness and capacity for CPFES and PFES implementation**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**									
5.2.1	**Analyze status. Challenges of PFES M&E platform/tool implementation developed by VFD and some other**	**LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**Each province has finalized PFES maps**	**-**			

	organizations to consider the completion the tool of VFD and support provinces to apply and demonstrate national wide										
5.2.1.2	*Review PFES maps and support provincial funds to develop/ update PFES map*	*LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*Finalize and update payment maps of several provinces using the QGIS tool.* *Carbon map of the whole province*	*47*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *SL: Continued in FY24* *HB: Completed* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*LC: Postponed to FY24* *SL: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Ontrack* *TH: Postponed to FY24* *NA: Postponed to FY24* *QT: Postponed to FY24* *QN: Postponed to FY24*	*SL: Trained on Q5PFES, QGIS tools for 46 trainees from PFF, FPD.* *Some left activities postponed to FY24 due to limited budget and delayed approval of Decree 156.* *HB: # The Project already reviewed PFES maps and supported provincial funds to develop/ update PFES map.* *# Carbon map- Although STTA are recruited but this activity is depending on activity 5.1.2.1 in which the assessment will show carbon potential area for mapping.* *LC, TH, QN: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget and delayed approval of Decree 156.* *NA: Postponed to FY24.* *QT: Postponed to 4/2024.*
5.2.2	**Organize training courses and implement the use of PFES M&E software**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**147 people trained on PFES M&E software, 63 people trained on QGIS add-on, increased capacity for 7 provincial funds and VNFF**	**-**			
5.2.2.1	*Develop/ update communication materials for capacity building and advocacy for PFES*	*TW, HB, TH*					*- Design PFES and CPFES communication materials, including leaflets, newsletters, videos, seminars, contests, and promotional products for potential carbon buyers.* *- Informational boards are installed in provinces that need them* *- Extracurricular materials*	*42*	*TW: Continued in FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Continued in FY24*	*TW: Postponed to FY24* *HB: Postponed to FY24* *TH: Postponed to FY24*	*TW: Completed 3 trainings of communication skills and designing for all provincial funds in Vietnam. Completed some communication materials.* *HB: # Designed sign boards.* *# Identified vendors to produce the sign boards.* *TH: Completed designing handbook for communities in manage and use PFES payment. Integrating PFES into school program is postponed to FY24.*

							integrating PFES for students and teachers				
5.2.2.2	Guide provincial fund officers to pilot PFES M&E platform (integrate GESI in one indicator)	TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN					Each province and the central fund can use PFES M&E software	18	TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN: Continued in FY24	TW: Postponed to FY24 LC: Behind SL: Ontrack HB: Behind TH: Behind NA: Behind QT: Behind QN: Behind	TW: Platform is ready for training. Training materials are under development LC, SL, TH, NA, QT, QN: Platform is ready for training. Training materials are under development. Platform was installed successfully to DOF server and is running well. HB: Platform is ready for training. Training materials are under development. Platform was installed successfully to DOF server and is running well. Developing user manual and training documents for provincial funds. The process is slower than expected due to new requirement for platform features from VNFF.
5.2.2.4	Upgrade the PFES M&E platform and guide to use updated version	TW					The software is upgraded to meet the needs of provincial and central fund officers.	50	TW: Continued in FY24	TW: Ontrack	TW: Platform was installed successfully to DOF server and is running well.
5.2.2.5	Support to finalize the indicators using in PFES M&E	TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN					Indicators are finalized to support M&E nationally	100	TW: Completed LC: Completed SL: Completed HB: Completed TH: Completed NA: Completed QT: Completed QN: Completed	TW: Ontrack LC: Ontrack SL: Ontrack HB: Ontrack TH: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack	TW, LC, SL, TH, NA, QN: Completed for FY23 all table, data entry template of priority indicators for 1st phase of platform update. HB: Held meeting with VNFF, 7 provinces identify roles of forest owner as organization in PFES M&E QT: Held a meeting with VNFF, 7 provinces identify roles of forest owner as organization in PFES M&E Completed for FY23 all table, data entry template of priority indicators for 1st phase of platform update.

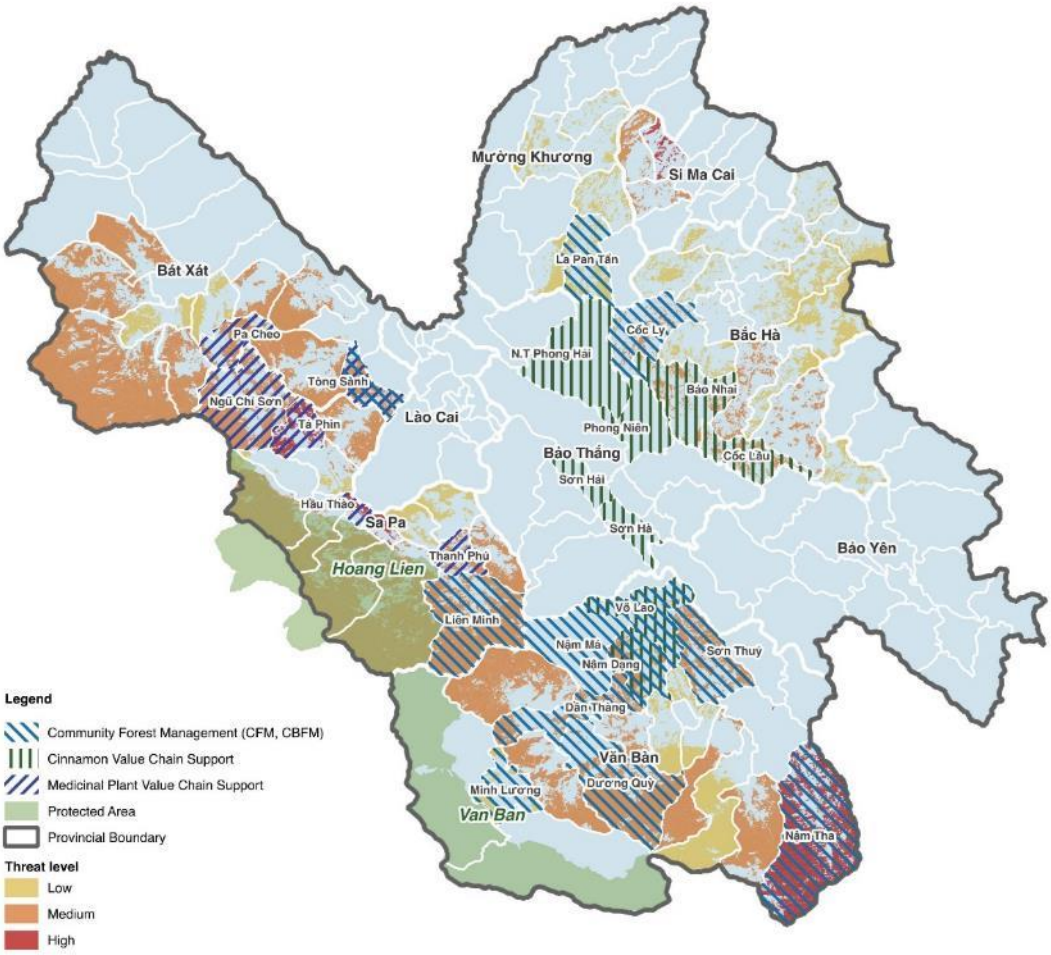
5.2.2.6	*Support to develop add-in on QGIS to develop PFES map*	*TW, LC, HB, NA, QT, QN*					*The add-in is developed to integrate with QGIS to develop CPFES maps. (63 people trained, 1 tool developed)*	*97*	*TW: Completed LC: Completed HB: Completed NA: Completed QT: Completed QN: Completed*	*TW: Completed LC: Ontrack HB: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack*	*TW: Completed tool development. HB provincial fund has used to produce PFES map for year 2023. Other provinces will use in 2024 due to the training and tool introduction to those provinces after the time they develop map for 2023. LC: Completed tool development. Hold training for provincial fund staff, FPD, forest owner as organizations. HB: Organized a training on add-in on QGIS to develop PFES map. 25 people trained: including officers from Hoa Binh FPDF, FPD and forest owners. NA: Completed 01 training course on using Q5PFES for 25 representatives of organized forest owners in the province (22 male; female: 3). QT: Completed tool development. Hold training for provincial fund staff, FPD, forest owner as organizations. QN: Completed tool development. Hold training for provincial fund staff, FPD, forest owner as organizations.*
5.2.4	**Trainings on PFES & CPFES for relevant stakeholders via training programs agreed with provinces and develop training documents**	**TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN**					**Provincial fund officers, forest owners, CPCs, and communities trained (793 people), increased capacity for 7 provincial funds and VNFF.**	**-**			
5.2.4.1	*Training on carbon trading market (with GESI integration)*	*TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN*					*290 people trained, including fund officers, forest rangers, forest owners, and companies. TW will participate with 1 selected province*	*100*	*TW: Completed LC: Completed SL: Completed HB: Completed TH: Completed NA: Completed QT: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack LC: Ontrack SL: Ontrack HB: Ontrack TH: Ontrack NA: Ontrack QT: Ontrack QN: Ontrack*	*TW: Organize 2 classes training on emission trading system for more than 200 participants from central to provinces. LC: Organized training for Provincial fund, DARD, PPMU, industrial companies SL: Organized training for 23 members of the Provincial fund, DARD, PPMU, industrial companies HB: Organized a training on carbon trading market. 28 people have been trained; including officers from FPDF, FPD, forest owners and companies. TH: Organized training for Provincial fund, DARD, PPMU, industrial companies. NA: Completed 01 carbon trading training course*

