What’s next for the River?

Is the Than Lwin “under threat” or “on the thread”

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The nature of our work

• Mission: Collaborate with partner orgs to empower the women and youth to have a more active role in sustainable development
• Action based research
• Awareness raising
• Empowerment
• Networking
The nature of our work

• Strengthening women participation
• Providing capacity building to ethnic youth and women
• Supporting affected communities

Women empowerment through training and film production.
Youth and their interests

• Working with diverse ethnic youth volunteer
• Youth interest to do documentations
• Many big development projects
• They have not been fully informed and consulted (including Mong Ton dam)
Findings: Access to Information

- Little information about the big dev plans
- No access to information about the dam

“Though Wan Sala village is the closest village and is only 19 miles way from the dam site, the consultative meetings have not been conducted and the people have not been targeted to participate in the meeting. (Interviewee, 2016)
Findings: Gender roles in resource governance

- Women have barrier to engage in local governance
- Little recognition in the society and power in natural resource governance
- Gender roles appear to be equal but not
- Structural violence
- Thus, gender analysis should be considered in hydropower project (resettlement mean loss of access to resources)
- No gender inclusion effects human rights issue
Why Youth?

• Less research on Youth
• Much work focus on youth’s challenge, but few study on new possibilities of youth
• Youth play significant role in environmentalism, activism and development
• Youth create possibilities: community organizing, developing cross-border networks, teaching and caring children
• Eg: Mekong Youth Assembly
  “Encourage all youths in the Mekong countries to bring about change in environmental concerns by working with their communities”
On a Thread?

- WBAB - hopeful and meaningful work span across borders
- “Thread”: to link the work of weaving; activity known to many groups worldwide
- Weaver: to create something new and strong
- Weaving: networking and developing youth requires the work of transformation
- “Thread” - combine in the process of “weaving” = stronger
- Networks being established are woven across borders
- Youth are not easily stopped by national borders
Under Threat?

- Than Lwin River as a trans boundary river
- It still lack a treaty and cooperation among the water users
- Need to find a common ground to negotiate with upstream countries, improve relationship and understanding
Recommendations

- Accountable and participatory water governance across borders is very crucial; therefore, water treaty is necessary for this trans-boundary river.
- Build trust and a bond relationship across border for equal benefit sharing from water resources.
- It is essential to balance the requirement for ecosystem biodiversity as contrasted with development activities.
- Long-term collaboration on conflict resolution and water resource management in addition to data sharing.
- Long-term commitment on environmental conservation and protection.
- Ethnic groups should have a primary role in water management across different scales, not limited to the “local”.
- Women, children and vulnerable group should be the major concerns in the decision-making processes, and should be involved as part of accountable and transparent decision-making processes.
- Youth should have the opportunity to be involved in all the above processes and activities.
- Local people should have a meaningful participation through adequate consultation and decision-making processes.