

# **Social Policy Ecology Research Institute**

**- SPERI -**

**Paper: The role of VNGOs in the Lobby Policy Changes**

**Case study - Sustainable Natural Resources for Xinh Mun minority  
Yen Chau district, Son La province**

**Hanoi, March 2007**

## **Part I: Context of Vietnamese NGOs doing Lobby in Vietnam**

### **I. The Vietnamese NGOs – Legal Framework**

*Most Vietnamese NGO's are operating in an ill-defined legal framework and often unfavorable social environment.*

- Until now no law has been passed that legitimates the position of VNGOs or regulates their activities. Decree 35/CP-1995 is applicable to Science and Technology Associations in which include VNGOs. Decree 88/CP-2003 only regulates the administrative management of VNGOs. There still are many inconsistencies when implementing the two Decrees.
- Civil society concept has been considered as 'sensitive'. VNGOs as a component of civil society are therefore often misperceived. Many local authorities have misinterpreted the role of VNGOs in the civil life.
- Many VNGOs lack a long-term vision or weak in capacity in dealing with challenges, whilst others are merely interested in the possible financial gains ignoring their social task.
- These concerns have until now hampered few honest VNGOs to implement their work effectively in a legitimate framework.

### **II. Rationale for VNGOs involved in Lobby-work**

*VNGOs are a part of civil society, working independently from government organizations and share responsibility towards the government in the certain social tasks. By nature, VNGOs should be independent, capable of self-financing, self-managing, self-regulating, and transparent.*

- Independence of a VNGO meaning that that organization should be objective in its decisions towards policy and policy changes. VNGOs should strive for justice in its aims (i.e. not influenced by merely financial gains).
- With a long term development philosophy, VNGOs should be well equipped with a strong team capable in working with *multi-disciplinary approach*. Human resources should have a broad social understanding, good technical background, and rich in experiences. A strong identity and well-maintain of ethics would help VNGOs to determine its position and market component in the society and possible advocate themselves as successful lobby institute in the future.
- VNGOs should play a role of bridging the information gaps between civilians, entities under legal adjustment, and policy makers. VNGOs can formulate clearly concerns brought up by grassroots organizations and defend these concerns to the right policy makers.

### **III. Priorities for policy lobby work for VNGOs**

*Issues for lobby should stem from actual social needs. VNGOs should pro-actively voice concerns from civil society groups to policy makers. On what base should VNGOs choose issues for lobby purposes? How can VNGOs prioritize the issues to be put on the policy agenda?*

1. **Priority on target group:** VNGOs should give priority to civilians, entities under legal adjustment, policy makers, and also those who do not have a suitable channel to represent their concerns. VNGOs should coordinate and maximize the opportunities for civilians and policy makers to gain better understanding of each other<sup>1</sup>.
  - a. Either it could be a foundation for sharing the common objectives and interests of concerned parties.
  - b. Or it could be just differences among parties due to the way each party *defines his values differ to the others*.
2. **Priority on content:** issues chosen should stem from (a) people's true concerns, and (b) enhance the relationship between government and the community. Key issues are (1) equal rights to resource use and management, (2) security of social relations to avoid conflicts, and (3) sustainability in resource use and secured living environmental quality.
3. **Priority to competence:** VNGOs should be independent and self responsible towards the government. They require a team of advanced competence e.g. ability to do applied research; work in multi-disciplinary approach, and strong analytical thinking. High level of professional development includes skills to coordinate, make links, and give consultations. VNGOs should define lobby as a part of priorities to determine its social function and political position.

#### IV. The lobbying process on policy changes of VNGOs

*Lobbying on policy changes should be a key development focus for VNGOs. Given an ill-defined legal framework and often unfavorable social environment, their challenges are how to implement lobbying activities to produce the most effective outcome, together with making objective decisions with well-justified evidence. How can VNGOs deal with different social relations and controversy from social perceptions?*

- Problems identification from local community: This requires community skills and approaches e.g. community meetings, and opened forums so that local community feels opened to share the strengths and weaknesses during the policy implementation.
- VNGOs should adopt skills like listening, recording, synthesizing, making analysis, and presenting the problems brought up from local communities to policy makers whilst returning responses from policy makers to the locals. VNGOs could make use of past experiences, technical knowledge, and social relations to assist communities in finding solutions to their problems.
- VNGOs should study community's problems carefully, and organize open forums for critical comments so that to formulate their objective opinions. VNGOs should seek consultations from leading scientists, social analysts, and the general public from mass media in order to produce well justified analysis of problems.
- SPERI has long attempted policy lobby work in relation to poverty alleviation and community development for minority communities. These are the key strategies in

