STUDY REPORT

MAPPING AND CAPACITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS WORKING ON ISSUES OF WATER POLLUTION AND WATER CONSERVATION IN VIET NAM

Center for Environment and Community Research (CECR)

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ACRONYMS

CAWACON	Collective Actions for Water Conservation
CSOs	Civil society organizations
CBOs	Community-based organizations
INGOs	International Non-Government Organizations
VNGOs	Vietnamese Non-Government Organizations
VWCN	Viet Nam Water Conservation Network
VPHA	Vietnam Public Health Association

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Rationale

The Project "Collective Actions for Water Conservation" (short name: CAWACON) is supported by USAID Local Work in Vietnam. The project supports a Network of Vietnamese NGOs, named Viet Nam Water Conservation Network (VIWACON) who will work with businesses, research institutions, associations, and individuals who are interested in and protecting surface water in Viet Nam from pollution. Within this framework, the members will work together not only to raise awareness of the public on causes of water pollution, its impacts on health, and economics, but also move to a sense of shared responsibility to protect rivers, streams, lakes, and coastal water areas.

The network will provide a platform for members and the public to dialogue and exchange information and share good practices on water conservation. Besides, the network will identify gaps and challenges in water pollution control and mobilize the participation of all stakeholders in collective actions and innovative solutions to address these issues at the community, provincial, and national levels. In particular, the VWCN will reach to the business sector and other donors to mobilize funding resources and supports to sustain its effort. It is also envisioned that after the project ends, VWCN will continue to be a strong partnership platform for people, civil society, the private sector, and the Vietnamese government to bring concerted efforts to conserve water and advocate for the protection of rivers, streams, fish, and the ecosystem. These efforts will serve to protect water resources from pollution and ensure access to safe water for all people.

Water management, including water pollution control and water conservation, is an extremely complex issue. Its governance requires a good set of laws, infrastructure, technology, and a high level of management capacity. It also requires the participation of all social components because every single entity of society and life depends on the good quality of water and its ecosystem. The main focus of this project for the next three years is on awareness-raising on water pollution and health, on behavior change through small grants and initiatives, based on scientific data and information.

There is an increasing interest in the health sector on environmental-related health issues. Vietnam Public Health Association (VPHA) has been working on environmental health issues through intervention models and policy advocacy. It has expressed great concern over waterborne transmitted diseases. Institute for Preventive Medicine and Public Health (IPMPH), Hanoi Medical University has established the Faculty of Environmental Health, which focuses on water pollution and health issues. Besides, the interest of organizations working on water issues is also increasing dramatically. Vietnam Fisheries Society (VINAFIS) concentrates on water pollution as a major barrier to a sustainable fishery. While all these organizations work on different aspects of water, there is very little coordination among them. Their activities were small, discrete, and not systematic, as a result, the lack of efficiency and a single voice was detrimental to making the necessary changes. If these organizations are connected and strengthened

The initiative of mapping and capacity building needs assessment of civil society organizations (CSOs) focuses on the in-depth capacity needs assessment of relevant national and local NGOs and organizations working on water pollution and health issues, water management, policy advocacy on water conservation. The scoping study will cover how the national policies are being translated through their works and how water pollution management and health impacts are priorities, if at all, in their advocacy or outreach. This will be done in the whole country, through a detailed scoping study (building on the initial work done during the Inception Phase of the project) to identify existing organizations, mapping their water and health focus, strengths in policy advocacy as well as awareness of and gaps in policy advocacy efforts. During the scoping study, the capacity needs assessment was conducted to inform the development of capacity for target organizations. This effort tries to identify the strengths of the CSOs and gaps in the leadership capacity, management, and policy advocacy capacity, and the gaps that need to be addressed by the capacity building

development programs and water management initiatives. The geographical areas will be focused on Hanoi, Danang.

The findings and recommendations from the scoping study will inform the development of the training modules for target CSOs. The training module will be developed following that will be used to strengthen the capacity of the national and local NGOs/CBOs to strengthen their capacity to advocate for water conservation, for implementation of collective actions to water conservation, and advocacy for community support policy and public-private partnership in water conservation.

1.2. Objectives of the study

The mapping and capacity building need assessment was carried out by the Center for Environment Community Research (CECR) with technical support from the national consultant. The objective of the study including:

- Provide overview context analysis of the current policy on water pollution and water conservation in Viet Nam and room for collaboration and networking to address water pollution and water conservation issues.
- Mapping out local NGOs working on water pollution and water conservation in Viet Nam
- Identify the needs and interests of local NGOs in the capacity building towards better collaboration, networking, and advocacy and implement collective actions to address water pollution and water conservation issue.
- Provide recommendations for design and deliver capacity development includes training modules on strengthening the capacity of national and local NGO/CBO and implement the collective actions to advocate for water conservation.

1.3. Scope of study

- **Mapping exercise:** the consultant reviewed relevant materials to collect information to identify organizations that have missions, visions, or interventions related to water issues in Viet Nam. There are some key aspects of the organizations that were collected and analyzed through the mapping exercise including (1) Type of organization, (2) Year of establishment; (3) experience in research and advocacy on water issues.

- **Capacity Need assessment:** the in-depth interviews and online questionnaires survey with target organizations were conducted to assess the current capacity and needs of local CSOs on capacity building to do networking and collection actions for water pollution and water conservation.

1.4. Methodology

❖ *Desk review*

The desk review began with understanding the existing policies, laws, research reports, and policy briefs on water conservation that exist for Vietnam. This was carried out to understand the framework conditions for operations within the area of water conservation and what implications they have in practice. The desk review paid more effort to collect available databases on CSOs working in the area of water conservation to provide inputs and primary information on Vietnamese CSO working on this issue.

❖ *Online survey questionnaire interview*

The online survey questionnaire interview was conducted targeting NGOs working in the area of water conservation. This survey has two objectives, the first is to take approval from the organization to participate in this primary survey and the second is to collect essential information about the organization. This includes information on the profile of the organization, their scope of work, the geographic span, whether they have done any advocacy work or not, etc. Annex 1 provides this quick survey questionnaire with target organizations.

❖ *In-depth interview*

The in-depth interview was conducted with representatives of **12 selected organizations.** The list of interviewees from these 12 organizations is provided in Annex 2. Before the in-depth interview, a capacity-framework that looked into the capacities of the organization was designed and administered. As the interviewees were key informants from the organization and also with greater experience at the community level, this survey served the purpose of providing a baseline understanding of the organization's capacities in need. This survey also responded to how organizations self-assessed themselves on their knowledge, skills, and capacity. There are six-domains of the organizational capacity that will be examined including:

1. Strategic Development capacity of the organization.
2. Evidence-based research capacity of the organization
3. Policy advocacy capacity of the organization
4. Networking and partnership capacity of the organization
5. Fundraising capacity of the organization
6. Leadership capacity of the organization

The capacity framework and the themes also needed to be explained to the respondents. Besides, indicators that determine a specific theme were also identified. The details of the capacity framework, the definition of each theme, and its indicators are provided in Annex 3 for reference. For each of these themes, input was sought through interviews, questionnaire responses, and secondary information available on the internet.

Within these themes, the questions assessed the needs and existing capacity building on some specific topics; needs and interests to improve knowledge and skills of policy advocacy; needs and interests to improve partnership for policy advocacy; and specific needs and interests for capacity building in water conservation, networking, and evidence-based research skills. The in-depth interviews also identified advantages, obstacles, and specific needs and interests of those VNGOs in policy advocacy on water conservation.

1.5. Limitations

This study presents a methodologically sound way to assess the needs of NGOs within the defined scope of research. However, there are some limitations of this study, which arise mostly from the boundaries of the scope of work that must be kept in mind for future analysis.

First of all, there are many different types of CSOs in Viet Nam, such as mass organizations; national socio-professional associations; local associations; science and technology development and research organizations or VNGOs, and informal groups. For this study, we defined the scope by focussing only on VNGOs as a key target for the capacity needs assessment. The other types of CSOs were not covered in this capacity needs assessment because they are not active actors in responding to water conservation issues and they are difficult to access them in this stage. Therefore, the findings from this assessment will not reflect the needs and interests of all types of CSOs in Viet Nam. However, they can be considered in future assessments.

Secondly, due to time and budget limitations, the study is based on a small sample and only one leader representative from each VNGO was interviewed to assess the needs and interests on behalf of the organization. The in-depth assessment will increase with a larger sample and more respondents per organization. Besides, it was difficult to approach some VNGOs and they are reluctant to provide organizational information. The consultant only approached 12 organizations who have a strong willingness to participate in this survey and showed their interest in the in-depth interviews. The information of the remaining 8 organizations is only based on a desk-review of the organizational website and online profiles.

