

Measuring social impacts in conservation: experience of using the Most Significant Change method

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Appendix 1 Sample MSC Story. Cambodian Elephant Conservation Group (CECG), Story identification code: SW/07/03/B1.

Name of person recording story: Mr Prak Vong

Province: Koh Kong

Date the story was recorded: 11 March 2007

Title of story: CECG stop rumours and help promote conservation and mitigation

(1) Tell the story. (Write the story, including details about **where, when, how and why** it happened, and **who** was involved. If CECG was involved in the story, say how they were involved. Keep focused on the subject. The story can be something that someone told you, or something that you have seen).

The field team was having troubles working with Treng Troyueng commune. By talking with the farmers we found out that the reason was a rumour. The farmers thought that we were using our computers (our GPS units) to make the elephants come to the fields and destroy the crops, so they did not talk to us when we visited the village, would not listen to our advice and continued to be angry with the elephants.

When we heard this rumour, we went to the community and explained that our computers did not make the elephants come to destroy the crops, and that our purpose was to help the farmers to protect their crops, and also to protect the elephants.

After this the community was happy to work with the CECG. We helped them change their crops and form a guarding group and in the last wet season there was no damage from the elephants. They are very happy with this result and no longer angry with the elephants.

✓ or 1, 2, 3	Which domain does the story apply to? <i>If the story applies to more than one domain, please show which domains it relates to most closely, using 1, 2, 3, etc.</i>
2	A, Change in attitudes & awareness of communities to CECG team, and CECG policies and objectives
1	B, Change in attitudes & awareness of communities to elephants and their habitat
	C, Change in attitudes & awareness of communities to conservation
	D, Change in mitigation methods
	E, Change in income (financial assets)
	F, Change in food security
	G, Change in social cohesion and cooperation (social assets)
	H, Change in human capacity and empowerment
	I, Change in physical assets
	J, Change in natural assets and biodiversity
	K, Institutional change
	L, Other sort of change (please specify):

To fill in during the provincial team meeting

(2) What can the group learn from this story of change? Are there any **recommended actions** for the team?

During the discussion, one of the team should make a simple list of the recommended actions, and who is responsible for each of them.

The field team should be aware of rumours that can put the community off working with the CECG. If the field team does hear a rumour, they should be patient and explain the truth to the community, and eventually the community will understand.

To fill in during the provincial team meeting

(3) If this story is chosen as **significant**, explain **why**.

The story was chosen because this situation could happen in another area and it is important that the field teams are aware of how to deal with it.

To fill in during the national CECG meeting

(4) What can the group **learn** from this story of change? Are there any **recommended actions** for the team?

During the discussion, one of the team should make a simple list of the recommended actions, and who is responsible for each of them.

As above

To fill in during the provincial team meeting

(5) If this story is chosen as **significant**, explain **why**.

As above

Appendix 2 Cambodian Elephant Conservation Group (CECG) objectives and the Most Significant Change (MSC) method (for further details of Domains, see Appendix 1).

The MSC technique was introduced to demonstrate progress towards three of CECG's objectives. Domains were developed to relate to these objectives:

Objective: Improving community attitudes to the conservation of elephants and their habitats

Field teams may encounter examples of positive and negative changes in community attitudes as a result of CECG interventions (Domains A, B & C).

Objective: Improving livelihoods of those severely negatively affected by elephants and the impact of restriction of resources from elephant habitats

Field teams may encounter change in communities' livelihoods as a result of CECG interventions: not solely changes in income (for instance through increased crop sales) but also wider social changes—such as increased community cohesion; empowerment; etc. (Domains D–J).

Objective: Increasing institutional support for conservation issues, primarily encouraging sensitive landscape development planning and decision making

All programme staff can record changes in the institutional support—from changes in attitudes of Ministries to elephant conservation to changes in team members' capacity (Domain K).