



# A Systematic Communication Approach to Strengthen Results

## BACKGROUND

Rural governance and self-organizing capacity in China is very weak, especially in remote, mountainous, ethnic-minority areas. In all target communities, women's education level is generally lower than men's, as is their confidence to participate in public affairs. The JP strove to improve best communication practices to strengthen local capacities in cultural heritage conservation, with a particular focus on women. Communication channels and strategies were improved in order to achieve concrete results in three areas:

**Community cultural mapping:** Cultural mapping is an effective tool to engage communities and provide capacity building opportunities for community inventory and preservation efforts;

**Community-based museum:** The methodology introduces a sustainable and holistic approach to cultural heritage protection, while maximizing local ownership;

**Agricultural-heritage protection:** FAO's Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) requires intensive participation of communities for implementation of project activities.

## PROCESS

The JP focused on collaborating with national TV stations Shanghai TV and Hong Kong TV to produce high-quality documentary films targeting different audiences in different languages. A project newsletter was produced in Chinese to timely inform beneficiaries of results, strengthen local ownership and maintain momentum.

The public was informed of project results and methodologies through films, newspaper and magazine coverage, academic papers and various events. These advocacy campaigns resulted in unsolicited volunteers and constant requests for interviews and feature reports.

Almost all communication efforts were initiated by implementation partners. From the first edition of the joint newsletter, partners actively made contributions, including local-led dissemination of newsletters and other printed materials, and local volunteer groups contributing high-quality photos to all publications.

Miao ladies working in the new office of Leshan Miao Embroidery Association supported by CDFP. By The Miler



# Outcomes

The intensive communication activities induced a spirit of dialogue and information sharing between local government departments in charge of culture, ethnic minorities and agriculture. Community-level beneficiaries were able to voice their opinions through publicity materials. By training community focal points, the project introduced a gentle and careful way to engage women in project implementation and communication activities.

**Community cultural mapping:** Four pilot communities successfully revived traditional cultural celebrations, with women actively participating in their organization and preparation. A volunteer support mechanism was established to provide long-term backstopping after project completion. A Practical Guide on community-based cultural mapping is being compiled to share knowledge in the China context, in particular in ethnic-minority rural areas.

**Community-based museum:** A community museum is planned for a pilot community listed as a GIAHS site and also containing an intangible cultural heritage entry. Community members will curate the exhibition and are being trained in museum management to enable them to manage the museum on the long term.

**Agricultural-heritage protection:** By 2011, three new sites in China were added to the GIAHS, and another three candidate sites were preparing applications. A local agricultural heritage conservation master plan is being drafted to support conservation and development of local agricultural heritage.

The project introduced a gentle and careful way to engage more women in project implementation and communication activities.