PART II: KEY FINDINGS

2.1. Civil society in Viet Nam

Before 1986, the concept of civil society organizations (CSOs) was not introduced in Viet Nam. The 'civil society' concept was first introduced to state agencies, beneficiary communities, and society in the early 1990s when international charities and development organizations entered Viet Nam. [1] In 2009, the ADB classified CSOs in Viet Nam into eight categories as follows:

- **NGOs:** specialized, intermediary, and non-profit organizations providing or support the provision of services related to socio-economic development, human rights, public welfare, or emergency relief.
- **Career associations**: This is an organization representing the interests of members who are active in a certain career field or do certain special occupations. Professional associations can create industry-related standards for members such as architects' associations, public accountants, etc.
- **Funds**: A charity formed by individuals or entities as a legal entity (a corporation or trust fund) that supports careers that are relevant to their goals of the fund.
- **Independent research institutes**: are the main organizations conducting research and analysis activities related to public policy issues and spreading their research findings and recommendations in the hope of having influence policymakers and policymakers.
- **CBOs**: These organizations often address members' concerns immediately. The key characteristic of CBOs is that they can mobilize communities through expressing needs, organizing and implementing participatory processes, accessing outsourced development services, and sharing benefits between members.
- **Religious organizations**: Groups with a religious establishment are established around a place of worship or a congregation, a religious establishment, or a registered or unregistered establishment with a religious identity or religion.
- **People's organizations**: These are groups of popular volunteers aimed at promoting the economic and social prosperity of its members.
- **Social and trade unions**: These are large-scale informal groups of individuals or organizations that change society through long-term, organized collective action.

To date, Viet Nam does not have a formal definition of CSOs yet, and this term is only used popularly by international development partners and INGOs working in Viet Nam. However, in practice, some types of organizations could be considered as a civil society organization, including (1) "mass organization"; (2) professional unions; (3) VNGOs, and (4) Community Based Organizations (CBOs).

The "mass organizations", which are usually called "socio-political organizations" were very popular in Viet Nam. These are main organizations which were named as "Mass organizations", such as the Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour (called as Trade Unions), the Women's Union, the Farmers' Association, the Veterans' Association, and the Youth Union. All of which were established in the 1930s in close coordination with the Party under the umbrella of the Fatherland Front. These organizations have very strong grassroots and large memberships, for example, Women's Union (12 million members); Farmers'

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[1] Binh, L.Q., Nam, N.T.T., Tra, P.T., & Phuong, P.Q. (2016) Benchmark assessment of civil society space in Viet Nam. Hanoi: The Institute for Studies of Society, Economy and Environment. Available at: http://isee.org.vn/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/benchmark-assessment-of-civil-society-space-in-vietnam..pdf

association (8 million members); General Federation of Trade Union (4.2 million members); Youth Union (5.1 million members); and Veterans' Association (1.92 million members)[2].

The "professional unions" and "associations" have been introduced in the early 1980s thanks to the establishment of three professional unions that bring together people with similar professional interests in science, culture, and solidarity. These were the Viet Nam Union for Science and Technology Association (VUSTA); Viet Nam Writers and Artists Association (VWAA) and the Vietnam Union for Peace, Solidarity and Friendship Association (VUPSFO – later called VUFO – Vietnam Union for Friendship Organizations). There were approximately 320 professional unions and associations in 2006, including business associations and umbrella groups or networks. They include "official" organizations, such as the Red Cross and journalists' associations, as well as non-state, socio-professional associations that cross over into the category of VNGOs, because they do some humanitarian or development work, as well as being organized around a group of professionals or businesspeople[3].

The "non-governmental organizations'" (NGOs) was also first introduced in the early 1990s when international charities and development organizations entered Viet Nam. There are also many international NGOs (INGOs) setting up offices in Viet Nam and the number of small local NGOs is also growing.[4] From the mid-1990s, there are also research institutions established, and organizations described as science and technology research organizations could be under this category. However, a change in regulations in 2009, closed-off areas in which independent organizations started by individuals were allowed to work. Many of these were registered under the Viet Nam Union of Science and Technology Associations (VUSTA) or its provincial branches; others register with ministries, city, and provincial authorities, universities, or mass organizations. They range in size from dozens of staff to a single founder, plus volunteers and consultants. Many VNGOs and research institutes have a strong technical capacity in their respective field. There is no official data on the number of VNGOs in Viet Nam[5]. The "VNGOs" terminology is now used more often in Vietnamese official life and by VNGOs themselves.

Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), which can be informal or associated with official organizations have been generally accepted by local authorities as grassroots movements. CBOs usually have started with a local development aim in mind, for example, water use efficiency, credit provision, or assistance for marginalized groups, such as the disabled, and may incorporate members of the local administration and/or mass organizations. The core activities of these CBOs are in the fields of poverty reduction, humanitarian relief, self-organization, and professional development. Only in the 2000s did CBOs in Viet Nam began to receive funds from international sources. Agricultural CBOs are formed under a Law on Cooperatives, and about 15,000 had registered by 2005. A broader kind of voluntary CBOs,

[2] ADB (2011). The Asian Development Bank, Civil Society Briefd Viet Nam 2011. Ha Noi: Vietnam Resident Mission. Available at: https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/28969/csb-vie.pdf (Accessed: November 20, 2019)

[3] Ibid

[4] Norlund, I. et al. (*Eds.*) (2006). The emerging civil society: An initial assessment of Civil society in Viet Nam. Johannesburg: CIVICUS: The World Alliance for Citizen Participation. Available at: https://www.undp.org/content/dam/vietnam/docs/Publications/22110_3202_Civicuc_report__E_%20(1).pdf (Accessed: November 20, 2019)

[5] Wells-Dan, A. (2012). Civil Society and Climate Change in Viet Nam, Actors, Roles and Possibilities. Hanoi: PACT, Vietnam Country Office. Available at: https://loggingoff.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/452.pdf

rural collaborative groups, are present in many locations in Viet Nam. By some estimates, there are 200,000 of these, with varying focuses and membership[6].

Category	Types of organizations included in the category	Relation to the state	Vietnamese definition
Mass Organizations	1. Women's Union 2. Farmers' Association 3. Youth Organization 4. War Veterans Association 5. Worker's Organization (VGCL)	Fatherland Front	Socio-Political Organizations
Professional Associations and Umbrella Organizations	1. Umbrella organizations like Red Cross, VUSTA, VUAL, Cooperative Alliance, etc. 2. Professional Associations	1. Fatherland Front 2. Registered with an umbrella organization, Center, or provincial organization	1. Socio-Professional Associations 2. Social and professional associations; some belong to the NGOs
VNGOs	Charity Research NGOs Consultancy NGOs Educational NGOs Health NGOs	VUSTA, Line Ministries, Provincial or District People's Committees	Social Organizations, NGOs
Community-based Organizations	Service and development or livelihoods-oriented Faith-based organizations Neighborhood groups Family clans Recreative groups	Indirect affiliation to other organizations or Civil Code Many are not registered	Rural collaborative groups Faith-based organizations Neighborhood groups Family clans

Source: Irene Norlund, "Filling the Gap: The Emerging Civil Society in Viet Nam." p. 11.

Although the term CSOs are not legally accepted by Government, some legal frameworks were issued by Government to manage control organizations that be considered as CSOs in Viet Nam and there are some policies and laws that provide legal frameworks to CSOs in Viet Nam, as follow:

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[6] Ibid

Table 1: Policy and legal frameworks for Civil society organizations in Viet Nam

Name of policy	Key points
The Law on Science and Technology – Law 29/2013/QH13 dated 1 January 2014	This law was particularly important for many developments and training VNGOs, which register with VUSTA and ministries as science and technology organizations. It provides regulations on the establishment, organization, and management of the science and technology organizations; the rights, benefits, and obligations of the science and technology organizations.
Decree 45/2010/ND-CP, dated 21 April 2010, on Management and organization of the associations and professional unions	Provides legal guidance on process and procedures related to the establishment, organization, and management of the associations and professional unions; the rights, benefits, and obligations of the associations, and state management with the associations.
Decree 80/2020/ND-CP, dated 8 July 2020, on regulations on management and use of the international aid	Provides specific guidelines and regulations on the process and procedures for the management and use of international aids, which will be applied to all VNGOs, mass organizations, and associations, professional unions who received the international aid support.
Decree 79/2003/ND-CP, dated 7 July 2003, on Grassroots Democracy	To ensure the right of the rural population "to be informed, to discuss, to carry out and to monitor" decisions of importance for their communities To regulate the role of mass organizations and professional associations in monitoring and providing feedback on the policy implementation.
Law on Promulgation of Legal Normative Documents, Law No. 80/2015 /QH13)	The Viet Nam Fatherland Front, the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Front's member organizations, and other agencies, organizations, and individuals have the right and are allowed to provide opinions about the request for construction of legal documents and draft legal documents. And in the course of elaborating legal documents, drafting agencies and relevant organizations have a responsibility to create conditions for agencies, organizations, and individuals to comment to draft legal documents; to organize to collect opinions of subjects directly affected by legal documents (Article 6). Agencies, organizations, and deputies of the National Assembly who preside over the drafting of legislative documents must consult relevant agencies, organizations, and subjects directly affected by the policy on the proposal, draft laws, ordinances, and bills, ordinances, draft resolutions on the web portal, or through the form of direct consultation, sending draft proposals for comments, organizing conferences, seminars, through the mass media (Articles 36 and 57)

Resolution No. 60/2007/NQ-CP Dated 3 December 2007;	Direct promoting the people's initiative and ownership in participating in the process of making policies, programs and plans to cope with climate change.