									QN: Completed		(Carbon SIM) for 41 participants (37 men, 4 women) in Quang Binh. QT: Completed to organize the training with 26 participants from province including forest owner, policy maker and emission companies. QN: Organized training for Provincial fund, DARD, PPMU, industrial companies.
5.2.4.7	Conduct advanced training on using QGIS in developing PFES map	HB, NA, QN					40 people trained	90	HB: Completed NA: Continued in FY24 QN: Postponed to FY24	HB: Ontrack NA: Postponed to FY24 QN: Postponed to FY24	HB: Conducted advanced training on using QGIS in developing PFES map. As a result, 21 people trained, including 3 women. NA: Organized a training course to support users in synchronizing Map in for to QGIS for 30 participants (29 male, 01 female) from organized forest owners and forest rangers of the province. Organized a training course to improve skills in using QGIS in developing PFES payment maps for 25 officials (24 men, 01 woman) from the Forest Protection Fund and forest owners of Nghe An province. QN: Postponed due to limited budget
5.2.4.8	Other PFES training	HB, TH, QN					280 people trained	83	HB: Postponed to FY24 TH: Completed QN: Completed	HB: Postponed to FY24 TH: Ontrack QN: Ontrack	HB: Organized a training PFES for commune staff with 79 participants, including 22 women. TH: Completed 2 GIS training: 1 about Q5PFES tool, 1 about advanced QGIS QN: Held 2 trainings for CPCs on management and use of PFES payment.
5.2.4.10	Training on producing PFES map according to new guidance in new Decree 156	TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN					Provincial Funds can apply Decree 156 guidelines to develop a map for carbon sequestration services, and a map of payments for aquaculture and ecotourism. 63 people trained	44	TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN Postponed to FY24	TW, LC, SL, HB, TH, NA, QT, QN Postponed to FY24	TW: Postponed due to delayed approval of Decree 156. LC: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget and delayed approval of Decree 156. SL: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget and delayed approval of Decree 156. HB: Delayed and pending on Decree156 approval. TH: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget and delayed approval of Decree 156. NA: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget and delayed approval of Decree 156. QT: Postponed to 4/2024. QN: Postponed to FY24 due to limited budget and delayed approval of Decree 156.

5.2.4.1.1	*Training/workshop on updated policy related to PFES*	*TW, TH*					*Training workshops to provide policymakers and local forest owners with updates on PFES policies. 120 participants*	*100*	*TW: Completed TH: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack TH: Ontrack*	*TW: Held a workshop for MARD with participants from forestry, agriculture, fishery with integration of carbon forest content. TH: Organized 1 communication campaign on PFES awareness raising for communities with 63 people join in Trung Son, Quan Hoa district.*
5.2.5	**Evaluate potential of other payment sources such as aquaculture, industrial water, forest lease etc.**	**SL, NA**					**Feasibility report will be completed**	**-**			
5.2.5.1	*Evaluate potential of other payment sources such as aquaculture, industrial water, forest lease etc.*	*SL, NA*					*Feasibility report will be completed*	*100*	*SL: Completed NA: Completed*	*SL: Ontrack NA: Ontrack*	*SL: Completed the study for the province. NA: Completed an assessment of PFES payment potential in Nghe An and 01 assessment report was completed and accepted in the second quarter of 2023.*
5.2.7	**Equipment/tools for PFES M&E**	**TW, SL, HB, TH, QN**					**The fund's equipment for PFES M&E activities is handed over**	**-**			
5.2.7.1	*Equipment for PFES M&E*	*TW, SL, HB, TH, QN*					*The fund's equipment for PFES M&E activities is handed over*	*100*	*TW: Completed SL: Completed HB: Completed TH: Completed QN: Completed*	*TW: Ontrack SL: Ontrack HB: Ontrack TH: Ontrack QN: Ontrack*	*TW: Handed over 2 laptops to VNFF SL: Handed over 2 laptops. HB: The Project has already delivered 02 laptops to the Hoa Binh Provincial Fund. TH: Handed over 2 laptops. QN: Handed over 2 laptops.*

ANNEX 3. PROVINCIAL PROGRESS REPORT

FY23 PROVINCIAL PROFILE: LAO CAI



threats of deforestation and degradation based on the project's baseline evaluation.

Key Provincial Facts

Total population: 761,890 people, including the following ethnic minority communities: Dao, Hmong, Tay, and Nung, Xa Pho.

Total forest area: 382,861 ha, of which 266,753 ha is natural forest and 116,108 ha is plantation forest.

Forest coverage: 57.7 percent

Value chains the Project supports: Cinnamon and medicinal plants.

Summary of Progress to Date in the Province

The numbers below represent verified accomplishments through FY23.

4,675 ha. of forest areas under improved management

168,529 tons of CO_2 emissions reduced

$823,923 funds committed towards conservation-friendly enterprises

4 conservation-friendly enterprises supported

1,068 people supported to adapt to climate change

4,157 people who received livelihood benefits

2,436 people trained

5 laws, policies, plans, regulations, or standards developed

865 people using climate information or are implementing risk-reducing actions to adapt to climate change

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN LAO CAI

In FY2023, through the Sustainable Forest Management Project (the Project), USAID supported Lao Cai to reach key achievements on community forest management (CFM), and medicinal plant and cinnamon value chain development. The Project worked with four communities of Van Ban, Bac Ha districts and Sa Pa town, where the total area managed by communities is about 4,645 ha. The Project helped allocate 1,987 ha of forest and forest land for two communes of Red Dao and Mong ethnic minorities in Lien Minh commune, Sa Pa town. Forest land use right certificates were retrieved from individual households and then allocated to communities for better sustainable forest management. The Project also helped Bac Ha Protection Forest Management Board develop a community-based forest ecotourism plan covering 2023-2030 to strengthen CFM and to better protect, conserve, and promote traditional cultural values. Lastly, the Project developed a Forest Protection Plan and provided patrolling equipment to improve forest management of 4,600 ha.

"The Project supported us to develop a Sustainable Forest Management Plan and trained our community to be directly involved in the forest monitoring process. Since then, we have realized that there are many precious plant species in our forest, and many activities our community can do to better protect and develop forests, and to preserve water for people, agriculture, and forestry production."

