

GENDER ACTION PLAN

1. A legal framework for promoting gender in Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) and associated policies are supportive of gender equality; however, a report to the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (July 2009) noted that there remain constraints to women's full participation in economic and community life due to tradition and ingrained stereotypes.
2. Government of Lao PDR realizes the productive role of Lao women in maintaining household food security and health through agriculture, forestry and other economic activities. The government is taking concrete actions in key economic sectors to ensure that national programs improve women's access to basic services and resources (e.g., credit and extension services) and involve women in local and national decision making processes.
3. The current Nam Ngum River Basin Development Sector Project (NNRBDS) improved the access of women to rural credits through village development revolving fund (VDRF) and clean water through improved water supply systems. The additional financing project will continue these well appreciated practices. In addition, the performance of the gender action plan of the current project is considered to be satisfactory. Quantitative indicators and their performance are summarized in Table 1. This shows that current targets remain challenging and worth maintaining under the additional financing project.

Table 1: Performance of the Gender Action Plan of the Current Project

Target Indicators	Performance in 2010
Water Resources Coordination Committee (WRCC) ¹ recruits at least 30% of technical positions.	11 (42.3%) out of 26 staff of the Department in the Water Resources (DWR) of the Water Resources and Environment Administration (WREA) were female.
At least 30% of district agriculture and forestry office (DAFO) extension staff will be women.	23% of DAFO extension staff were women in 2010 (120 women out of total 525 staff).
At least 50% of all training program participants will be women.	45% of farmer training participants in total were women. More than 75% of participants in village development revolving fund (VDRF) training were women.
Women will form 50% of project beneficiaries.	50% of village production group members were women.

4. **Implementation arrangements:** the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), through the Office of National Project Manager (ONPM), will have an overall responsibility for implementing the Gender Action Plan (GAP). Safeguard officers in the ONPM, National Agriculture and Forestry Extension Service (NAFES), and District Agriculture and Forestry Offices (DAFOs) assisted by a safeguard specialist, will be in charge of gender-related issues in the project implementation on a daily basis. They will assist other project staff at the district levels for project activities on the ground, and facilitate the participation of women in project activities such as participatory rural appraisal, semi-annual planning and review process, and training and workshops. During the implementation the status of women in the project area will be analyzed to determine priority activities to be incorporated into annual work plans of the project. Capacity building for project staff will have dedicated programs to gender-related issues. Cooperation with other development projects in the area will be enhanced to support the implementation of the GAP. A monitoring and evaluation officer in the ONPM will monitor the

¹ WRCC was superseded by WREA as an implementing agency of NNRBDS in 2007. WREA became the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE) in June 2011.

progress and, as required, identify constraints and developing remedial actions as part of the project monitoring and evaluation process, supported by a monitoring and evaluation specialist and a social safeguard specialist, in collaboration with representatives from the Lao Front for National Construction (LFNC) and the Lao Women's Union (LWU). The ONPM will report the monitoring result and progress in a quarterly basis in collaboration with project implementing agencies. Costs for implementing and monitoring GAP will be financed by the loan proceeds.

Table 2: Proposed Actions by Project Output

Component and Output	Gender-Related Action	Target Indicator
Integrated Water Resources Management Component		
Nam Ngum River Basin Committee Secretariat (NNRBCS) strengthened for sub-basin management (MoNRE)	Agenda of relevant workshops and training sessions will include gender-related issues in sub-basin water resources management.	Annual training workshops deal with gender-related issues. By 2015, 30% of participants for training workshops for sub-basin planning are female.
	Women will participate in the planning process. The roles and responsibilities, and needs and concerns of both women and men are considered.	By 2013, five sub-basin management plans developed, which include gender-mainstreaming elements.
Watershed Management Component		
District land use planning enhanced (IWMU)	Female staff in district governments will be invited to dissemination workshops.	By 2015, XX% (to be decided at the higher level than the female staff ratio in each beneficiary agency) of workshop participants are female.
Agricultural support services improved for the sustainability (NAFES)	The targets will be fully informed to stakeholders. Women will be encouraged to participate in workshops, training sessions, and other project activities for government staff and villagers.	By 2015, 30% of trainees are female in the training sessions for extension staff. (The ratio will be refined based on the female staff ratio in each beneficiary agency) By 2015, 30%-70% of participants in workshops and training sessions at the villages level are women (the ratios will be refined based on the female preferences on training subjects). By 2013, 30% of participants in village land use planning processes are female. By 2015, 900 new borrowers (50% female) receive credit from newly registered VDRF institutions. By 2015, 25% of functionalities of farmers' groups for production and infrastructure maintenance are women.
	The concept of joint land certificates will be informed and agreed among target villagers.	By 2015, 80% of farmers obtain joint land use certificates issued in the name of both husband and wife in 30 additional villages.
Capacity Development Component		
Institutional and human resources capacity developed for project implementation (ONPM)	Monitoring data will be disaggregated by sex and ethnic group to the extent possible.	By 2015, quarterly progress reports include sex and ethnic group disaggregated data for project performance.

IWMU = Integrated Watershed Management Unit, MoNRE = Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, NAFES = National Agriculture and Forestry Extension Service, NNRBCS = Nam Ngum River Basin Committee Secretariat, ONPM = Office of National Project Manager VDRF = village development revolving fund.