NGOs networks or working groups are other types of informal organizations in Viet Nam. Most NGOs networks or working groups are considered an unofficial organization. All networks and working groups are established and maintained for voluntary purposes. At present, there are some networks or working groups of CSOs that have been established and maintained with the participation of diversified membership organizations. The numbers of membership could be very large or small depending on case by case. The management of those networks is assigned to one qualified member.

In water sectors, Viet Nam River Network (VRN) is the biggest network of member organizations working on river issues, including NGO's representatives, researchers, academics, government officials, local communities, and individuals. VRN was established in November 2005 and coordinated by The Centre for Water Resource Conservation and Development (WARECOD). Since 2012, the Centre for Social Research and Development (CSRD) take a turn to be responsible for the overall coordination of VRN's activities including activities in Central Vietnam. WARECOD continues to facilitate the activities in the North and the Centre for Biodiversity and Development (CBD) continues to facilitate the activities in the South. Green Innovation and Development Centre (GreenID) is supporting VRN in advocacy work particularly in the area of energy and development. VRN is an open forum whose membership comprises a broad set of actors concerned with river protection and sustainable development in Vietnam.

Besides, the Coalition for Clean Water (CCW) was also other networks of NGOs working on water issues. The network was established in 2013, with the participation of 30 key members in Son La, Da Nang, Hanoi, Bac Ninh, Quang Nam, Binh Duong, Thai Binh, Can Tho provinces. This is a network of NGOs involved in the protection and monitoring of water resources. The network has been founded and coordinated by CECR aiming to address water pollution and its impacts on the health of people living around it. In each locality, CCW has formed partnerships to mobilize the participation of all stakeholders including government, businesses, research institutes, universities, and communities to participate in the management model through capacity building, developing databases on water pollution sources, technical measures to prevent pollution from wastewater and waste, and developing action plans in monitoring and preventing water pollution in the above localities.

In sum, although there is no official definition of civil society organization to date, the CSO term has been used popularly and accepted by many development partners and NGOs in Viet Nam. The Vietnamese Government also have issued some legal documents to guide and manage the operation of CSOs in Viet Nam. However, the current legal frameworks are more focused on strengthening and guiding the state management on CSOs activities. It lacks the specific legal documents to provide guidance or facilitation of CSO's roles in policy advocacy or address the water-related issues. This limitation leads to the fact that many CSOs working on water issues are not clear to what extent and how they could participate in the policy advocacy and they are also reluctant to join the CSOs network to address this issue.

2.2. General information on CSOs working water-related issues

The desk-review of the book list of Vietnamese NGOs, published by The Asia Foundation, in 2011 was conducted to explore the number of NGOs working on water-related issues in Viet Nam. The book list covers 386 organizations, which were categorized into 6 types of CSOs, including (1) Centers – usually called Vietnamese NGOs, (2) Clubs – usually called community-based organization, (3) associations – called professional associations, (4) unions, (5) self-help networks, and (6) research institutes. Among those, there are only nine organizations that have specific interventions on water-related issues. Besides, the mapping exercise also reviewed the list of organizations, which are the members of the Coalition for

Clean Water. As a result, a total of 21 organizations have been selected for the survey. This section provides basic information on those organizations.

Water-related interventions

The mapping exercise focused on the organizations that have vision and mission or at least interventions on water-related issues. Therefore, the desk-review was used as the first step to screen those organizations. 21 organizations that have specific interventions in the area of water have been reviewed by this survey.

The result of a desk-review shows that there are four main kinds of interventions related to water issues that have been implemented by those organizations including (1) conduct applied research and study; (2) provide training and capacity building, (3) implement project/program on water treatment, and (4) conduct pilot models on water treatment or technology application for water treatment. More detailed information is presented in the below table 2.

Table 2: List of CSOs that have interventions on water-related issues in Viet Nam

No	Name of organization	Interventions on water
1	Center for Researching and Applying New Technology and Environment (ENVIC)	• Provide service on science and technology for wastewater treatment and clean water supply; treatment of hazardous waste and other science and technology services; • Training, consulting, appraisal, conferences, and seminars in the fields above.
2	Technology Center for Storage and Environment (TSEC)	• Handling waste, clean water, and factors affecting the environment.
3	Center for Water Resources Conservation and Development (WARECOD)	• Raising awareness of water resource protection, use and management of clean water supply, and extension activities • Assessment of environmental, cultural, and social impacts of development projects related to water resources
4	Vinh Phuc Provincial Fund for Vietnamese Children (VFVC)	• Supporting the construction of preschool classes, clean water wells for educational institutions, medical institutions for raising and taking care of children in difficult areas, mountainous and remote areas ...
5	Center for Development of Community and Children (CDCC)	• Clean water and sanitation conditions
6	The Consultative Institute for Socioeconomic Development of Rural and Mountainous Area (CISDOMA)	• Providing experts in the fields of Agriculture, energy, environment, forestry, fishery, rural development planning to explore and exploit clean water.
7	Institute of Water Resources Technology and Environment (IWRETE)	• Science and technology services: consulting to set up pre-feasibility projects for irrigation construction works and the environment; • Consulting feasible project formulation, selecting technology and equipment in the field

		of water resources engineering and environmental treatment;
		• environmental impact assessment; professional training and fostering in the above research fields.
8	Southeast Asia Institute for Water Resources and Environment (SAIWRE)	• Conduct scientific research and implementing programs, projects in the field of water resources and environment; • Management, exploitation, preservation, improvement, and protection of water sources, environmental environment. • The relationship between the environment, water resources, and life; • To apply technologies in the construction, management, and exploitation of irrigation projects, hydroelectricity, water treatment, environmental protection, and water resources for agriculture, rural areas, and daily life. • Training human resources and transferring technology, scientific and technical advances in the fields of irrigation, hydropower, water resource use, environmental treatment. • Implementation of science and technology services, consulting, appraisal and evaluation projects, irrigation works, hydroelectricity, water resource use, and exploitation and environmental impact assessment; • Provide knowledge and dissemination, and conferences and seminars.
9	Science Technology Union for Rural Development (STURD)	• Use energy sources of water sources, • Combat environmental pollution in rural areas.
10	Center for Sustainable Community Development (SCODE)	• To clear the flow of Day River • Clean water treatment • Wastewater treatment in the craft village
11	Viet Nam Fisheries Association (VINAFIS)	• Conduct study and research on exploiting and farming aquatic products • Management of wastewater, sludge, plastic waste in fisheries activities
12	Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (INEST)	• Wastewater treatment; • Implement the intervention projects related to river and lake ecosystems
13	Center for Development of Community Initiative and Environment (C&E center)	• Use of wastewater in rural and urban farming • Conduct research on sustainable development of Quao river lake in Binh Thuan province,

		• sustainable water use toolkits for university lecturers school and youth groups; • water management and use through participatory bilateral dialogues with small-scale water suppliers and re-use water in the river basin
14	Center for Sustainable Development for Water Resources and Climate Change Adaptation (CEWAREC)	• River basin management; • Impact assessment on the water environment, river health, community livelihoods in the development project • Conduct cross-border impacts in the Mekong River basin to Vietnam; pollution, encroachment on river and lake water sources and recommendations on solutions; water security;
15	Centre for Marinelife Conservation and Community Development (MCD)	• Strengthen the management of waste floating on the river; • Projects on environmental sanitation
16	Ben Tre Young Creative Group (BTSCG)	• Water purification model
17	Centre of consulting, application and development for agriculture science and environment (CADASE)	• Agriculture waste management and treatment • Domestic waste management and treatment
18	Center for Rural Resources Development Research (CRDR)	• Produce bio-products for flood water treatment to use for domestic water and pond treatment • To build purification tanks and the rainwater tanks
19	Consultative and Research Center on Natural Resources Management (CORENAM)	• Support Management Board of Protection Forest to plant models of indigenous trees in the water resource protection basin
20	Centre for Social Research and Development (CSRD)	• Hydropower Impact Assessment • Water Governance and Community Role • Flood Management
21	The Center for Environment Community Research (CECR)	• Study and research on water pollution • Policy advocacy on water pollution control • Lead the Clean Water Coalition

(Source: questionnaire interview with 12 organizations and desk review)

As mentioned, one limitation of this mapping exercise is that it does not cover all Vietnamese CSOs working on water-related issues in Viet Nam. The selection of CSOs for review was conducted randomly and based on their willingness to participate in this survey. Therefore, not all CSOs are identified and reviewed by this survey. However, those organizations

selected for this mapping exercise are the most active organizations working on this issue in Viet Nam.

