

## Final Evaluation Report

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Your Details	
Full Name	Van Kien Nguyen
Project Title	Scaling Up a Traditional Rice-Shrimp Based Agroecological Farming System in the Mekong Delta
Application ID	31913-2
Date of this Report	31 December 2021

**1. Indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.**

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Socio-economic and farming system survey of 50 farmers in the project site				We interviewed 60 household heads and their members. We collected socio-economic, nutrition and health data of the household and their members.
Soil and water data collection and analysis				
Biodiversity data collection and analysis				We documented: (1) plant communities in traditional rice and HY rice farming systems; (2) Fish communities in traditional rice and HY rice farming systems (48 fish species occurring in all studied farming systems whereby traditional rice farming systems housed 44 species in comparison to 33 species recorded in HY rice farming systems); (3) Reptile communities in traditional rice and HY rice farming systems (23 species of reptiles in traditional rice and HY rice and 18 shared species occurring in both two farming systems); and (4) Bird communities in traditional rice and HY rice farming systems (39 bird species recorded in traditional rice and HY rice, whereby 31 species occurred in both the two farming systems).
Value-added food production of chemical free traditional rice to promote local and international market				We designed the procedure to produce traditional rice vermicelli, designed branding, package and trade the products with the branding name of Mekong Nutrition and sold it online. The technology was transformed to Mr Le Quoc Viet, the owner of the farm, to promote it in the future. <a href="https://mekongnutrition.com/san-pham-cua-mekong-nutrition/bun-gao-lua-mua-sinh-thai-17">https://mekongnutrition.com/san-pham-cua-mekong-nutrition/bun-gao-lua-mua-sinh-thai-17</a>

Traditional rice varieties conservation activities				We selected two varieties (Chau Hag Vo and Tau Huong) that Mr Viet shared with 10 farmers in the village to conserve and plant in the next season.
Water Governance				We interviewed 15 key informants and hosted two focus group discussions – documented the issues of water governance at local level.
Policy dissemination activities				We hosted two stakeholder workshops to share the research activities and research outputs to the local communities. We developed a clip about the project to share the research outcomes in English and Vietnamese.
Publication and submission				Two papers are in progress of editing for submission to regional journal articles.  Participation takes longer time than we expected.

## 2. Describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

- a). The valued added products of the traditional rice were developed to promote in the domestic market – which were welcomed by the consumers.
- b). The biodiversity values of the traditional rice fields were richer than in the adjacent short term High Yielding Rice Variety (HYV) fields, recognised and identified by the farmers. Consequently, they changed the behaviour toward caring for the ecosystem of the traditional rice landscape.
- c). The quality of soils was improved significantly compared with the adjacent short term High Yielding Rice Variety (HYV) fields.

## 3. Explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.

We experienced a covid-19 lockdown during 2020 and the first quarter of 2021. However, we could manage to undertake field studies in 2020.

## 4. Describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project.

Local government at the commune and district levels, farmers, media agents, researchers in the Mekong Delta and private sectors in Ho Chi Minh City involved in the stakeholder meetings, workshops, and purchasing the rice products (milled rice

and rice vermicelli). The vegetarian restaurant in HCM city purchased rice and promoted the vegetarian dishes to the local dwellers.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

Yes, we plan to develop and scale up this initiative in the adjacent communities where the traditional rice-based ecosystem exists.

**6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?**

We hosted stakeholder workshops to share the research findings to the communities, created a video about the project posted in the Mekong Organics channel, presented in the workshops and will publish in the journal articles.

**7. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?**

**We will promote the value-added products at the premium price to increase income for farmers.**

We provide training to farmers about agrobiodiversity, nutrition, and health of the community, and introduce the agro-ecotourism to young people about traditional values of the rice-based ecosystem.

**8. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?**

We promoted the Rufford Foundation logo in the project website and the clip of the project.