Mr. Chao Lao Si, Red Dao person – village head of Chu Cang Ho, Tong Sanh commune, Bat Xat district, Lao Cai province

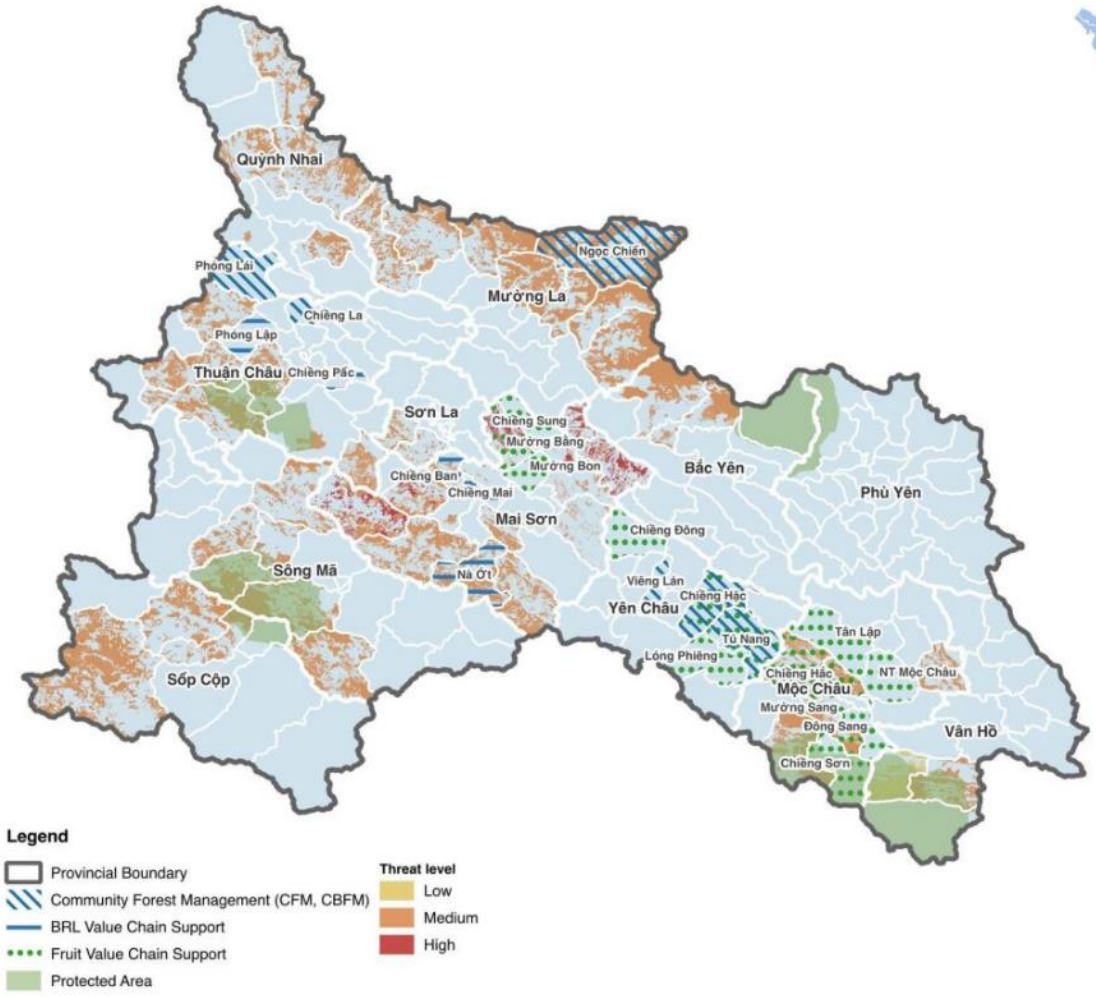
After identifying medicinal plants and cinnamon as two key value chains contributing to sustainable forest management in Lao Cai province, the Project implemented many activities to develop these value chains by improving institutional capacity, production, and processing, and through community-business matchmaking and market linkages. The Project provided technical support and equipment for conservation-friendly enterprises that signed partnership agreements with the Project. The Project helped to design Red Dao Medicinal Plant Performance Space in Sa Pa town and is now in the process of calling for investments. Cinnamon is considered the most important key crop in Lao Cai province, which is why the province is prioritizing the Project's support of the cinnamon value chain. In the FY23, the Project established a total of 14 organic cinnamon farmers' groups and provided training on forestry (planting, tending) techniques and training on pre-processing support, which helped improve 1,300 ha of cinnamon forest and benefited 2,800 people. The Project also provided nursery management support for 20 nurseries, signed partnership agreements with two nurseries, and delivered two tons of high-quality seeds for the plantation of 1,300 ha of forest.

A Red Dao farmer is thinning the cinnamon trees based on recommended practices. Photo credit: Quoc Hoang

Obtaining Certification of Cinnamon Seed Stands

In 2023, the USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project conducted a survey and identified 25 ha of 15-year-old cinnamon trees owned by 33 households in Bac Ha and Van Ban districts where it was possible to produce high-quality seeds for seedlings. The Project provided technical support to local Red Dao communities in two communes to make boundaries, select and save the best trees, and thin the rest, and to maintain the recommended density of about 600 trees per ha. This practice helps increase productivity and produce better seed quality. The Project also helped 33 forest owners to prepare documents for the necessary cinnamon high-quality seed stands certification legally required of nurseries that purchase seeds. In September 2023, Lao Cai Forest Ranger Department officially issued certification, valid from 2023-2028 for this area. This 25-ha of cinnamon forest will provide more than 30.2 tons of seeds, which will produce more than 56.5 million good-quality seedlings for plantation for 17,120 ha of cinnamon. With the official certification, the cinnamon forest owners are now able to sell their high-quality cinnamon seeds to cinnamon nurseries. In addition, the 17,120 ha of improved forest can potentially contribute to carbon sequestration of more than 1 million tons CO_2 (17,120 ha x 60.3 t C/ha).

FY23 PROVINCIAL PROFILE: SON LA



Key Provincial Facts

Total population: 1,301,862 people, including the following ethnic minority communities: Thai, Muong, Mong, Kho Mu, and Xinh Mun.

Total forest area: 666,887.7 ha, of which 594,075.6 ha is natural forest and 72,812.1 ha is plantation forest.

Forest coverage: 47.3 percent

Value chains the Project supports: Fruit and bamboo.

Summary of Progress to Date in the Province

The numbers below represent verified accomplishments through FY23.

6,448 ha. of forest areas under improved management

229,278 tons of CO_2 emissions reduced

$188,348 funds committed towards conservation-friendly enterprises

2 conservation-friendly enterprises supported

365 people supported to adapt to climate change

4,157 people who received livelihood benefits

2,500 people trained

7 laws, policies, plans, regulations, or standards developed

8 institutions with improved capacity

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN SON LA

Son La is one of two first provinces in Vietnam that piloted the financial mechanism of Payment for Forest Environmental Services (PFES) since 2008. Building off success from the USAID Vietnam Forest and Delta Project, the USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project continued supporting Son La province with two main activities to better protect and manage its community forests: 1) developing the fruit, and rattan-bamboo-leaves (RBL) value chain, and 2) supporting the implementation of PFES and the development and future piloting of carbon-PFES, or C-PFES. With technical support from the Project, Son La's Provincial People Committee issued a Decision on piloting sustainable forest management and carbon trading in river-basins of small-hydropower plants in Muong La and Bac Yen districts. Withing the PFES system, this initiative will be an innovation for direct payments from company to communities protecting the forest in the watershed. In FY23, the Project provided technical assistance and advocated a provincial policy on forest and forest land allocation (F/FLA) in three districts of Muong La, Moc Chau and Van Ho. It is estimated that 15,342.6 ha of FA/FLA in forty communes will be re-allocated for local communities in FY24. In September 2023, thanks to the Project's technical assistance, three community forest management plans with 2,239 ha of forest have been developed by communities and verified by Commune People Committees. This involved the participation of local communities, especially women and ethnic minority groups in fruit value chain and helped them increasing capacity on tendering, harvesting, processing products, as well as management their business. Through the approach of Public, Private and Community Partnership (PPCP), the Project signed partnership agreement with local conservation-friendly enterprises on bamboo-rattan-leaves value chain and mobilized the investment up to 21 billion VND from public and private sector. Son La is also the first province to install the Forestry Violation Database Management System (FVDMS) from provincial to district level, which contribute to better forest management.

