

Contributions of TVN in promoting the Vetiver System with emphasis on Social projects and overview of work in Africa for Vetiver promotion

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Abstract

The Vetiver network is actually a network of individuals or groups or institutions that have a common goal, to see vetiver used as much as possible. Everyone tries in each his or her own way to help others by sharing information and experiences. The creation of a local level system of people spreading the technology is what has driven the vetiver program development in countries around the world. The social aspect of our movement incites public and private participation, and creates the motivation and encouragement that leads communities to become aware of the benefits of its use. The steps taken to do this include information dissemination, field demonstrations, training, follow-up and the incorporation of feedback into future activities and projects. The strategy behind our work is one of community and individual participation to solve problems quickly, at low cost and insure that the solutions are sustainable over the long term. Our strategy also takes into account the multitude of uses and the ease of its adaptability to each situation. We provide a tool to empower individuals and communities to be proactive in the face of environmental and economic issues.

TVN has promoted community participation and social interaction, illustrated using the following countries: China, Thailand, The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madagascar, and the United States. Each one has approached and implemented their activities in unique and innovative ways and each one has had varying levels of success. The benefits of social approaches are many, however, the principle ones include sustainable development over time, livelihood improvement and increased income generation and food security, the ability to adapt the multiple uses at all levels of society, increased environmental protection for the land and its people. It is a very powerful tool to mobilize communities and individuals to solve problems that otherwise continue to plague their daily lives.

Like all technology and its interaction with people, vetiver technology has constraints. Virtually all of these constraints are easily overcome. In most countries, many people simply have no knowledge of vetiver and its uses. Therefore there is a need to introduce new concepts and technology requiring time and effort. Introducing something new means working with the innovators first, then expanding the beneficiary base as visible results occur. Many times innovators are few and difficult to identify. Vetiver must be grown in a nursery and multiplied across several growing seasons. The planting material is bulky and costly to transport. Vetiver hedges, if planted improperly, fail so there is a need for supervision, monitoring and in many cases trial and error. The right planting

material is critical. TVN provides access to convincing scientific and research information that helps overcome the hesitancy of the scientists in each country who are always doubtful at first about the benefits vetiver technology. This presentation concludes with an overview of vetiver programs in the African continent.