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<sup>1</sup> Policy lobbying is a learning process to improve awareness and capacity for local communities of the policy making process. This also brings policy makers to come closer to the realities encountered by the disadvantaged civil society groups including poor farmers. Policy lobbying is actually a two-way learning of local communities and policy makers, aiming to understanding better each other. In some cases, policy lobby on changing legislation in the Western countries could involve either compromises or pressures by different means to obtain specific interests for certain interest groups.

Conference on Lobbying - "Practical and Legal Framework". March 12-13 2007 - Legislative Committee - Vietnamese National Assembly.  
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developing and strengthening social relations between ethnic minorities and the majority (i.e. local communities and policy makers through the coordination of VNGOs). This is *how social capital could be enriched*.

Social Policy Ecology Research Institute (SPERI) in its long term vision has clearly defined policy lobby work as an important strategy to build up and developing the social capital resources. SPERI attempted over the past 10 years to lobby policy changes on “*Sustainable Use and Management of Land and Forest resources for particularly Minority communities in the watershed*”.

## **Part II: Case study - Sustainable Natural Resources for Xinh Mun minority Yen Chau district, Son La province**

### **I. Rationale**

#### **I.1. Key reasons**

1. One of the SPERI<sup>2</sup>'s research focuses is sustainable resource use and management of land resources for minority communities living in the watershed by use of applied theories on Human Ecology and Human Geography.
2. Since the beginning, SPERI worked with minority communities from 16 highland provinces. Much of their cultural values and identity were ignored due to impacts after 30 years' continued resettlement. Many minorities have increasingly become dependent.
3. Forest resource in the watershed areas is a part of a sensitive ecological system. These areas are yet easily accessed due to unsecured livelihoods and food shortage encountered by many people; although forest in the watershed should be of highest priority for protection.
4. Xinh Mun minority lives in a valley of an important watershed with highly protected forest in the North Western Vietnam. The area will be part of an expanded zone for large reservoirs and hydro-dam projects. There is a threat of cultural traditions, community values, and structure to be destroyed as a consequence of large scale projects.
5. If enabling Xinh Mun community to set up a live-pilot on sustainable use and management of forestland resource in their village areas and share this pilot to policy makers and implementers, then somewhat community structure and community values could be revived.

#### **I.2. Xinh Mun minority in Bo Ngoi village**

1. Xinh Mun minority faced a threat of losing cultural values and damaged community structure;
2. The general awareness and perception see Xinh Mun as the 'backward' community, naming Xinh Mun people as 'Puoc'. This psycho impact affected Xinh Mun people's sense of confidence. They became isolated from any outsiders.
3. Local authority in the commune did not have a full understanding of Xinh Mun community's values, cultural norms, and community structure.

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<sup>2</sup> A merger from the three affiliated organizations TEW<sup>2</sup> (Towards Ethnic Women), CHESH<sup>2</sup> (Center for Human Ecology Studies of Highlands), and CIRD<sup>2</sup> (Center for Indigenous Knowledge Research and Development) Conference on Lobbying - “Practical and Legal Framework”. March 12-13 2007 - Legislative Committee - Vietnamese National Assembly. Van Chai – Sam Son, Thanh Hoa.  
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4. The resettlement program in 1985 resettled Xinh Mun community to an area known now as Bo Ngoi village. Their livelihoods have not been improved after 10 years' resettlement. They continued accessing the forest for hunting and gathering. As part of the resettlement program, many outsiders also sought new land areas in the Xinh Mun area.
5. There was a conflict between Xinh Mun minority and the majority Kinh of 30 hectares of land in Bo Ngoi village. The Kinh people migrated freely from Hai Duong province in the lowland to search new land in the highland.
6. Xinh Mun community at the time did not have the rights to use and manage their land although settled in Bo Ngoi village long before the Kinh lowlanders' arrival.
7. Xinh Mun community lives closed by the other Xinh Mun communities surround the Bo Ngoi village area so could be expandable after the live-pilot.
8. SPERI could produce a manual on sustainable use and management of resources by use of community development approach.