Besides, although, several NGOs and local networks are working on different aspects of water in Vietnam, the practical experience working with those organizations shows the fact that there are only some organizations have active roles and great contribution to address water-related issues in Viet Nam. For example, The Center for Environment Community Research (CECR), which coordinates the Clean Water Coalition has been focusing on advocating a new law on water pollution control. Vietnam River Network, a network coordinated by the Center for Water Resources Conservation and Development (WARECOD), and Center for Sustainable Development of Water Resources and Adaptation to Climate Change (CEWAREC), are both local NGOs, have been advocating for sustainable water resource exploitation and water quality monitoring at the community level. The Institute for Environmental Science and Technology (INEST), Hanoi University for Science and Technology, has done much work on applied research on water science and technology and best practices for communities. Vietnam Water Supply and Sewerage Association (VWSA), which has 300 members, has worked with CECR on a community business partnership to protect up-streams for water supply production. In addition, there are many CSOs in Viet Nam already have knowledge and experience in the areas of water pollution and water conservation. This experience could be used as a good start for establishing the networks to learn and share among CSO, and facilitate the collective actions to address the water pollution or water conservation effort in Viet Nam.

Head-office, project location, and year of establishment

The result from the desk-review also shows that the majority of surveyed organizations have a head office in Ha Noi city. 14 out of 21 surveyed organizations (equal to 66.7%) have a head office in Ha Noi. There are several organizations that have head-office in another province, but this number is small in total. This situation raises attention that Ha Noi based organizations should be the priority, and do not forget the provincial-based organizations when facilitating the establishment of the networks or collection actions on water issues.

Table 3: Head-office, project location, and year of establishment

No	Name of organization	Head office	Project locations	Year of establishment
1	Center for Researching and Applying New Technology and Environment (ENVIC)	Ha Noi	Ha Noi	2007
2	Technology Center for Storage and Environment (TSEC)	Ha Noi	Nationwide	2003
3	Center for Water Resources Conservation and Development (WARECOD)	Ha Noi	Nationwide	2006
4	Vinh Phuc Provincial Fund for Vietnamese Children (VFVC)	Vinh Phuc	Vinh Phuc	1993
5	Center for Development of Community and Children (CDCC)	Ha Noi	Ha Noi, Lang Son	2005
6	The Consultative Institute for Socio-economic Development of Rural and Mountainous Area (CISDOMA)	Ha Noi	Northern Mountainous provinces	2000

7	Institute of Water Resources Technology and Environment (IWRETE)	Ho Chi Minh	Ho Chi Minh	2003
8	Southeast Asia Institute for Water Resources and Environment (SAIWRE)	Ha Noi	Ha Noi	2007
9	Science Technology Union for Rural Development (STURD)	Ha Noi	Nationwide	1993
10	Center for Sustainable Community Development (SCODE)	Ha Noi	Nationwide	2005
11	Viet Nam Fisheries Association (VINAFIS)	Ha Noi	Nationwide	2000
12	Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (INEST)	Ha Noi	Nationwide	1998
13	Center for Development of Community Initiative and Environment (C&E)	Ha Noi	Nationwide	2008
14	Center for Sustainable Development for Water Resources and Climate Change Adaptation (CEWAREC)	Ha Noi	Nationwide	2008
15	Centre for Marinelife Conservation and Community Development (MCD)	Ha Noi	Nationwide	2003
16	Ben Tre Startup Creative Group (BTSCG)	Ben Tre	Red River Delta	2010
17	Centre of consulting, application and development for agriculture science and environment (CADASE)	Thai Binh	Thai Binh	2009
18	Center for Rural Resources Development Research (CRDR)	Ha Tinh	North Central	2011
19	Consultative and Research Center on Natural Resources Management (CORENAM)	Hue	Nationwide	2005
20	Centre for Social Research and Development (CSRD)	Hue	North Central	2008
21	The Center for Environment Community Research (CECR)	Ha Noi	Nationwide	2009

There is a good foundation that most of the surveyed organizations have a long history of experience in addressing water issues. This could be seen through the majority of organizations established between the years of 1993 and 2011. Of which, the Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (Hanoi University of Technology) is the organization which was established earliest in 1998. The Center for Research and Development of Rural Resources in Ha Tinh was the latest organization that was established in 2011. There are many organizations established in year 2000s. This shows a fact that many organizations have a long history of experience with water-related issues in Viet Nam. This will be a good entry point if they are engaged in policy advocacy on water-related issues. The remaining issue is that to what extent and how these experiences should be documented, coordinated, and utilized for policy advocacy efforts.

The majority of surveyed organizations are registered as science and technology organizations, it is usually called a Vietnamese Non-governmental Organization (VNGOs). There are only three organizations that have some specific titles as Association, Foundation, or Training Centers. This shows a high potential entry point for promoting the roles of CSOs in policy advocacy. Having experience and labeling as a science and technology-based organization, those organizations will have a strong position to contribute their efforts to policy advocacy effort by conducting evidence-based research, piloting models, and then providing inputs and practical evidence for policy development and implementation process.

There is another strong entry point for networking and partnership between CSOs in addressing water-related issues is that the majority of surveyed organizations have interventions at the nationwide level. 11 out of 21 organizations have interventions at nationwide level (accounting for 52.4%). The remaining three organizations have areas of operation concentrated in the North Central Coast and Red River Delta (accounting for 18.2% and 9.1% respectively). This shows good potentials to collect and coordinate diversified experience and good practices from the ground and bring it to a common platform for discussion and sharing at the national level.

Human resource and funding resource

The human resource of NGOs will play important roles not only in operating the organization but also in networking with other organizations. The practical experience shows that organizational experience and capacity could be seen through several qualified staff members are available and the documentation system is in place to keep knowledge and skills of the organization be continuing, even when the staff turn-over. However, there is a fact that the capacity of the organization will depend very much on the top leader's experience and knowledge. Many NGOs have young human resources and poor experience staff. Most of the surveyed organizations have a small number of staff members with a range from 4 to 15 staff members, and the majority of staff members are women. The information on the human resources of 12 organizations involved in the questionnaire interviews is presented in table 3.

Table 3: Human resource of surveyed organizations

No	Organizations	Total	Males	Female
1	Center for Sustainable Community Development (SCODE)	7	4	3
2	Viet Nam Fisheries Association (VINAFIS)	15	10	5
3	Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (INEST)	38	16	22

4	Center for Development of Community Initiative and Environment (C&E)	10	3	7
5	Center for Sustainable Development for Water Resources and Climate Change Adaptation (CEWAREC)	10	5	5
6	Centre for Marinelife Conservation and Community Development (MCD)	15	2	13
7	Ben Tre Startup Creative Group (BTSCG)	12	7	8
8	Centre of consulting, application and development for agriculture science and environment (CADASE)	15	4	11
9	Centre for Social Research and Development (CSRD)			
10	Consultative and Research Center on Natural Resources Management (CORENAM)	4	2	2
11	Centre for Social Research and Development (CSRD)	5	0	5
12	The Center for Environment Community Research (CECR)	10	2	8

(Source: questionnaire interview with 12 organizations)

Besides, the human resource of NGOs is depending on the project's fund. The low salary payment is another challenge for NGOs to keep their staff stays longer with the organization and head-hunting effort. As a result, Vietnamese NGOs could not have enough capacity to bid on the big proposal and lack the human resource to manage and implement the project and program effectively.

The competition for funding is also another challenge that requires the Vietnamese NGOs need to build their capacity and networking to deal with this situation. According to the questionnaire survey conducted with 12 out of 21 organizations above, the majority of organizations have a main funding source, from international non-governmental organizations (accounting for 62.5%). This is the most traditional source of funding that has been accessed by those organizations.

