

A microloan program for improving household economy in a Muong community, Vietnam.
(Oral Presentation)

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Introduction

One of the goals of the University of Illinois-based International Cooperative Biodiversity Group Program is the discovery of new molecules from plants of Cuc Phuong National Park (CPNP), Vietnam, as potential candidates for drug development. Since the Muong Community who live in the Cuc Phuong Commune serve as the stewards of the CPNP biodiversity, a form of reciprocity with the community was implemented.

Objectives

To improve the household economy of selected members of the community, in support of the effort of the CPNP to reduce the human pressure on the park's biodiversity.

Methods

A rotating loan of money in the amount of 2.5-3 million Vietnamese Dongs was provided to selected families at the lowest socioeconomic levels. Selection criteria and monitoring were developed, and selection of the recipients was determined by an Economic Development Village Board.

Results

Within a 5-year period, loans were provided to 45 families in the amount of 110,000,000 VND (US\$7,333). The 45 families generated a revenue of 220,100,000 VND (US\$14,673), and each family made profits in the range of 5,000,000 to 23,000,000 VND, depending on the length of time of family participation.

Conclusion

An evaluation meeting with the participation of representatives from People's Committee of Cuc Phuong commune, Farmer Association of Cuc Phuong, HEPR Board of Cuc Phuong, ICBG staff, and CPNP personnel assessed the program as successful in improving the household economy of most impoverished members of the Muong community, while helping reduce the human pressure on the park's biodiversity.

Keywords: Muong; household economy; Vietnam

Selected References

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