## **II. Challenges of Xinh Mun minority**

### **II.1. Challenges in perceptions**

1. Xinh Mun community is one of the very first settlers in Yen Chau district; but were referred as the 'backwards'. Many policies were implemented on population redistribution, villages' relocation, and large-scale resettlement. All aimed at improving the livelihoods of highland communities. Policy implementation however turned expected effects into impacts due to poor understanding of community culture and their structure, and a lack of coordination between Government and local communities. Resettlement program, for instance, resettled Xinh Mun community to the Bo Ngoi area but did not carry out an in-depth study of their everyday's cultivation and living practices. Xinh Mun people were put in the unfamiliar living conditions in the new land. Instead of accepting new agricultural practices, Xinh Mun people returned to the forest to gather products then exchanged for food and money with outsiders mainly the Kinh majority. Livelihoods of Xinh Mun community were not progressed.
2. Despite these challenges, there were certain community values that Xinh Mun community well-maintained as of strong identity and community structure. They had a strong belief towards forest and land spirits along with community regulations and customary laws. Challenges of a new market economy threaten the community structure; and that Xinh Mun people were thirst of opportunities to learn, understand, and realize how they could preserve identity, cultural values, and other community norms by their community strengths. The outsiders kept coming to take away the land of Xinh Mun community.

### **II.2. Conflicts over land and inconsistencies of policy implementation**

1. Two years after implementing population redistribution policy in 1985, Bo Ngoi village was occupied by some Kinh households who migrated freely from Hai Duong province. The 16 households took advantages of the innocence of Xinh Mun community to take away about two third of the valley for cultivation and settlement. Legal documents from resettlement program certified the land area belonged to Xinh Mun community but not yet authorized the Land Use Rights Certificates (LURCs) for them. Xinh Mun people continued searching products from the forests such as digging yam, collecting non timber

forest products, and hunting wildlife to exchange with outsiders. In many exchanges, Xinh Mun people were cheated e.g. a 50-kg bag of corns (valued at 40,000 Vietnamese dong) for only a small glutamate bag (valued at 8,000 Vietnamese dong), which was unfair. This kind of market behavior did not bring about the fairness for Xinh Mun community; instead, pushing them to exploit further resources from the forest.

2. Many land policies have lacked appropriated instructions during implementation. The rights of individuals on land use and management were not secured. This has resulted in conflicts between the Xinh Mun and the Kinh ethnic groups over land use and management.

### **III. SPERI's challenges during project implementation**

1. **Challenges in helping the Xinh Mun community:** How to regain their self-confidence when they were affected heavily from the views seeing them as the 'backward' community. Xinh Mun people became isolated, dependent, and had no rights to resource use and manage.
2. **Challenges in working with local authority:** How to facilitate local authority to get involved in program activities so that they could be better informed to realize the actual values of Xinh Mun community so that give supports in reclaiming the rights to land use and management for Xinh Mun people.
3. **Challenges in dealing with conflicts between Xinh Mun and Kinh ethnic groups:** How to provide opportunities for the two groups meet up and discuss to find solutions on conflicts resolutions by the peaceful approach.
4. **Challenges in lobbying to reclaim the rights to land use for Xinh Mun community:** How to reclaim the rights over 30 ha of land and forest in Bo Ngoi valley for Xinh Mun community, and how to certify an equal role in resources use and management for Xinh Mun women in the LURCs given the lack of supportive legal framework on women's position in the society.

### **IV. Objectives**

- To lessen the feeling of self-inferior whilst encouraging Xinh Mun people to feel proud of their community and being confident in any decision making that concern their community development.
- To change attitude and behavior of outsiders including local authority on the way they viewed Xinh Mun people.
- To facilitate the reclaim of the rights to land use for Xinh Mun community without creating conflicts; and to lobby for the rights to land use for Xinh Mun women by certifying the names of wives being placed in the front and equal with their husbands' names in the LURCs.
- To produce a manual on sustainable use and management of resources by use of community development approach. This would meet the needs of SPERI staff, community development workers, and lobbyists.

