

Building Resilience and enhancing public participation in adaptation projects



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NIODIOR

Climate Change in West Africa is recognised to pose substantial risks for human populations, especially those heavily reliant on natural resources for their subsistence, thus exacerbating both conservation and development challenges. Communities that rely upon coastal ecosystems for their livelihoods are likely to be affected more radically.

The village of Niodior is an island located in Sangomar MPA with an approximate land size of 3 square kilometers and an approximate population size of 7235 inhabitants. Endowed with diverse ecological resources, Niodior is located in the Saloum Delta, a wetland classified World Heritage by UNESCO. The community has a protected forest area with different plant species useful for food and medicinal purposes. Large portions of its coast are covered by mangrove forest which serves as natural buffers against coastal erosion and harvest grounds of diverse sea food. The vegetation comprises littoral vegetation and continental vegetation. The settlement areas of the island are mainly sandy with some houses using oyster shells on their compounds. There are many different shallow valleys which separate the different settlement areas. There are various hills of sea food shells which have been put in place during the Neolithic period by indigenes of the land.

The main livelihood activities are fishing, fish transformation, agriculture, livestock keeping and forestry. Community members are well organized and have a strong sense of ownership of their ecological resources, thereby seeking its conservation.

Niodior has initiated by itself Community management of natural resources (non-timber forest products). However in recent years, the extraction of fuelwood has become rampant thereby degrading mangrove forest and exposing the area further to the impacts of climate change.

Inhabitants also do not have regular electricity supply, no access to treated water, with all of them having wells as their source of domestic water.



OBJECTIVE/ ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED

The overall goal of the project is to enhance livelihoods and increase socio-ecological resilience in Nioidor coastal protected area systems to the negative effects of Climate Change. To achieve this, the project worked closely with local partners to assess the social vulnerability to Climate change, of natural resource dependent human populations living in and around marine protected areas.

Activities implemented of this case study were directed towards:

Scoping of relevant system diagnosis and prioritisation of vulnerability and adaptation challenges, and their relationship with management of protected areas.

Identification of existing response strategies and tools, opportunities and barriers to adaptation, as well as the role of management of protected areas to buffer adaptive capacity.

Developing shared visions of the future and it ends with detailed mapping of existing assets, resources and capacities available with which to achieve these goals.

Back-casting step-by-step plans that build on present strengths to achieve future goals.

Test each community back-casted plans through 4 distincts scenarios for robustness.



MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

Training of facilitators: 5 research facilitators were taken through all the steps in each of the participatory tools designed for the community workshop. It gave facilitators hands on experience on all the tools.

Community workshops: Activities of this community workshop were conducted using a strength-based capacity development approaches, particularly on the Appreciative Inquiry concept which is based on a theory that positive changes come from appreciating what exist and focusing on the successes of the past rather than on failures and challenges. With this approach community members were led through diagnosing of current vulnerabilities and adaptive capacity and planning, along with building local strengths. The level of community engagement in this project was excellent. Out of 50 participants selected, there were 49 in total who turned out.

Household interviews: Apart from the 49 participants who were engaged in the community workshops household interviews were also conducted with 30 other household heads through random sampling.

Scenario development activities: the scenario development activity allowed participants to stress test their adaptation plans through possible scenarios in the community.



LESSONS LEARNED/ CONCLUSION

Most women came in late due to their house chores.

The additional training of facilitators was beneficial because it allowed them to improve their mastery of tools

Niodior's community is fairly well organized, especially in the management of fisheries and forest natural resources and this is reflected through the Natural Resource Management Committee(COGERE)

In conclusion, it is extremely crucial for populations to get involved in all projects linked to climate change, and at all levels. By taking full ownership of their community development, they will make a huge difference around their environment, for their future generations.