Figure 1: Current funding resource of surveyed organizations
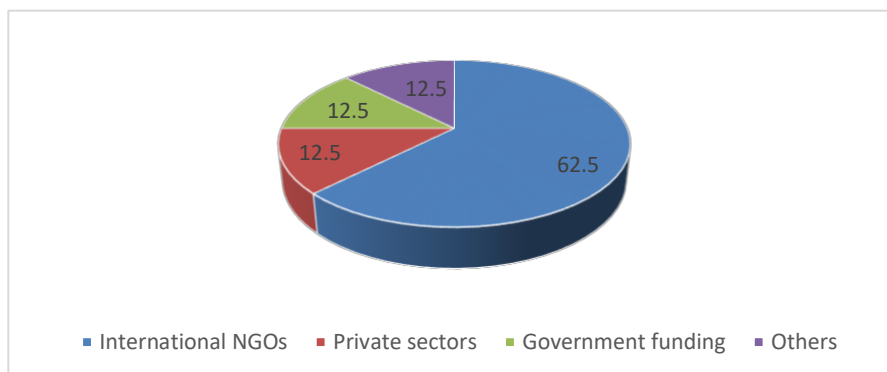
(Source: questionnaire interview with 12 organizations)

Besides, some organizations have funding sources from the State Budget or Government funding sources (accounting for 12.5%), for example, INEST, VINAFIS, but this source is very limited, and not many Vietnamese NGOs have access to this. Some organizations have funding resources from businesses or private sectors, such as the Vietnam Fisheries Association, but the percentage is also very low (accounting for 12.5%). This is a non-traditional funding resource. However, there is a big challenge now for all Vietnamese NGOs is that their funding source is mainly dependent on international development aids while this source to become limited due to many big donors and development partners have been phasing out from Viet Nam.

2.3. Organizational experience in the water-related issues

2.3.1. Evidence-based research

The mapping activity also tries to explore to what extent and how CSOs in Viet Nam experience the evidence-based research skills, which aims to provide strong evidence for policy advocacy on water-related issues. Therefore, one of the tasks under the mapping exercise is to explore to what extent the local CSOs in Viet Nam have experience in conducting evidence-based research, particularly on water issues. The result of the desk review shows that most of the organizations have experience in researching general and water-related issues in particular, but there is not much experience in doing evidence-based research.

Table 4: Basic information on surveyed organizations

No	Name of organization	Research experience
1	Center for Researching and Applying New Technology and Environment (ENVIC)	• Conduct scientific research and technology application in the fields of electricity, electronics, measurement, chemicals, fertilizers, and the environment. • Study on environmental treatment and environmental impact assessment. • Research, design, project, and transfer technology in the above research fields.
2	Technology Center for Storage and Environment (TSEC)	• Technology research in preserving and processing agricultural products, preventing termites and harmful organisms; waste treatment, clean water, and other factors affecting the environment. • Research in the field of preservation and the environment, specialized equipment, and active ingredients. • Biotechnology research in plant and environment protection.
3	Center for Water Resources Conservation and Development (WARECOD)	• Conduct five studies on local knowledge about aquatic resources. • Implement social research projects related to livelihoods and access to clean water in the community.
4	Vinh Phuc Provincial Fund for Vietnamese Children (VFVC)	N/A
5	Center for Development of Community and Children (CDCC)	• Research experience in the fields of environment, children, gender equality, and HIV/AIDS

| 6	The Consultative Institute for Socioeconomic Development of Rural and Mountainous Area (CISDOMA)	• Conduct research and assessment on sustainable environmental; natural resource management; climate change response; disaster risk management; sustainable agriculture and rural livelihoods; market connectivity; social enterprise development.
7	Institute of Water Resources Technology and Environment (IWRETE)	• Scientific research in the field of water resources and environment management, exploitation, preservation, improvement, and protection of water sources, the environment Ecological; the relationship between the environment, water resources, and life;
8	Southeast Asia Institute for Water Resources and Environment (SAIWRE)	• Scientific research on water resources and environment; management, exploitation, preservation, embellishment, and protecting water sources, ecological environment; the relationship between the environment, water resources, and life; • Environmental impact assessment;
9	Science Technology Union for Rural Development (STURD)	• Researching and consulting on rural and agricultural development planning in different regions.
10	Center for Sustainable Community Development (SCODE)	N/A
11	Viet Nam Fisheries Association (VINAFIS)	• Research and share experiences in aquaculture and fish farming
12	Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (INEST)	• Experienced in researching environmental protection in Vietnam, solving environmental problems in Vietnamese craft villages, and reusing waste.
13	Center for Development of Community Initiative and Environment (C&E)	• Conduct quality studies on social and environmental impacts on local communities focus on climate change impacts, sustainable consumption, and production, • Conduct social-environmental impacts of construction of industrial parks and public works, community participation in the effective management and use of resources.
14	Center for Sustainable Development for Water Resources and Climate Change Adaptation (CEWAREC)	• Implement research related to sustainable development, integrated water resources management, strategic environment impact, climate change, and adaptation to climate change • Conduct survey for economical and social conditions related to sustainable development, integrated water resources

		management, investment projects, and adaptation to climate change
15	Centre for Marinelife Conservation and Community Development (MCD)	• Research on coastal communities and marine ecosystems • Applied research on Integrated coastal management
16	Ben Tre Startup Creative Group (BTSCG)	• Conduct applied research on water filtration model by fertility membrane methods for farmers in areas that do not have clean water
17	Centre of consulting, application and development for agriculture science and environment (CADASE)	N/A
18	Center for Rural Resources Development Research (CRDR)	N/A
19	Consultative and Research Center on Natural Resources Management (CORENAM)	• Research and assessment on forest management • Assessment on the ecosystem and its resilience
20	Centre for Social Research and Development (CSRD)	• Gender assessment in hydropower development • Applied study on water governance
21	The Center for Environment Community Research (CECR)	• Research and policy analysis on current legislation, policy gaps related to Water Pollution Control, and environmental protection in the bottom-up approaches

Concerning water-related issues, the result of the questionnaire survey and desk review shows that many organizations (17 out of 21 organizations) have the experience to research water-related issues, such as river basin management; impacts on the water environment, river health, community livelihoods of development projects (thermal power, hydropower, industry); cross-border impacts in the Mekong basin to Vietnam; pollution, encroachment on river and lake water sources and recommendations on solutions; water security. Although these organization's research is more focused on scientific research and applied research on water issues, this is a good foundation to build up the capacity of evidence-based research in the future and facilitate collective actions to address water-related issues.

2.3.2. Policy advocacy experience

The result of the mapping exercise with 21 organizations (9 members of Clean Water Coalition and 11 organizations in the book list of VNGOs in Viet Nam) showed that some organizations only have the experience to do policy advocacy in general. Not many CSOs have the experience to do policy advocacy on water issues. This is a big gap that could be considered by the project.

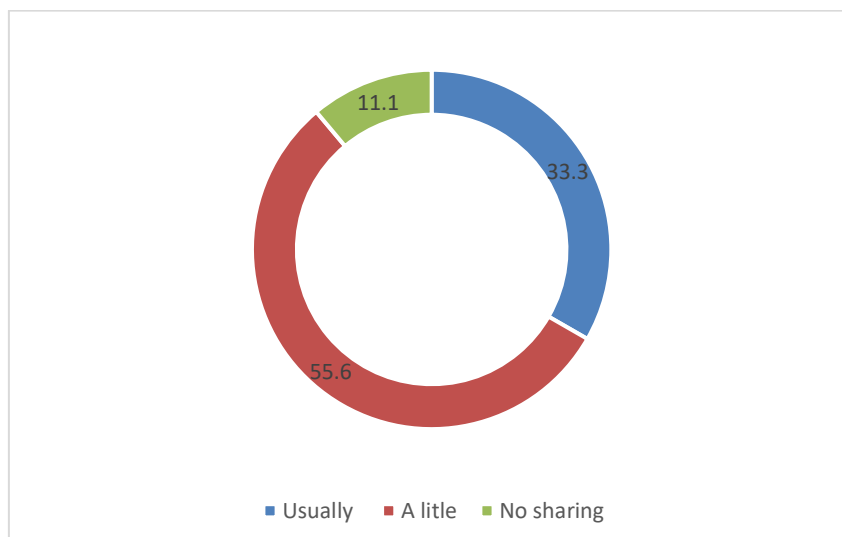**Figure 2: Policy advocacy experience of surveyed organizations**
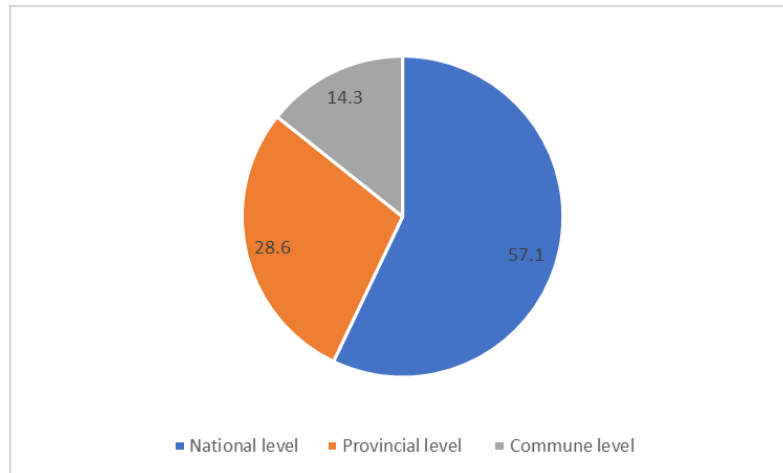
Many organizations already have experience in implementing project activities in the areas of water conservation, and even some also have experience in doing policy advocacy in this area. However, those organizations still lack the experience to do advocacy in effective ways. One possible reason, though not reflected in this quick survey and comes to prominence in-depth interviews, is that the advocacy is not in sync with the evidence generated from research and experience and thus not quite effective. Therefore, building capacity on advocacy is needed for these organizations; and they should have enough knowledge and skills to advocate effectively and also in the process improve their capacity to collect and use strong evidence to convince policymakers for policy change in the areas of water pollution and conservation.