### **V. SPERI's community approach**

Most research activities and approaches in the project reflected the nature of a lobby process. Approaches varied different with regards to each target group and each challenge. The lobbying with

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Xinh Mun community is a process of promoting personal confidence and strengthening community solidarity. The process also maximizes spiritual attachments between Xinh Mun people and their land and forest spirits through religious practices, beliefs system, and community traditions and regulations. These skills in community approach are the state-of-the-art; and SPERI attempted to continue learning and finalizing them as our experiences in community development:

1. *To study and research local language, tradition and custom, religious beliefs, and local knowledge and experiences.*
2. *To cooperate closely with village elders and leaders. To interactively link between customary law of the community and the official legal frame.*
3. *To provide opportunities for minority groups to freely discuss and making contacts during their formation of interest groups.*
4. *To create an environment for local communities to meet the right personnel, right topic, right place, and right time so that they exchange about solutions.*
5. *To provide a legitimate legal frame and necessities for community to build up their own pilot on community development and poverty alleviation.*
6. *To facilitate an environment with basic conditions for communities to cross monitor and evaluate.*
7. *To organize workshops for stakeholders include community, local authority, development agency, media, and policy makers having open discussions.*
8. *To create an institutional learning environment for communities can form their self management and self accountability regulations.*
9. *To seek partnerships to increase exchanges among interest groups and interest networks. If possible, to link up directly between networks of local communities, key social entrepreneurs, and key development economics organizations as to prepare a firm foundation for developing further different community services.*

## **VI. Strategies in policy lobby**

1. Introduce Xinh Mun community to scientists who work on sustainable land use for slope land cultivation and forest in the watershed (e.g. Prof. Bui Quang Toan, Prof. Dr. Nguyen Van Truong, Prof. Le Van Khoa, and Dr. Adam Fford, etc). This allowed Xinh Mun community and the scientists to communicate with each other. Sharing experiences helped Xinh Mun people's needs and concerns heard and understood.
2. Make use of realistic indicators and outcomes from the pilot; share them across the mass media so that general public, policy makers and implementers can be informed. This helped to change the view from outsiders looking at Xinh Mun people.
3. Organize national forums for Xinh Mun community, scientists, representatives from communal-district-provincial People's Council, policy makers such as Minister of Forestry Ministry (Prof. Nguyen Quang Ha), Chairman of Ethnic Council of the National Assembly (Dr. Y Ngong Niek Dam), and mass media to together study the problems faced by local communities and discuss solutions.

## **VII. Lobbying skills**

*During the lobbying, each target group has different interests to the others; and this often dues to the differences in perceptions of values. Lobbyists should therefore be flexible in coordinating, integrating,*

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*and having abilities in dealing with multi-tasks e.g. advocating, facilitating, and convincing within the legal framework and financial opportunity. SPERI's skills in lobbying the Xinh Mun case as followed*

**1. Lobbying Xinh Mun community: is the learning process on how to enhance community norms and structure.**

Xinh Mun community structure emphasized the decisive role of women in their family and community. Our lobby process started with Mrs. Vi Thi Dong an elderly woman of Bo Ngoi village. Invite her to participate at community meetings; she was the key person to facilitate the community to realize community strengths including values, culture, and structure. Community meetings were organized at Mrs. Dong's house instead of the village leader's house. After each study visits, she always pioneered in applying knowledge that she gained from the study e.g. gardening, fencing, land use planning, and household management skills. Mrs. Dong became a part of the community soul, gradually improving community structure, and that enhancing the feelings of self confidence. Xinh Mun people started to feel that they were not weak, or backward, or inferior to the others.

**2. Lobbying the 16 Kinh households: is a process using psychological influences based on legal framework and financial compensation to resolve conflicts.**

About 16 Kinh households arrived to settle in Bo Ngoi village was in the context that Xinh Mun people did not yet know how to manage their land. Xinh Mun people only realized their rights to land use and management after they were given opportunities to approach and making use of legal documents. The reclaim of 30 ha of land for Xinh Mun community was at the time appropriate. Lobbying the 16 Kinh households to leave Bo Ngoi valley was based on the co-solidarity between the Kinh and Xinh Mun groups. Many compromises including financial compensations were made for the Kinh households e.g. crops they used to grow on the land were compensated.

**3. Lobbying local authority: is a process of responding to local people's concerns by coordinating local community and authority to co-work on solutions.**

- Invite local authority to get involved in program activities so that they could be better realized the values of Xinh Mun community so to give supports in the reclaim of land use rights for Xinh Mun people.
- Explore opportunities to increase sharing of concept of values, advantages of a strong community structure of Xinh Mun people, and the sustainable development philosophy from SPERI. This helped to improve authority's awareness and understanding of Xinh Mun people and VNGO.
- Facilitate local authority with legal documents to reclaim the rights to land use for Xinh Mun community of 30 ha; and convince authority to accept the name of wives on LURCs which were at the time not recognized by Law. This has changed perceptions of many local authorities towards Xinh Mun community and other ethnic minorities. Prejudice among the general public and policy makers of issues relating ethnic minority has also changed. Gender role in resource use and management has started to taken effects.