"We are ethnic minorities, living in a remote mountainous area, which lacks the farmland to earn a daily living. Thanks to USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project's support, we could establish a new Tre Xanh Cooperative in March 2023 to focus on producing the bamboo shoot value chain to help create jobs and generate additional income for women. Since then, our cooperative received dedicated coaching from the Project to build our capacity and help us mobilize investments from the central Government. To date, the cooperative has developed and produced five kinds of bamboo shoot products to the market. In 2024, we plan to earn a four-star quality rating for a 'One Commune One Product' (OCOP) product made from bamboo shoots."

– Ms. Quang Thi Phong, director of the Tre Xanh Cooperative"

Piloting sustainable forest management and carbon trading in river-basins of small hydropower plants: The Son La Case

To mobilize resources for forest protection and development in river-basins, the USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project supported Son La province to develop and get Provincial People Committee's approval to pilot sustainable forest management approaches in river-basins of Muong La and Bac Yen districts. The activities planned will include the following interventions: (i) improved community forest management of 6,727 ha of community forest; (ii) plantation and restoration of forests for special use and protection forest over 556 ha; (iii) plantation of 20,000 trees in low crop yield upland fields; (iv) direct PFES payments from small-hydropower plants to communities; and notably, (v) piloting carbon trading in an area of 64,489 ha in Muong La and Bac Yen districts. The Project aimed to support Son La to mobilize investments of up to 55.2 billion VND for forest protection and management tasks, with up to 45.2 billion VND coming from local government, and 10 billion VND from hydroelectricity companies; communities will also invest part of their PFES revenue for this intervention. The Project also planned to pilot a new PFES payment scheme through which forest service users (i.e., hydroelectric projects, in this case) pay fees directly to communities (i.e., the forest owners). In addition, the Project planned to help assess forest carbon stocks in the pilot sites, after which Son La can implement carbon trading. Allocating and investing resources in forest protection and development will result in more efficient and sustainable forest management and will also contribute to enhancing forest carbon storage volume and supporting Vietnam to reach its carbon emission reduction targets.

Nam Chien hydropower plant reservoir - Muong La district. Photo credit: Thang Vu – CFMC

Chieng Muon hydropower plant, Muong La district: Photo credit: Trang Chu

FY23 PROVINCIAL PROFILE: HOA BINH

The shaded areas above show where project activities take place compared to areas that are facing threats of deforestation and degradation based on the project's baseline evaluation.

Key Provincial Facts

Total population: 854,131 people in total, including five ethnic minority communities: Muong (63% total population), Thai, Dao, Tay, and Hmong groups.

Total forest area: 237,299 ha, of which 141,614 ha is natural forest, and 95,685 ha is plantation forest.

Forest coverage: 51.69 percent

Value chains the Project supports: Medicinal plants, bamboo, and acacia.

Summary of Progress to Date in the Province

The numbers below represent verified accomplishments through FY 23.

13,631 ha. of forest areas under improved management

717,892 tons of CO_2 emissions reduced

$16,380,277 committed towards conservation-friendly enterprises

5 conservation-friendly enterprises supported

1,998 people supported to adapt to climate change

30,385 people who received livelihood benefits

5,513 people trained

11 institutions with improved capacity

973 adults who perceive their land tenure is secure

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN HOA BINH

In FY23, the USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project carried out many activities to comprehensively support forest management and development in Hoa Binh province. Those activities resulted in positive outcomes for forest owners, communities, conservation-friendly enterprises, and other stakeholders in the province. Through targeted capacity building, the Project established 19 Community-based Forest Management Boards and 21 Community Forest Patrolling Teams. As a result, 7,131 ha of natural forest (both protection and production forests) in 21 communities of Da Bac, Mai Chau, and Lac Son districts are now well managed by community patrolling teams. To improve production forest management practices, the Project helped establish 131 famers' groups in 131 villages of 19 communes with 4,414 members total (90% ethnic minorities). These smallholder farmers' groups were granted sustainable Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certificates for an area of 6,106 ha of acacia plantation with about 16,000 beneficiaries. The Project supported the plantation of about 500 ha of new acacia from seedlings, engaging 360 households. For International Day of Forests on March 21, 2023, the Project organized a successful tree plantation event with more than 250 representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Hoa Binh Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, USAID, youth unions, local households, and mass media to plant 500 trees (Michelia tonkinensis) and to hand over one million acacia seedlings to forest growers. To reduce pressure on forest resources, the Project supported 5 cooperative groups and their 836 member households by enhancing the rattan-bamboo-leaves and medicinal plant value chains. The Project also increased functionality of law enforcement systems for forest crimes, developing policies and regulations to support forest protection in the province. As a result, the province piloted the Forest Violations Database Management System (FVDMS) and developed six policies and regulations this year. The Project's targeted activities in Hoa Binh led to 13,630 ha of forest being under improved management.

"The Huong Xuan Cooperative has received a lot of support from the Project through technical assistance such as: capacity building (trainings), product development and improvement (shampoo and soap), and market access. Thanks to these activities, I have become more confident in production and business to create more jobs and incomes for local people. Revenue from the cooperative has also increased by about 100% compared to before Project support."

Mrs. Ha Thi Le– an ethnic minority, female Director of Huong Xuan Cooperative in Mai Chau district, Hoa Binh province.

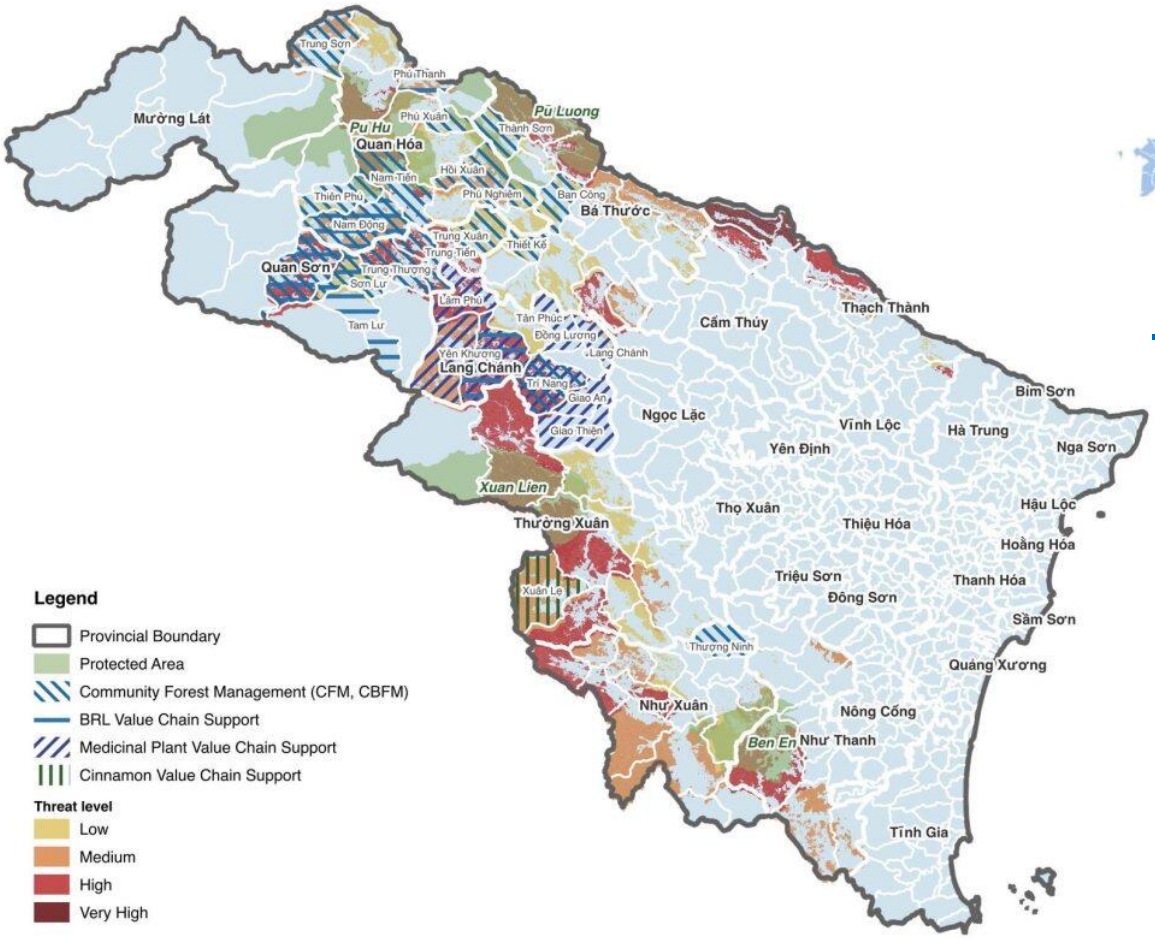
The project organized a visit to an FSC-certified forest. Photo credit: Tien Nguyen