2.3.3. Networking experience

Most surveyed organizations have the experience to be a member of the networks, they have diversity in areas of interventions and currently, they are at least being a member of the Clean Water Coalition. As mentioned, these organizations are the most active actors in the water issues. However, there is a fact that the level of sharing between organizations is still very limited. Only 33.3% of surveyed organizations shared that they usually share information with other organizations. 55.6% of survey organizations shared but very little. This is a challenge to facilitate the networking among organizations working issues.

Figure 3: Level of sharing with other organizations

At present, the networking mechanism of NGOs is developed and maintained in two main ways. At the national level, these organizations have participated as a member of the Vietnamese NGOs working groups in the area of water, for example (Clean Water Coalition); the water alliance. However, most of the organizations only participate as a member to share their knowledge and experience. Especially, the main motivation when the organization joins the network or working groups is to learn knowledge and experience from others and looking for a funding opportunity for their organizations rather than, aiming to collaborate with others to address the common water-related issue or advocacy activities.

There is a difficult issue that lack of coordination among the members. There is a fact that the networking will be maintained effectively depending very much on the roles and capacity of the coordination organization. Some networks are very strong because they have strong coordinators who can inspire others and mobilize the active participation of all members for common activities of the networks.

At the regional level, few organizations participate as a member of the regional networks or working groups. If yes, they are participating intending to learn and share experience in the area of water conservation or prevention of water pollution. But non-organizations have experience as a leading agency to facilitate dialogue or policy advocacy at the regional level.

2.3.4. Funding raising experience

The majority of the current funding sources of surveyed NGOs are from the International NGOs, international development agencies, and Embassies of other countries in Viet Nam. There is very limited funding that coming directly from UN agencies, other multilateral agencies, and corporations to support those organizations.

These organizations do not receive any direct funding from Banks (ADB or World Bank). Some local organizations have limited funding support from Government, but a very little source. The NGO-government partnership is something that they want to strengthen not just for funding but for a better working environment for policy advocacy.

Lack of funding for operations, advocacy work, evidence generation is also a cross-cutting need. All the responding organizations do not have any annual fundraising plan. There is no fundraising team or staff, and typically the senior staff is responsible for resource mobilization.

2.4. Capacity building needs and interests

2.4.1. Capacity in evidence-based research

Even the surveyed organizations already have experience in doing the research, but the fact that they still lack evidence-based research skills. The interview with organizations provides some information on needs and interests for capacity building activities for these organizations. They also raised some difficulties and gaps that need to be strengthened to improve the capacity of evidence-based research in the area of water pollution and conservation.

Most of the surveyed organizations expressed that evidence-based research requires a secured funding resource. If the activities are tagged to a project, it is easier. However, the scope of such activities is restricted and is driven by donor requirements. Having access to funding resources to conduct evidence-based research can help in utilizing the ground-level experience for policy recommendations backed by strong evidence, but it also requires a capacity to fundraising for this activity.

Some VNGOs emphasized the need for strengthening and developing stronger partnerships with government agencies that can provide resources and enabling environment for evidence-based research. Besides, the outcomes of such work are more likely to be incorporated into the policymaking process. Most of surveyed VNGO shared that collaborations with both Non-governmental organizations and Government agencies are required to join the effort to conduct evidence-based research, especially for policy advocacy activities.

The surveyed VNGOs also mentioned that being a research network that has international experts and researchers can be helpful in understanding emerging areas of research. The respondents also mentioned that young fellowships for staff can give access to technical and funding support for conducting evidence-based research. They were, however, not much aware of active networks relevant for their field or fellowships that their staff could apply for.

Most of the VNGOs pointed towards the need for capacity building on evidence-based research for young staff members looking at methods, processes, issues, good research practices for gender assessments, and ways of overcoming data limitations.

2.4.2. Networking capacity

The need and interest for networking and partnership is a cross-cutting need to conduct policy advocacy on water pollution and conservation. It emerges as a part of all the other needs. Funding limitations also restrict the capacity to explore networking opportunities. The VNGOs feel the need for more networking opportunities and the need for developing partnerships to support each other's work and to enhance their skill base. Networking forums and even participation in pieces of training are seen as good opportunities for engagements. Besides, there is also a need to strengthen existing partnerships with beneficiaries and stakeholders for effectiveness in activities by promoting the roles of network coordinators. Strengthened ties with government and public bodies support a healthy working environment for activities.

2.4.3. Policy advocacy capacity

All the responding organizations do not have an annual advocacy plan. The activities are designed and implemented based on the emerging needs or events relevant to (or already included within) the project plan. The responses towards having an annual advocacy plan were mixed. Some VNGOs felt that it can be useful to have a plan, while others felt that given their working dynamics, they must remain flexible for activities. The VNGOs were documenting some of important the advocacy activities.

The regional and global advocacy activities are very limited. Most of their work is very focused on grass-root interventions. Their limited capacities to link their grass root work with international and regional commitments and frameworks limit their regional and global advocacy work. This was also evident in the survey, where women leaders were aware of international frameworks but did not have much idea about integrating them into their organization's activities.

The VNGOs expressed interest in facilitating and develop partnerships among VNGOs, who are working on the same water issues and provide to conduct policy advocacy activities collaboratively. They recommended that the first effort could be strengthening the current networks and starting with several active members who have strong commitments and willingness to participate in the policy advocacy on water issues.

Most of the VNGOs have a very young staff. The attrition rates are also high. Therefore, for younger staff members the need for training on policy advocacy skills was expressed to give younger/newer staff opportunities to learn and practice. The themes included emerging issues of water issues, regional experiences, technical concepts of policy advocacy, how to link their grassroots work with the international processes, and how to advocate for responsive projects and policies in the prevention of water pollution and water conservation.

The respondents, however, emphasized the need for a hands-on and practical approach in training on policy advocacy. The surveyed VNGOs suggested that dedicated coaching and mentoring sessions for leaders and staff on policy advocacy on policy advocacy and also to focus on key issues in the domain, strengthening community resilience planning and advocating for budgets in projects to address the water issues. Besides, the capacity building on policy advocacy skills for the members of the network or the alliance is also considered so that they can jointly advocate one common issue.

2.4.4. Fundraising and proposal writing

Lack of funding for operations, advocacy work, evidence generation is also a cross-cutting need. All the responding organizations do not have any annual fundraising plan. There is no fundraising team or staff, and typically the senior staff is responsible for resource mobilization.

VNGOs expressed the need to build capacity to do fundraising from the banks and corporates and the government besides traditional donors (INGOs and international organizations). The emerging need here was to know who are the donors, both traditional and non-traditional and what are they looking for in projects i.e., their financing criteria, objectives, and interests.

A unanimous need was to for training and coaching on proposal writing and project design. The skills highlighted were designing the evidence-based research projects and advocacy activities that promote partnership and networking to address water issues. This includes methods for assessments and processes to be followed for designing and developing these proposals and projects.

As there is not much information on potential funding opportunities, the surveyed VNGOs expressed interest in have an information hub that provides updated funding opportunities to Vietnamese NGOs on regular basis. It also generated an idea of joining the effort to design a network proposal and implement joint projects between members of networks.

As many of the VNGOs were relatively small, they felt the need for developing a partnership with other organizations to co-apply for funding opportunities whenever they came up. However, they were not aware of the right partners.

2.5. Key challenges and barriers for networking are to solve water population and water conservation issues.

Low motivation and willingness

Many organizations express that they highly appreciate the opportunities for networking, but the most important expectation is to learn experience from others and looking for funding opportunities. The fact that there are a limited sharing and commitments from members organizations to the common effort of the networks or working groups. As a result, most of the current networks and working groups are established and maintained because there is

financial support from the donor or at least there is an active member who playing the leading roles.

There is a high potentiality that many organizations that have good experience in grassroots and this is very useful if those experience are shared and promoted through networking or working groups. However, not many organizations have strong motivation to coordinate and facilitate the sharing and learning between those organizations to serve for advocacy activities. Therefore, the experience and good practice are not shared and reached by policymakers. Besides, most interventions done by NGOs are a quite small scale, therefore, it needs to harmonize these experiences through networking or doing collection actions to advocate for policy change. But there is a big challenge for this effort is that non-organization is willing to lead this process. There are many reasons to explain this situation, but the most practical reason is due to lack of capacity and motivation to do so.