<https://mekongorganics.com/du-an-nhan-rong-he-thong-canh-tac-lua-mua-tom-cang-xanh-tom-su-o-dong-bang-song-cuu-long/>

**9. Provide a full list of all the members of your team and their role in the project.**

**Dr. Nguyen Van Kien**, project lead

**Mr Le Ngoc Hiep**, valued added component

**Mr Huynh Ngoc Duc**, soil science component

**Dr Nguyen Hoang Han**, soil science component

**Mr Nguyen Van Thai**, socio-economic component

**Mr Pham Tan Dat**, biodiversity component

**Mr Ly Quoc Dang**, biodiversity component

**Ms Pham Tran Lan Phuong**, water governance component

**Mr Nguyen Minh Dang**, seed component

**Mr Le Quoc Viet**, seed component

#### **10. Any other comments?**

We valued the contribution of The Rufford Foundation to the conservation effort in the Mekong Delta.

We acknowledged the great support from the Research Center for Rural Development, An Giang University (now is the climate change institute).

We acknowledged the great support from Mekong Organics PTY LTD from Canberra Australia, who promoted the project on the website of the Mekong Organics and also in the YouTube channel.

We thanked the support from Mr LE Quoc Viet, Sub-Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the farming community in Chau Thanh District of Kien Giang province, Mekong Delta, Vietnam

We wish to thank the businesses who support the project, to promote rice in the vegetarian restaurant and the consumers in Ho Chi Minh city.

