



# What is Participatory Photography?

Participatory photography (PP) is a communications method that helps people to reveal aspects of their life through the story-making capacity of photographs. These stories can help managers to understand the relationships between local communities and 'things', such as forests and wildlife; with this knowledge being useful in the development of conservation plans and strategies that consider local needs and environmental interactions. PP can also provide a 'voice' for groups that traditionally go unheard in local communities, such as women, as well as building the capacity and confidence of people who participate in PP training.

## Participatory Photography



## Participatory Photography in the Cardamoms

In March 2007 Conservation International, with support from USAID and the Environment Operations Centre, coordinated a PP course involving young people (14 – 19 years) from the Central Cardamom Protected Forest, in Southwest Cambodia. Over two weeks 10 participants were taught how to operate and take photos with a digital camera, and how to transform their photographs into stories. Participants were subsequently requested to respectively develop stories based on the theme *'have forest, have life'*, a traditional saying from the Cardamoms region.

in the

Central

Cardamom

Protected

Forest



## The Exhibition - *'Have Forest, Have Life'*

This exhibition features abstracts from the photo-stories developed by the participants in the March 2007 course. Looking at these stories one is left with an enriched understanding of the depth and diversity of the relationships the story-tellers share with the Cardamom's forest, and how the forest's existence is central to their well-being and survival. This understanding can be used to inform the development of strategies that promote biodiversity conservation and the livelihood security of local communities living in the forests of the Central Cardamoms region.