Leadership capacity

As mentioned above, there is a fact that the knowledge and skills of organizations are depending very much on the leaders. Only senior leadership positions of the VNGOs have enough capacity to do policy advocacy because she or he has a good relationship with ministries or line ministries. As a result, the junior staff of VNGOs does not have enough capacity and even they are not empowered to do this work.

The willingness and motivation of VNGOs to participate in networks and working groups will completely depend on the leadership capacity of the senior leaders. If the leaders are interested, they will be active to join the networks. If not, it is very difficult to motivate them. Besides, there are very diversified expectations raised by the senior leaders of VNGOs when they participate in the networks or groups. It seems that the learning and sharing purpose could be the first, but the most important purpose is to look around for funding opportunities. In some cases, many members-only expected that other members share experiences with them, but they do not want to share their experiences with others. Some organizations only become more active if they see the potentials for funding resources when they participate in this network or group.

Funding raising capacity

As mentioned above, most networks and working groups of VNGOs are established and maintained thanks to financial support from an outside resource. Therefore, the network or working groups will be sustained when all members have enough capacity to do fundraising. Some members may have the experience to do fundraising for their organizations, but the majority is that they do not have enough capacity to do funding raising as a group or a network.

Besides, all networks or working groups will be managed and maintained based voluntarily. Therefore, it will vary depending on the capacity of active members. Financial management is also another issue that may make some organizations have low motivation to join the networks if they do not see any financial benefits.

Networking capacity

One of the weaknesses of VNGOs is that the majority of staff members are young or they do not have much experience. Therefore, when they are assigned to participate in the network, they do not have the power to make decisions. While only senior leaders of organizations are the persons who can make decisions, but it seems that they are very busy so that they did not participate in the networking meeting regularly.

In addition, there have not the same voices or concerns between members when they participate in the network. There is a difference between members in experience and capacity so that some organizations feel that they are not suitable because they have a poor experience. Those who are active members are busy with their professional activities so that they may not be interest or willing to join.

PART 3: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. Conclusions

The Vietnamese Government has shown its strong commitment to the prevention of water pollution and conservation of water resources. This effort could be seen through the development of various policies, plans and in the effort to implement these policies. In practice, all ministries and provinces are responsible for building and issuing action plans to respond to issues of water pollution and conservation. These legal documents do not mention directly the roles, responsibility and capacity needs of the civil society organizations in the water issues, however, they provide key principles and overall points of view related to community participation and mobilization of community resources, experience, which direct and facilitate the participation of civil society organizations in solving the water issues in Viet Nam.

There are some legal documents and policies on water conservation and prevention of water that envision the roles of civil society organizations in Viet Nam. The National Strategy on sustainable development for Vietnam for the period 2011–2020 expressed that sustainable development is the responsibility of all organizations, communities, and individuals. The strategy also includes some key actions to promote the active participation of civil society organizations in the implementation of sustainable development actions, such as monitoring policy implementation, implementing the initiatives, contributing towards technical resources, etc.

Overall, there are many positive framework conditions for CSOs to expand their role and responsibility. To avail of these opportunities, the CSOs need to make significant technical contributions especially in evidence generation, advocate actively for water issues, strengthen their networks and increase the outreach of their work. However, the remaining challenges and difficulties are the capacity of CSOs, financial resources, and their willingness to join efforts to address the issues.

The capacity needs assessments showed some gaps in the capacity of the NGOs that need to be addressed to improve the quality of works. Among surveyed NGOs, many of them have the experience to do policy advocacy, even at the national levels, but they are still facing some difficulties when doing this work in practice. The biggest challenge for them is the lacking financial resources to do this work, especially for conducting evidence-based research. They still also lack knowledge and experience to do policy advocacy on water pollution and water conservation. They may have experience in policy advocacy in general, but not much about advocacy on water pollution prevention and water conservation.

The CSOs lack adequate capacities in these domains, therefore, have not been occupied the space that the policy frameworks make for them. This is a gap that needs to be bridged to accelerate the pace of CSOs' engagement. This scoping study is one such attempt to understand the capacity gaps, needs, and interests of CSOs.

The questionnaire survey and key informant interviews conducted in this scoping study show evidence of needs and interests on technical support on evidence-based research and policy advocacy capacity in water pollution and water conservation. Another positive result from the scoping study is the willingness of the VNGOs to participate in capacity building exercises. 100% of survey organizations expressed their needs and concerns on capacity building. But the remaining gap is about the capacity and resources to do this work.

Three main types of capacity building approaches have been proposed by the surveyed NGOs include (1) co-research implementation – the research will be jointly conducted by mentors and VNGO's staff; (2) direct training; and (3) coaching and mentoring with experts. Besides, participation in workshops and conferences or events done by regional and national networks and working groups are also options for capacity building

3.2. Recommendations

Provide capacity strengthening activities under two domains: technical activities and activities for organizational development

The key informant interviews were structured around 6 capacities. The overview of the needs and interests of the CSOs that emerge from the key-informant interviews were not just technical but also like organizational development and sustain the organizational capacity in the future.

Type of capacity	Specific needs and interests
Capacity for strategic development	• Long term strategy for organizational development • Network and partnerships • Networking events
Evidence-based research capacity	• Seeking and access to available funding sources • Strengthened partnerships with government agencies, the development banks, and INGOs • Research networks in the regions and young fellowships • Training on evidence-based research - methods, processes, key issues, good practices for gender assessments, overcoming data limitations
Policy advocacy capacity	• Development and implementation of an annual advocacy plan of the organization. • Linking operations of policy advocacy efforts at the national level with international and regional commitments • Networking and partnerships for policy advocacy on water issues. • Training on policy advocacy skills: Emerging issues in water pollution, water conservation, and regional experiences mainstreaming gender, gender-responsive projects, and policies, community resilience planning, gender budgeting
Networking and partnership capacity	• Strengthened the current networks and partnerships with external stakeholders, organizations, and government bodies. • Seeking and developing new networks of organizations who have the same mission and vision to prevent water pollution and water conservation.
Fundraising Capacity	• Awareness raising and mapping the donors, financing criteria, objectives, and interests • Training on proposal writing and project design skills • Information hub on funding resource • Network and partnerships for proposal development and project implementation.

Leadership Capacity	• Knowledge of regional best practices • Enhanced skills in policy advocacy and evidence-based research. • Training and capacity activities on Leadership skills

The need for technical capacities arose because the staff is often young, there is attrition among staff, they are not always up-to-date with the current international frameworks and their applications and finally, even at the leadership level, the most recent training was elementary. Similarly, there was a need for organizational development. This looked into how the overall policies and strategy documents of the organizations can be restructured in a way to guide their operations in dealing with emerging needs in water pollution and water conservation and its impacts on health. Many VNGOs were already working in some of the domains listed under the needs, but they expressed interest in a more practice-oriented approach to understand these technical concepts so that they can strengthen and improve their limited skills. Therefore, the activities should be tailor-made to build the knowledge and skills gained from specific interventions done by those VNGOs.

Technical capacity skills

- Training on evidence-based research - methods, processes, key issues, good practices for gender assessments, overcoming data limitations
- Training on policy advocacy skills: Emerging issues in water issues, regional experiences, evidence-based research projects, and policy advocacy activities.

Organizational Development skills

- Long term strategy for organizational development
- Annual advocacy plan

CAWACON project must design and provide tailor-made capacity building activities, especially because conventional activities like workshops were received with mild acceptance in comparison to co-research implementation (i.e., where there is ongoing technical support from experts) and hands-on direct training.

Support Vietnamese NGOs through leadership programs

One aspect of training and capacity building is to strengthen the technical capacities. However, to leapfrog in their achievements, the leadership skills must be provided with specialized leadership programs that can drive transformational change in motivation and responsiveness of VNGOs in networking and responding to water pollution and conservation at all levels.

The leadership programs must incorporate a mentorship approach primarily because enhancing leadership skills is an ongoing process and will not happen immediately. For example, skills to identify target policymakers and skills to work with them, and how to mobilize the financial resource for policy advocacy come over some time. Similarly, knowledge of regional best practices in project interventions and all phases of a project (problem analysis, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation) is technical "must-have" strength at the leadership level.

The key informant interviews provided the following needs that are more relevant for leadership programs:

- How other countries strategies to address water pollution issues while maintaining high economic growth
- Data collections
- IT and water conservation
- Communication - Actions
- Strengthened partnerships with government agencies, the development banks, and INGOs
- Linking operations with international and regional commitments
- Proposal writing and project design skills
- Knowledge of regional best practices
- Enhanced skills in evidence-based research and policy advocacy.