During the process, SPERI on the one hand succeed in coordinating different parties and gave consultations when in-need and maintaining its independence. It was more important the remarkable shift happened internally within the Xinh Mun people from self inferior to self confidence was the key factor to change others' view and attitude. Xinh Mun community has become more self control, and able to make decisions for all activities. Yen Chau district authority such as Mr. Hoang Chi Thuc (Chairman of the district's People's Committee), Mr. Bui Dang Du (Vice leader of the district's People's Party), Mr. Lo Van Sinh (Vice Chairman of the district's People's Committee), the Head of district's Projects Management, Mr. Ho Nhu Hong, the Head of district's Land Unit completely changed their attitude towards Xinh Mun people after witnessing their community development.

## **VIII. Benefits for VNGOs through lobby**

- VNGOs learned from challenges when working with local communities and found out their own approaches to resolve problems. They learned the local concept of values, community identity, and traditional structure. VNGOs realized the differences in nature between community norms and outside practices. VNGOs by being closed to local communities could well understand actual needs of the local people.
- VNGOs linked up local's concerns to the policy making process and advocating policy changes for the benefits of the local people. SPERI gained many benefits from being a bridge in this process: not only learn distinctive cultural values and social traditions of Xinh Mun community; but facilitate a better understanding about Xinh Mun people through changing views and attitude of many outsiders. The process was a two-way learning to understand each other; but also changed the unequal view between ethnic minorities and the majority during policy making and implementation.
- Xinh Mun community was able to obtain their rights to land use and management in the whole Bo Ngoi valley. Its effects have expanded to the other 8 Xinh Mun communities nearby and other minorities nationwide during the 1997-2002. The Land Law in 2003 at the Article 48, Section 3 officially regulates both husbands and wives' names in the LURCs<sup>3</sup>.
- After the names of Xinh Mun women were certified on LURCs, they feel stronger of their personal values and also social positions. Their image in the family changes. They are given better opportunities to access to new knowledge whilst integrating with their own local knowledge in using and managing resources. Bo Ngoi village has become a key study site for members of Agro-forestry extension programs of Son La province to come and learn. About 100% of the families are enjoying their lives.
- ICCO donor appreciated highly the project SPERI worked with Xinh Mun community and that decided to select SPERI as a strategic partner in Cooperation and Development.

*VNGOs are a part of civil society, standing aside with government organizations to give assistance in implementing certain social programs. By nature, they are actually civil organizations. During the policy lobby, the benefits for VNGOs is to be able to connect government and civil society to work together to bring better social outcomes.*

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<sup>3</sup> After the Bo Ngoi program in 1997, more than 35,000 ha of forest land were allocated to households and communities including 4,000 ha of primary forests in Luang Prabang district, Luang Prabang province, Laos P.D.R by 2002. About 10,000 women have their names certified in the LURCs (source: SPERI and its successor organizations)

1. *Natural resources would be better preserved if they were under the management by the people.*
2. *Cultural identity values and traditions of ethnic groups would be maintained (See further in the Politburo Resolution 8)*
3. *Social order and social security among communities were strengthened; conflicts between civil society and government would be reduced; the government continued to strengthen its governing role.*
4. *Poverty alleviation and community development could be conducted in the most secured, peaceful, and effective way.*

## IX. Achievement indicators

### IX.1. Indicators on community development

Indicators on improving community needs	Effects of indicators
Communal solidarity was strengthened	People voluntarily protected community forest by self setting up their own community forestry regulations.
Communal confidence was enhanced	People actively exchanged products like soybean, corn, and rice with outsiders. They confidently voice up their opinions in development program. They were willing to share their knowledge to outsiders.
Outsiders' attitude toward the Xinh Mun changed	Image of the Xinh Mun in the eyes of outsider changed. Attitude and behavior of outsiders improved.
Community awareness and understanding was improved	Xinh Mun people know how to make use of their land e.g. growing multi-crops, raising animals, and make composts for recycling agricultural wastes. Environmental health and hygiene was improved. Community adds soybean and vegetables into their daily meal (increasing nutrition).
Women capacity in household management was improved.	Women learn to grow, process, and calculate crops products in their garden. They learn how to sew clothes for family members so to avoid purchasing. They make decisions on how to manage their household activities.
Self management capacity of community increased	People discuss to form community regulations on forest protection, community land, fish pond, and water resources. They discuss ways to increase benefits from fruit trees, cinnamon, fish, soybean processing, and sewing machine.
Rights to forest and land use were recognized officially.	Forest and land were better protected by families and community. Villagers felt secured on their land, enabled to decide what to grow on their land.
Sustainable use of resources.	Better livelihoods for Xinh Mun community; community health improved by a reduction of daily illnesses (e.g. diarrhea, flu, coughing)
Livelihood and social relationship security be improved	Villagers are less dependent and becoming much more proactive in exchanging with outsiders. Relationships