Sustainable Forest Management and Forest Certification

Sustainable forest management and certification for production forests were highly prioritized in Hoa Binh this year. In FY23, the Project supported Hoa Binh in increasing sustainable timber production by small-scale forest owners via technical trainings on silviculture; facilitating to increase demand by processors for certified wood; connecting the market between forest owners and wood processing enterprises. To improve forest owners' practices on plantations, the Project collaborated with Hoa Binh Biomass Investment Joint Stock Company (the Company) to support forest owners to obtain sustainable forest management certification in Hoa Binh province. As a result, small forest owners' groups were issued Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) forest management certification for 6,106 ha of acacia plantations. Maintaining the certified acacia forest will bring more opportunities and options to forest owners in Hoa Binh province in terms of sustainable forest management, forest certification, and improved economic, social, and environmental efficiencies from forests. It will also improve the quality of 6,106 ha of acacia plantation and will enhance the CO2 sequestration of acacia forests, contributing to the Project and Vietnam's carbon sequestration and reduced emissions goals.

FY23 PROVINCIAL PROFILE: THANH HOA

The shaded areas above below where project activities take place compared to areas that are facing threats of deforestation and degradation based on the project's baseline evaluation.



Key provincial facts

Total population: 3.64 million people (2019), including the following ethnic minority communities: Mường, Thái, and Thổ.

Total forest area: 647,737.35 ha, of which 393,361 ha is natural forest and 254,376 ha is plantation forest.

Forest coverage: 53.6 percent

Value chains the Project supports: Medicinal plants, rattan, bamboo, and cinnamon.

Summary of Progress to Date in the Province

The numbers below represent verified accomplishments through FY 23.

45,949 ha. of forest areas under improved management

1,675,636 tons of CO_2 emissions reduced

$2,883,996 committed towards conservation-friendly enterprises

5 conservation-friendly enterprises supported

2,425 people supported to adapt to climate change

10 laws, policies, plans, regulations, or standards developed

4,705 people trained

15 institutions with improved capacity

796 adults who perceive their land tenure is secure

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN THANH HOA

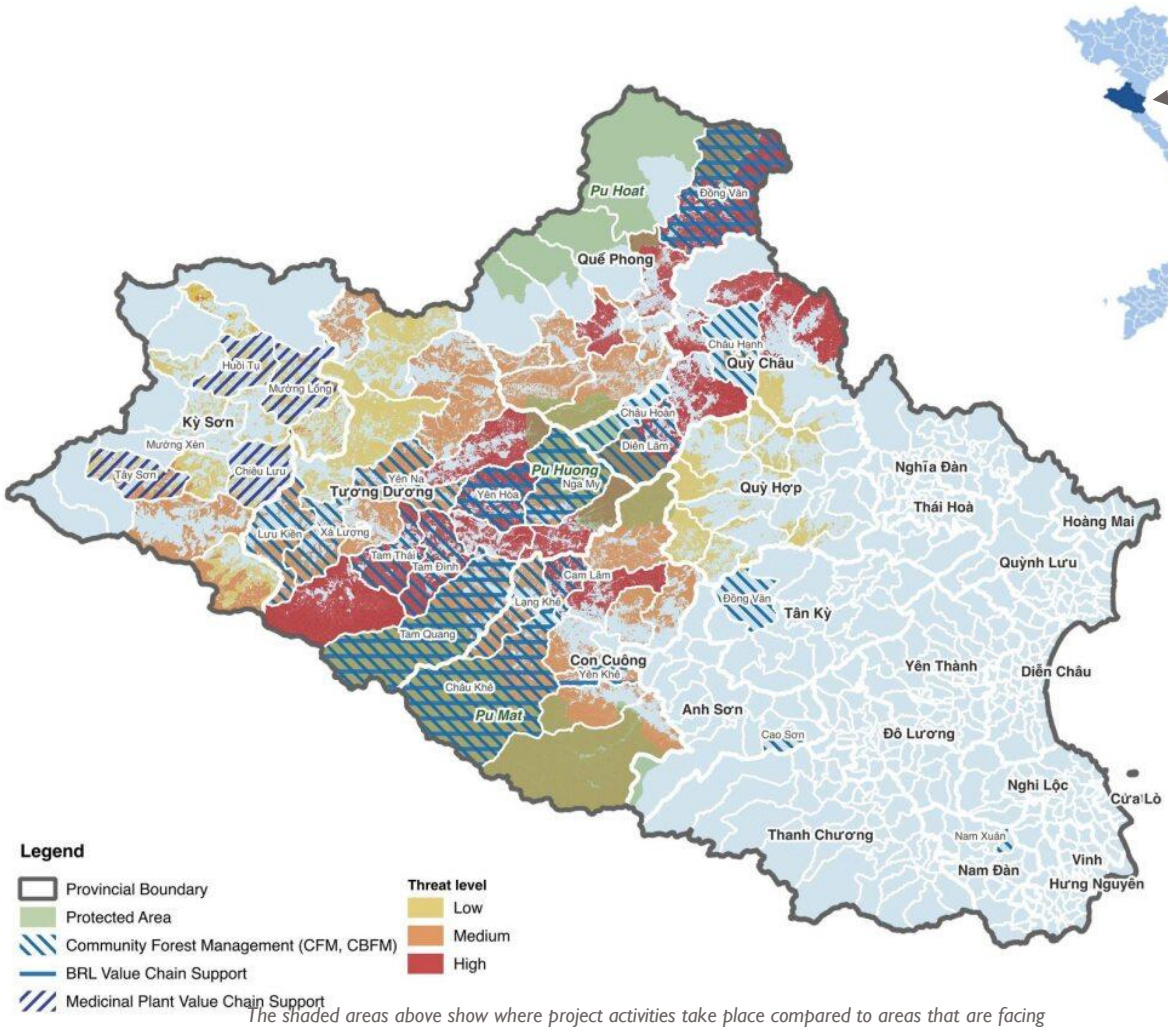
In 2023, with technical support from USAID's Sustainable Forest Management Project (the Project), Thanh Hoa province implemented Sustainable Forest Management Plans to better manage a total area of 25,044 hectares (of which 8,745 ha are production forests). The Project engaged with Biomass Fuel Nghi Son through a partnership agreement to improve knowledge and promote participation in forest certification groups for households with the goal of certifying 4,500 ha of forest by 2024 and 14,000 ha of certified forest by 2026. The Project helped 2 Forest Protection Management Boards build and deploy the Forest Management and Monitoring Systems using technology, such as using satellite image to check and detect changes and fluctuations in forest areas, using smartphones to gather the data in the field and synchronize quickly, using QGIS to update the changes of forest/plantation current status and making the reports. The Project provided technical assistance to improve the capacity and produce high-quality seedlings for 6 selected nurseries, and supported building of 15 big-timber plantation models using the forest-thinning method and more than 40 forest-tending models using the branch-pruning method. The Project worked with 11 communities spanning 12,600 ha to enhance their management and protection of community forests, and initiated forest and forest land allocation associated with connecting forests to residential communities. The Project worked with Thanh Hoa province to upgrade Xuan Lien Nature Reserve to National Park status for better forest resource protection and biodiversity conservation. Once it is designated as a national park, Xuan Lien will have more opportunities for forest landscape and biodiversity conservation, 32,000 members of forest-dependent communities in the buffer-zone will have enhanced international-domestic resource mobilization and better livelihoods through education, recreation, and ecotourism activities. The Project also developed the bamboo and rattan value chain, establishing four bamboo and rattan cooperative groups and organizing trainings to improve their skills and products based on market requirements. The Project also supported 54 female representatives of companies/ cooperatives/ production groups/ business establishments to improve their capacities in entrepreneurship and business planning, of which 11 women won prizes in the "2023 Ideas and Start-up Products Contest" organized by Thanh Hoa provincial Women's Union. One of the Project-supported businesswomen earned the consolation prize at the central-level competition organized by the Central Women's Union.