Strengthen the coordination of the current Networks and Partnerships

Strengthening the quality of networks and partnerships to access funding emerged as a cross-cutting need. The project as such cannot directly provide funding to the VNGOs. However, overall capacity strengthening and leadership development programs will make the VNGOs more capable to apply for different funding opportunities. For instance, designing good proposals is fundamental to apply for different funding opportunities.

One of how networking opportunities can be provided at a relatively low cost is to develop virtual groups. These groups can also serve as information hubs where members can share grant opportunities, look for partners and create more awareness about donors, financing criteria, objectives, and interests. To get this initiative rolling, the VNGOs who participate in capacity strengthening and leadership programs must be encouraged to be self-starters and initiate such virtual engagement spaces. Other mechanisms to strengthened collaborations can be brainstormed in the capacity strengthening and leadership programs. Some key recommendations as follow:

- Strengthened current network and partnerships with external stakeholders, organizations, and government bodies.
- Awareness about donors, financing criteria, objectives, and interests
- Information hub on funding source

ANNEX 1: ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

Dear sir/madam,

Center for Environmental and Community Research (CECR) is implementing a project "Collective Actions to Protect Water Resources" funded by USAID in Vietnam. The project aims to improve the capacity of social organizations working in the field of water resources protection. To better understand the capacity building needs of social organizations, we conduct a capacity needs assessment of potential partner organizations.

We would like to invite your organization to participate in the capacity building needs assessment within this project framework. The information you provide will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes and as a basis for the design of the appropriate organization's capacity building activities.

Are you agree to participate in this survey?

- Yes
- No

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION ON YOUR ORGANIZATION

1. Organization name in Vietnamese
2. Organization name in Vietnamese
3. Contact address
4. Telephone
5. Email
6. Website if any
7. Year of establishment
8. Type of organization:
   □ INGOs
   □ VNGOs
   □ Association/Union
   □ Fund
   □ Other (please specify):

9. Number of staff members
   - Total:
   - Male:
   - Female:

10. Number of management board members
    - Total
    - Male:

- Female:

11. The current area of interventions?

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12. Project locations of your organization?
□ Nationwide
□ Northwest
□ Northeast
□ Red River Delta
□ North Central
□ South Central
□ Central Highlands
□ Southeast

13. Does your organization have any interventions related to water resource protection?

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14. Has your organization had experience in policy advocacy activities related to water resources protection?
□ Yes, ever
□ No, never → **Skip to Q 19**

15. What are your organization's specific advocacy activities on water resource protection?

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16. Which level of advocacy activities on water resources protection was implemented by your organization?
□ National level
□ Provincial-level
□ District level
□ Commune level

17. What forms of policy advocacy have been implemented by your organization?
□ Evidence-based research
□ Workshop/forum
□ Campaigns
□ Policy dialogues
□ Other (specify):……………………………………………

18. Does your organization wish to improve its knowledge and skills on advocacy related to water protection.?
□ Yes
□ No

19. What researches in the field of water protection does your organization have been conducted?

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…………………………………………………………………………………………...

20. Is your organization interested in conducting evidence-based research to advocate for water conservation?
□ Yes
□ No

21. Does your organization wish to participate in activities to improve evidence-based research skills in the field of water protection to advocate policy change?
□ Yes
□ No

22. Does your organization want to join the working group/network of social organizations working on water and environmental protection?
□ Yes
□ No

23. Please choose three types of capacity building that your organization wishes to participate in? (Mark order 1, 2, 3 most favorite forms)?

	Select 3 most priority
□ Online training courses	
□ Online workshop	
□ Online training for self-study	
□ Online training courses with trainers/facilitators	
□ Mixed online and offline training courses	
□ Direct coaching and mentoring	
□ Specific assignment with guidance from consultant	
□ Other (specify) :	

Thank you very much!

ANNEX 2: LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS SELECTED FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

No	Name of organization	Address	Informants
1	Center for Water Resources Conservation and Development (WARECOD)	Tel: 098 248 1995 Email: lan@warecod.org.vn Website: www.warecod.org.vn	Nguyen Thi Ngoc Lan
2	Center for Sustainable Community Development (SCODE)	B9-14 Hateco building, Yen So, Hoang Mai, Hanoi Tel: 02436281768 Email: scode.office@gmail.com Website: s-code.com.vn	Nguyen Lan Phuong
3	Viet Nam Fisheries Association (VINAFIS)	Floor 3, A7, No 10, Nguyen Cong Hoan street, Ba Dinh, Ha Noi Email: hoinghecavietnam@gmail.com Tel: 0243. 7717739	Pham Anh Tuan
4	Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (INEST)	Room 312, C10, University of Science and Technology – No 1, Dai Co Viet Street, Hai Ba Trung, Ha Noi	Hoang Thi Thu Huong
5	Center for Development of Community Initiative and Environment (C&E)	Tel: +84 (0) 965842587 Email: buthuyeco@gmail.com Website: http://ce-center.org.vn Address: R 510- E1 Building, No 6 - Dang Van Ngu, Dong Da, Hanoi	Bui Thi Thanh Thuy
6	Center for Sustainable Development for Water Resources and Climate Change Adaptation (CEWAREC)	Tel: 090.329.4647 Email: vdangngoc@gmail.com	Dang Ngoc Vinh
7	Ben Tre Startup Creative Group (BTSCG)	Address: #9/3 Tran Quoc Tuan Street, Ben Tre City, Ben Tre province Tel: 02753820080 Email: sangtaotre2016@gmail.com Website: www.xudua.com	Vo Chi Cong

8	Centre of consulting, application and development for agriculture science and environment (CADASE)	Address: # 9, Tran Hung Dao Street, Thai Binh city, Thai Binh province Tel: 0912 301 752 Email: trungtamtb@gmail.com	Nguyen Thi Hoa
9	Center for Rural Resources Development Research (CRDR)	Address: Block 1b, Nghen town, Ha Tinh province Tel: 0915431747 Email: chrd.vn@gmail.com	Tran Thi Thanh
10	The Center for Environment Community Research (CECR)	Address: R.501-502, Blg E1, Trung Tu Diplomatic Compound; # 6 Dang Van Ngu, Ha Noi, Viet Nam Tel: +84 913382244/+84 977630144 Website: www.cecr.vn	Dinh Thu Hang
11	The Consultative Institute for Socioeconomic Development of Rural and Mountainous Area (CISDOMA)	Address: No 24, K80C, Vinh Phuc Str., Ba Dinh Dist., Hanoi, Vietnam Tel: (+84) 24 3784 3678 - (+84) 24 3784 3681 Website: http://cisdoma.org.vn/	Truong Quoc Can
12	Centre for Marinelife Conservation and Community Development (MCD)	Address: Room 3104, Floor 31, Building 34T, Hoang Dao Thuy, Hanoi, Vietnam Tel: 024.2221 2923 Fax: 024. 2221 2924 Email: mcd@mcdvietnam.org Website: www.mcdvietnam.org	Than Thi Hien

ANNEX 3: CAPACITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

No	Key indicators of the capacity	Definition
1.	**The relevant area of intervention** The organization must have interventions (projects and research) in the area: (1) water pollution prevention; (2) water resource conservation	The organization could provide evidence to prove that at least one intervention (project or research) has been conducted in the area: (1) water pollution prevention; (2) water resource conservation
2.	**Policy advocacy skills** The organizations have experience in doing advocacy policy at local, provincial, national, and regional levels.	The organization could provide evidence to prove that they are involved in existing advocacy and outreach work on (1) water pollution prevention; (2) water resource conservation. The policy advocacy could be conducted at the national, provincial, district, or commune level.
3.	**Evidence-based research skills** The organizations can do evidence-based research or policy impact assessment.	The organization could provide evidence to prove that they have the experience to have researchers, who have at least five years of experience in doing policy impact assessment or evidence-based research. The priority will be given to the organizations having the experience to do evidence-based research or policy impact assessment in the area of (1) water pollution prevention; (2) water resource conservation
4.	**Leadership skills** The organization have strong commitments and high motivation and interest to join capacity building assessment and the capacity building program/projects	The organization shows strong commitments of leaders and staff to join the capacity building need assessment and shows high interest in participating in all capacity events; open-minded and willing to learn more about (1) water pollution prevention; (2) water resource conservation. The organization expresses the capacity needs to strengthen the work on (1) water pollution prevention; (2) water resource conservation
5.	**Fund-raising skills** The organization has experienced staff who have strong experience to do fund-raising; have the experience to prepare a project proposal.	The organization could provide evidence to prove that they have staff who have strong experience to do fund-raising or at least having the experience to prepare project proposal; analyze the funding scheme.

Center for Environment and Community Research (CECR)

Room 501-502, Building E1, Trung Tu Diplomatic Compound,
6 Dang Van Ngu, Dong Da dist., Ha Noi

T: 024 3972 8063   E: cecr.vn@gmail.com
W: cecr.vn   F: fb.com/cecr.vn