	between Xinh Mun and Kinh people got improved.
30 ha of land and forest in the Bo Ngoi Valley are legally managed by Xinh Mun people.	Xinh Mun women and men are equal in land rights. Conflicts over land between Xinh Mun and Kinh people are completely solved.

## IX.2. Lessons learnt

### IX.2.1. Lessons for VNGOs and lobbyists

- The work with Xinh Mun community has reflected a philosophy that intellectual knowledge and value dignity that VNGOs learnt from the community should return to the community. *The commitments of returning benefits to the community are important for VNGO's sustainable development.*
- Lobby policy changes is a multi-disciplinary process of integrating psychological, cultural, legal, and beneficial approaches to solve problems without creating new conflicts. Lobbyists should identify clearly stakeholders' concerns and well understand each interest's agenda. *Lobbyists can well connect between customary traditions and the current legal frame.*
- Lobby policy changes is a *process of nurturing and developing social norms, community values, and traditions* whilst the formal legal frame can only respond to the least legal requirements of citizens.
- Lobby policy changes is a process but a skill to turn problems encountered by civil society and local authority to become VNGOs' problems and vice versus, turning problems that VNGOs and civil society facing to become authority's problems. When all concerned parties share their problems, they might feel the need to work together to find out ways of dealing with these problems. This is *a way of forming and developing social capital resources.*
- Policy lobby require objectivism, transparency, and honesty in most activities.
- Policy lobby contribute to social order, social security, social benefits, and societal development.

### IX.2.2. Lessons for policy implementation process

1. Strengths of development are often in the position of being proactive, autonomous, self-management, and shared responsibility. Globalization pressures along with international development programs are promoting and advocating self-development and self-autonomy of local communities. *VNGOs should see themselves as the key partner to work with local communities on community development and policy lobbying.* VNGOs could assist policy makers in bringing local needs and concerns to the policy making process to ensure legislation meets the needs and return benefits to local communities.
2. In a so-called democratic and transparent civil society, VNGOs are likely the satellites to bridge the gaps between local communities and policy makers. VNGOs understand the actual local concerns and help to make objective analysis before presenting to policy makers. VNGOs can advocate peaceful approach to solve problems/concerns of the locals and policy makers. *The stereotype seeing VNGOs are opposition with government should therefore be changed.*
3. VNGOs by nature are independent organizations. They are well equipped with intellectual capacity and have broad social understanding. VNGOs are independent in development

function and long term development vision. The government should provide a legitimate legal frame for VNGOs to work effectively in bringing about social benefits.

### **Part III: Conclusions**

1. SPERI uses Xinh Mun case as an illustration on how VNGO doing lobby in Vietnam for 'sustainable use and management of natural resources for minorities' living in the watershed. The study demonstrates policy lobby work by looking at poverty alleviation and community development aspects; although does not define lobby concept. The key target groups are local community, scientists, policy makers and implementers.
2. Policy lobby work is a process - studying the reality, research and analyzing the inconsistencies that occur during policy implementation. It is a process of listening and learning from local community. Lobby is a medium for local community to share their concerns to policy makers; and in return, receiving responses from policy makers. A policy lobby process should maintain fair, objective, and transparent factors.
3. SPERI understands policy lobby work as a *strategy of socializing the differences in ideas, cultural norms, and concept of values of the different social actors*. In the study, SPERI was able to clearly facilitate *a synthesis of concerns brought up by the grassroots communities and together with them defend their concerns to the supportive policy implementers*.

### **Questions**

1. What are conditions for VNGO's to do lobby?
  2. How to strengthen VNGO's in lobby skills?
  3. Do we need a legal frame for lobby in the Vietnamese context?
- Could lobby / lobbying become a profession?