"With the support of USAID's Sustainable Forest Management Project, we quickly approached the application of QGIS-QFIELD technology to update information on forest patrol routes, to delineate fluctuating forest areas and at-risk areas to develop the plans for forest patrol, monitoring to perform better the approved sustainable forest management methods."

- Mr. Le Thanh Cong, Deputy Head of Planning and Forest Protection Technique, Lang Chanh Forest Protection Management Board

Terraced fields in Pa Ban village. Photo credit: Cintapo Tran

FY23 PROVINCIAL PROFILE: NGHE AN



The shaded areas above show where project activities take place compared to areas that are facing threats of deforestation and degradation based on the project's baseline evaluation.

Key provincial facts

Total population: 3,419,989 people, including ethnic minority communities: Thai, Hmong, Khơ Mu.

Total forest area: 1,014,075 hectares, of which 789,934 ha is natural forest and 224,141 ha is plantation forest.

Forest coverage: 58.36 percent.

Value chains the Project supports: rattan, bamboo and leaves, and herbal medicine.

Summary of Progress to Date in the Province

The numbers below represent verified accomplishments through FY 23.

44,827 ha of forest areas under improved management

1,712,056 tons of CO_2 emissions reduced

$2,172,645 committed towards conservation-friendly enterprises

7 conservation-friendly enterprises supported

4,876 people supported to adapt to climate change

7,830 people who receive livelihood benefits

12,230 people trained

42 institutions with improved capacity

3,949 people using climate information or are implementing risk-reducing actions to adapt to climate change

ACHIEVEMENTS IN NGHE AN

Nghe An has approximately one million hectares of forest area—the largest forest area of any province in Vietnam. However, the province faces difficulties implementing sustainable forest management practices due to a shortage of technical and financial resources. In 2023, the USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project helped Nghe An's forest-dependent communities with the following achievements:

- ***Strengthening community forest management:*** Supported six communities to manage 5,249 ha of allocated forests and 41 communities under forest protection contracts to protect 23,828 ha; helped prepare Sustainable Forest Management Plans for five communities to protect 4,529 ha across two districts; and provided support to 22 communities under forest protection contracts to prepare plans, including forest patrolling schedules, for better manage 15,546 ha.
- ***Environment friendly value chains and livelihood development:*** Supported Nghe An to develop rattan, bamboo and leaves as well as medicinal plants value chains benefiting 1,441 people and mobilizing USD 274,000 in value chain investments from the private sector.
- ***Improve sustainable forest management and forest certification:*** Improved 45,006 ha of forests, including 2,823.3 ha of plantation forest, which was awarded Forest Stewardship Certification (FSC) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) representing 29 farmers' groups (1,072 people); and improved management of 24,843.66 ha by supporting Districts Protection Management Boards to develop and implement Sustainable Forest Management Plans.
- ***Develop forest policies to strengthen forest law enforcement:*** Developed seven provincial forest policies to strengthen forest law enforcement and building capacity of Forest Protection Department forces.
- ***Forest environmental services payment mechanisms:*** Updated and finalized Payment for Forest Environmental Services (PFES) mapping and raised awareness on future launch of carbon trading via carbon-PFES, or C-PFES mechanism in Vietnam.

These initial achievements are helping Nghe An province implement Provincial Directive No. 10 (issued by Nghe An's Party Standing Committee) to promote high-quality intensive forest plantation toward forest certification of 50,000 ha by 2025, and to implement the Provincial Strategy on Forest Development 2020-2030, to reduce deforestation and forest degradation, enhance carbon stock and CO2 sequestration, and combat climate change.

Engaging the private sector to strengthen acacia forests.

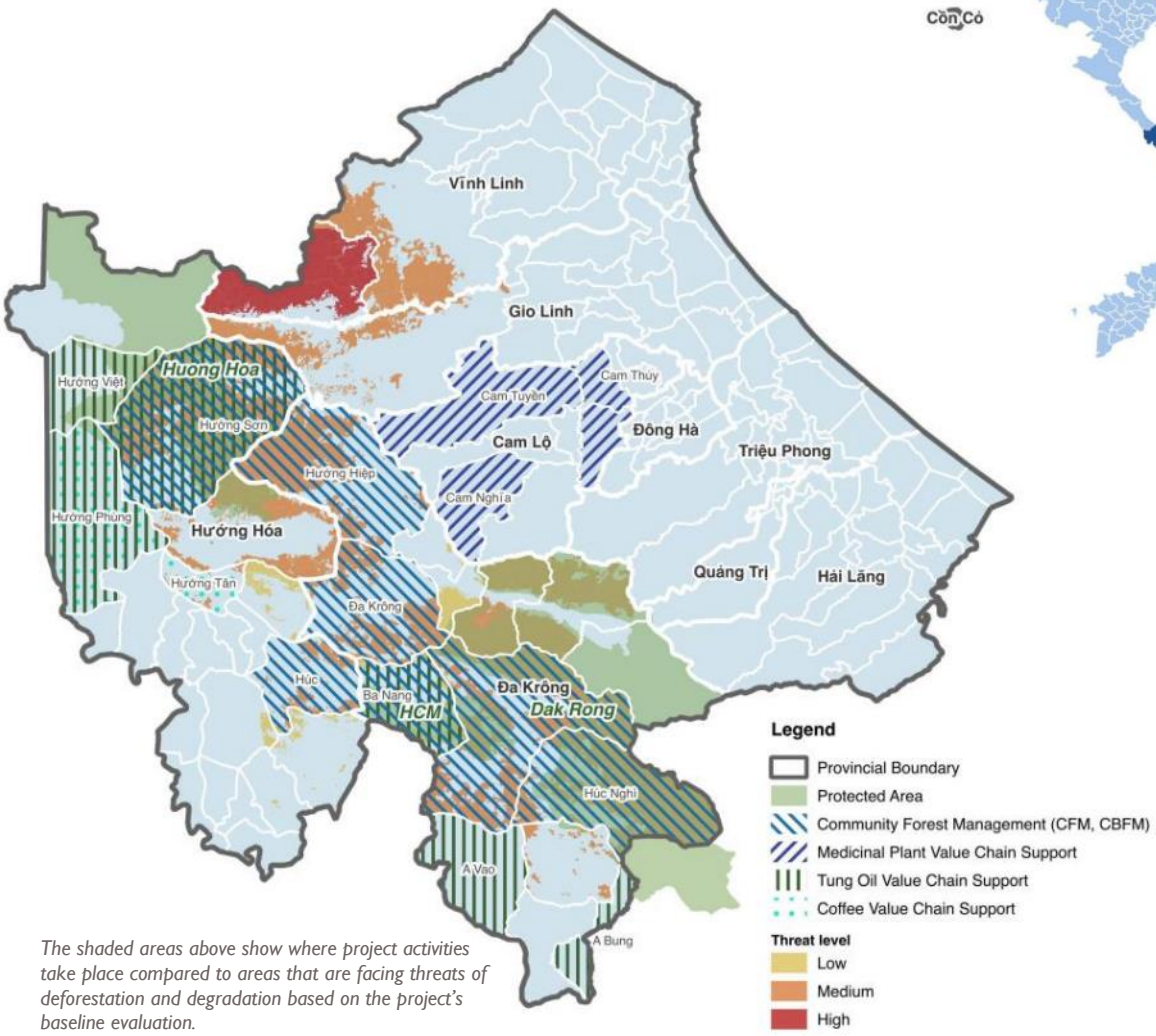
The Project is helping Nghe An improve sustainable forest management and expand FSC certification for more than 43,000 ha (10,000 ha in 2023 alone). The Project engaged two private sector partners—BVN Thanh Chuong and Biomass Fuel Viet Nam (BFVN)—to improve the acacia value chain, in line with Provincial strategies and policies, to promote forest plantation and certification.