**Component: Traditional seed purification process**



Photo 1: seed and seedling



Photo 2: Transplanting





Photo 3: ripening



Photo 4: Harvesting and storage



Photo 5: Training the farmers and community about seed selection



**Component: Soil sample collections and analysis**

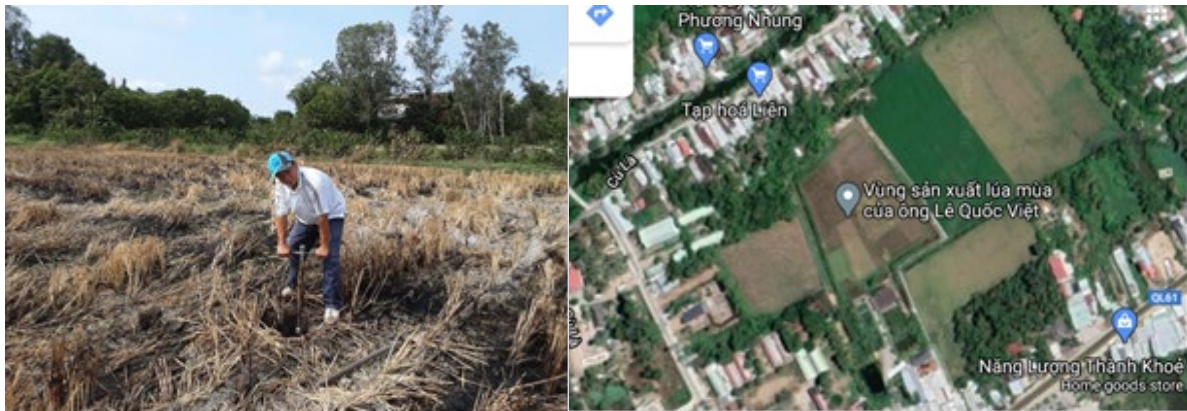


Photo 6: Soil surface and location of soil samples



Photo 7: Surveying the soil before it was collected

**Component: Value added component**



Photo 8: rice paddies in the basket and the rice mill

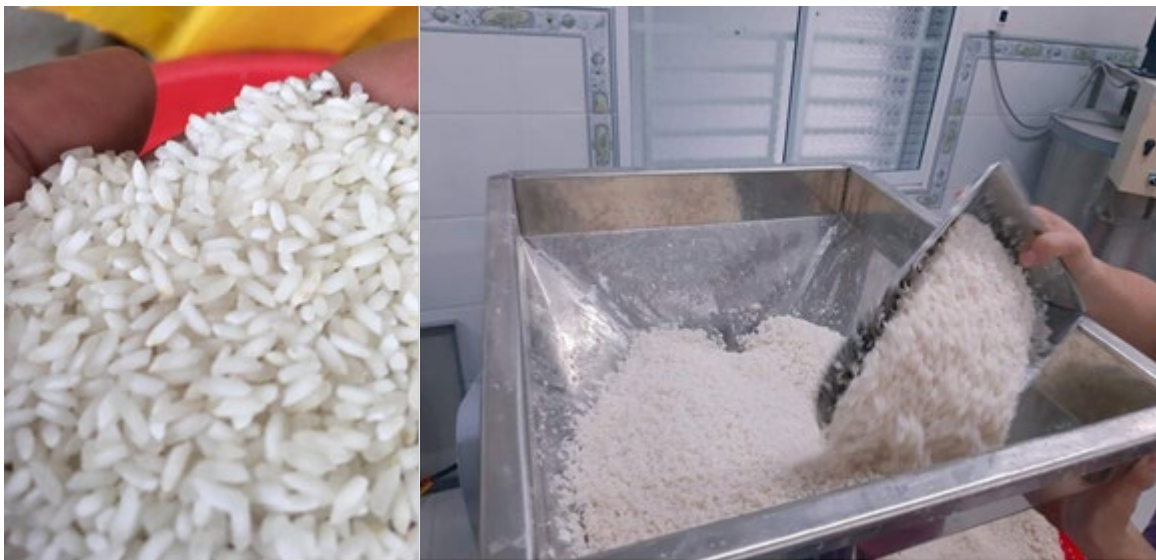


Photo 9: polished rice and rice flour





Photo 10: rice flour is ready for making vermicelli



Photo 11: the end products of traditional rice – vermicelli



Photo 12: the end products of traditional rice – vermicelli



Photo 13: vegetarian rice



Photo 14: Promotion of the rice and rice value added products in HCM city at the market fair





Photo 15: Milled rice were promoted in the market



**LÚA MÙA  
TỪ VIỆT**  
*vị ngon từ quá khứ*

**Our Mother Taste from the past**

Three main human groups including Khmer, Chinese, and Kinh have cultivated seasonal rice in the harmony with nature since the discovery and settlement in the Mekong delta.

Until now, there are thousand of rice varieties selected by the farmers with the assistance from evolving growing techniques over hundreds years of discovery and settlement here. Each development stage of a seasonal rice plant is considered to reflect a growing period of a human, which has been observed and remembered in the mind of the people over time. Hence, a culture in which human life and seasonal rice life is intertwined to give birth to "văn hóa lúa mùa" (seasonal rice - based lifestyle and culture) in the Mekong delta.

The seasonal rice grains are believed to be the accumulation of soil, sky and human relationship. Eating such rice not only commemorate the ancestors who risked their life to clear the land but also respect their lifestyle in harmony with the nature.

We are proud to be the pioneer in preserving seasonal rice-based lifestyle and culture, selecting seasonal rice varieties, and introducing those varieties to the public.

We are committed to preserve seasonal rice-based culture!

Promoting Organic Food Certification  
& Trade between Australia and Vietnam

**Mekong  
Organics**

**LE GIA SPECIAL FOOD CO., LTD**











Photo 16: the traditional rice of the project was promoted in the Mekong Organics' project: promoting organic food certification and trade between Australia & Vietnam



**Component: Biodiversity**



Photo 17: Biodiversity values of the traditional rice paddy fields



Photo 18: Survey of biodiversity values of the traditional rice paddy fields





Photo 19: potential eco-tourism at the traditional rice community



Photo 20: Students and university lecturers visited the project sites



## Socio-economic survey



Photo 21: socio-economic household survey



Photo 22: socio-economic household survey





Photo 23: socio-economic household survey – nutritional health



Photo 24: socio-economic household survey – water governance



Photo 21: poster of the project stakeholder workshop on 30 June 2020





Photo 22: the stakeholder workshop on 30 June 2020



Photo 23: project team members