To date, the Project helped improve 25,170 ha of forest sustainable forest management through improving quality of hedge orchard to enhance capacity of high-quality seedling production; supporting silvicultural activities (thinning and tending), and promoting farmers to convert from small to large timber plantation. Of this improved forest, 2,823.30 ha of acacia forest was awarded PEFC and FSC certification under BMFV for 29 farmers' groups (1,072 farmers) in Anh Son district. Both partners are in the final stage of conducting assessments of 8,800 ha for FSC certificate for 54 farmers' groups (approx. 3,000 farmers) by the end of 2023.

This effort has resulted in initial impacts on both local communities and private sector partners through farmers' improved knowledge and practices on sustainable forest plantation (i.e. improved seedling production, silviculture knowledge, no-burning reforestation approaches, newly accessed market linkages, and FSC linkages for more income improvement opportunities.) On the other hand, the private sector partners benefit from improving their chain

Farmer Nguyen Nhu Que in Phuc Son commune, Anh Son district

FY23 PROVINCIAL PROFILE: QUANG TRI



The shaded areas above show where project activities take place compared to areas that are facing threats of deforestation and degradation based on the project's baseline evaluation.

Key provincial facts

Total population: 649,708 people, including the following ethnic minorities: Van Kieu and Paco.

Total forest area: 248,122 ha, of which 126,692 ha is natural forest and 121,429 ha is plantation forest.

Forest coverage: 49.9 percent

Value chains the Project supports: medicinal plants, arabica coffee, and Tung oil.

Summary of Progress to Date in the Province

The numbers below represent verified accomplishments through FY 23.

5,816 ha of forest areas under improved management

215,042 tons of CO_2 emissions reduced

$10,220,665 committed towards conservation-friendly enterprises

8 conservation-friendly enterprises supported

1,034 people supported to adapt to climate change

1,765 people who receive livelihood benefits

10 institutions with improved capacity

8 laws, policies, plans, regulations, or standards developed

837 people using climate information or are implementing risk-reducing actions to adapt to climate change

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN QUANG TRI

Quang Tri province is a coastal province in the North Central region of Vietnam—a significant part of the East-West Economic Corridor connecting Laos, Thailand, and Myanmar via the 'Lao Bao' international border gate to ports in the central region. Quang Tri was one of the provinces most impacted by war destruction and has suffered from slash-and-burn cultivation for many years, especially in forests already degraded by chemical toxins. Therefore, the natural forest ecosystem is degraded, the area of natural forest reserve has been reduced, and forest quality is poor. Effective measures are needed to strengthen forest management and protection, and to restore natural forests. In FY23, the USAID Sustainable Forest Management Project made progress on its 85 sustainable forestry activities in Quang Tri. The Project's biggest achievements in the province included developing a Community Forest Management (CFM) plan for 212 households of Gia Gia village that jointly manage 1,614 ha of natural forest; improving and systematizing cooperative forest protection and forest fire control at CFM sites between 11 communities (1,234 households) to manage and protect 4,164 ha of natural forest; and lastly, supporting seven conservation friendly enterprises (CFEs) in the medicinal plants, coffee, and acacia value chains to jointly benefit for 1,765 people and to mobilize nearly USD 10 million towards sustainable forest value chains.

"The time investment and costs for both burning and non-burning models of harvest residue treatment are the same, but harvesting productivity in non-burn areas is higher, resulting in about 20-30 tons of timber. Keeping or double slashing harvest residue is the most environmentally friendly practice that is considered in forest certification auditing procedures."

- Mr. Nguyen Van Luc, Head of Thuy Dong Cooperative-Forest Certification Unit of Cam Lo district, Quang Tri province

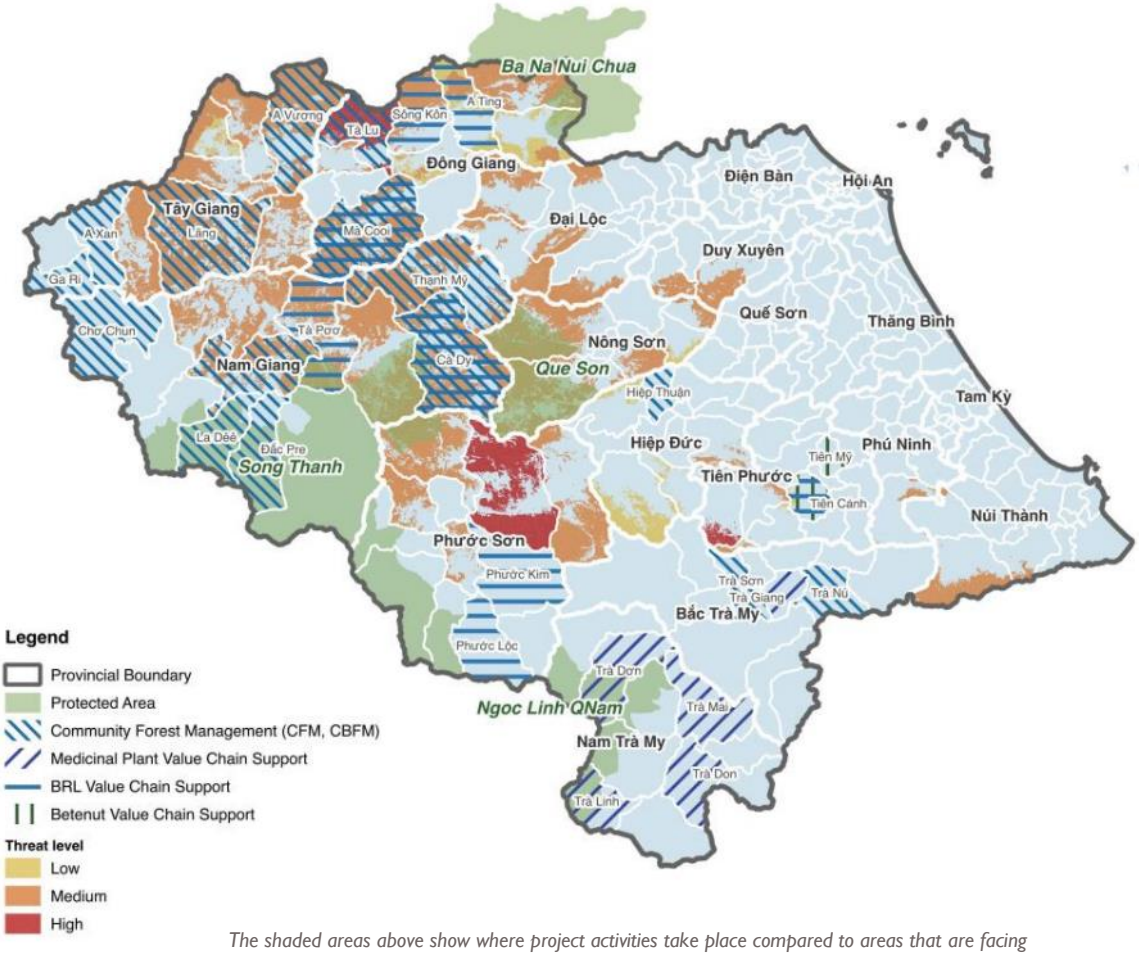
REDUCE EMISSIONS THROUGH MORE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF HARVEST RESIDUE IN ACACIA PLANTATIONS: Quang Tri currently has 121,420 hectares (ha) of planted forests (48.9% of the province's total forested land area) of which 85,406 ha (70%) is planted production forests. The majority (64%) of these planted production forest owners are individuals and households. Currently, about 7,000 ha of production forests are planted annually in the province, mainly with the use of hybrid acacia planting material. In Vietnam general and Quang Tri particularly, Acacia plantation owners traditionally burn harvest residue—such as stumps, leaves, and bark——to prepare the ground for new planting. This causes air pollution, soil fragmentation, biodiversity loss, and CO2 emissions. It can even lead to nearby forest fires. In Quang Tri, the Project launched a study on forest certification and management of harvest residue for Acacia plantations that demonstrated the costs and benefits of different harvest residue approaches. As a result of this targeted intervention, 2,000 hectares of Acacia plantation in four districts of Quang Tri province will apply with Project support the non-burning practice. Secondary data shows that one hectare of Acacia plantation (aged six years) will produce 32.4 tons of dried harvest residue, equivalent to 55.8 tons of CO2. The Project aims to contribute to reducing 5.5-7.8 million tons of CO2 per year by promoting non-burning practices across 110,000 hectares/year in the Project areas.

Promoting non-burning practices on acacia plantation for better environmental outcomes

In FY23, the Project supported the Quang Tri Association Smallholder Forest Certification Groups (ASFCG) to help smallholder forest owners participate in more than 500 ha of FSC certification and to apply environmentally friendly practices, such as non-burning after harvesting the acacia forest, With the Project's support, more than 536 ha of 85 afforestation households have been evaluated and will be granted FSC certification in November 2023. This area will strictly follow the requirements of FSC standards, to ensure sustainable use and forest protection. The Project also provided 150,000 of high-quality acacia material plants to 20 households affiliated with Keo Son Cooperative for use on 75 ha of newly planted acacia. Participating households applied non-burning practices to harvest residue of acacia, which is better for the environment and better for tree and soil health. The Project estimates that, over this area, an estimated 34,000 tons of CO2 emissions will be reduced, contributing to Project's, USAID's, and Vietnam's reduced emissions targets.

Non-burning acacia planting area of Mr. Le Hai Binh in Cam Nghia commune, Cam Lo district, Quang Tri. Photo credit: Phong Le

FY23 PROVINCIAL PROFILE: QUANG NAM



The shaded areas above show where project activities take place compared to areas that are facing threats of deforestation and degradation based on the project's baseline evaluation.

Key provincial facts

Total population: 1.52 million, including the following ethnic minority groups: Co Tu and Ca Dong.

Total forest area: 680,806.40 ha, of which 466,207.21 ha are natural forests and 161,201.85 ha are plantation forests.

Forest coverage: 58.71 percent.

Value chains the Project supports: rattan bamboo and leaves (RBL), medicinal plants, betel nut, and acacia.

Summary of Progress to Date in the Province

The numbers below represent verified accomplishments through FY 23.

17,258 ha of forest areas under improved management

689,280 tons of CO_2 emissions reduced

$687,794 committed towards conservation-friendly enterprises

12 conservation-friendly enterprises supported

1,724 people supported to adapt to climate change

10,224 people who receive livelihood benefits

16 institutions with improved capacity

4 laws, policies, plans, regulations, or standards developed

1,396 people using climate information or are implementing risk-reducing actions to adapt to climate change

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN QUANG NAM

Quang Nam Province is located in the central coast region of Vietnam with 680,806 ha of total forested area, accounting for 60 percent of the natural area. Although there is significant potential to benefit from the forest, the province is already facing forest degradation and deforestation. Together with provincial government, USAID's Sustainable Forest Management Project has been implementing a wide range of interventions to address these issues. In FY2023, the Project helped develop seven Community Based Forest Management (CBFM) and three Community Forest Management Plans (CFM) covering 16,039 ha of forest in total and organizing hundreds of forest patrols. This contributed to better forest protection and management for 11 communities. The Project also helped improve livelihoods for forest dependent communities by promoting four value chains, including rattan, bamboo and leaves, medicinal plants, betel nut, and acacia. To implement these value chains, the SFM signed 09 partnership agreements with local conservation friendly enterprises. As a result, nearly 10,000 people benefited from the cooperation and USD 688,000 was mobilized. The Project also improved production forest management practices by engaging with Hiep Thuan Cooperative and Thien Hoang Company to implement interventions, such as: i) capacity building on sustainable forest management and forest certification, resulting in the formation of 12 smallholder groups (584 households); ii) developing two SFM plans; iii) forest mapping; iv) address audit-identified issues for forest certification with the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC); and v) developing a plantation forest insurance mechanism, and completing the biomass supply chain. As a result, Hiep Thuan received FSC certification to sustainably manage 1,195.5 ha of acacia forest of 221 smallholders. Thien Hoang Company is currently working towards the FSC certification of 3,000 ha in 2024.

"Big loss due to natural disaster to plantation forest is one of the significant challenges for local forest owners. Therefore, with the technical support from the Project, Hiep Thuan piloted the model on internal insurance for plantation forest. This will motivate farmers to expand the planted forest areas and apply the sustainable forest management practices in coming time."

- Mr. Mai Tan Luu, chairman of Hiep Thuan Commune's People Committee

Protecting forest owners and households from natural disasters with risk mitigation mechanisms.

The effects of climate change are present in central Vietnam, including in Quang Nam, which has caused enormous damage to plantation forests. There is currently a lack of affordable insurance schemes for farmers to purchase for coverage, which is a major obstacle to the implementation of sustainable forest management and to developing large dimension timber forests.

Hiep Thuan Cooperative was established in 2017 with 15 cooperative members, including farmers from neighboring communes in Quang Nam province. The Cooperative recognized that farmers' plantations needed technical solutions to mitigate risks from natural disasters. The Cooperative established a pilot model on risk mitigation for plantations to help members and associated households mitigate losses from natural disasters. With technical assistance from the Project, Hiep Thuan Cooperative established the Regulation on Risk Mitigation Fund in August 2022 to mobilize funds from local forest owners, cooperative members, bank deposit interest, assistance from organizations, businesses and individuals, assistance from the State, and assistance from development projects.

Through technical, production and financial solutions, the risk of damage from natural disasters and forest fires will be minimized, building trust among forest owners to plant large timber forests to meet the cooperative' business strategy (and environmental target) of 1,500 ha of sustainable plantations by 2027. This risk mitigation mechanism will motivate members and the community to prolong the plantation rotation, which will contribute to increasing carbon sequestration and creating an opportunity to help small forest owners (farmers) improve sustainable plantation management practices, leading to improved livelihoods as well as social and environmental benefits.

Introduction meeting about the internal insurance for plantation forest owners at Hiep Thuan commune, Hiep Duc district, Quang Nam province. Photo credit: Sang Luu