

LAO PDR

BUILDING RESILIENCE OF URBAN
POPULATIONS WITH ECOSYSTEM-
BASED SOLUTIONS

POLICY BRIEF:
GENDER ACTION PLAN

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KEY MESSAGE

The Gender Action Plan aims to create gender parity in the involvement of women in the planning, implementation and monitoring phase of the Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) project activities.

The two main goals of the Gender Action Plan are to decrease employment inequalities and increase women's climate awareness.

This project strives to ensure gender parity in the hiring of staff and participation of women in project interventions. A full time Monitoring and Gender Officer will be hired for the duration of the project (5 years) to continuously check that gender targets are being met.

INTRODUCTION

Climate change is increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme rainfall events in Lao, leading to more frequent and severe flooding in vulnerable cities along the Mekong River. However, these rapidly growing cities lack adequate flood management planning. In order to create a climate-resilient approach to flood management UNEP has proposed an ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) projects in the cities of Vientiane, Paksan, Savannakhet and Pakse. These project will confer adaptation benefits in the form of flood reduction, increased ecosystem services from wetlands and streams, and increased knowledge directly to approximately 74,600 people living in villages near project interventions.

The projects will also focus on gender-sensitive development and aim to alleviate existing gender inequalities. Targets for women's participation differ across project activities and range from 30% to 50% - careful analysis was done to ensure that targets accurately reflect local realities and women's preferences. To ensure these gender targets are met, a Monitoring and Gender Officer will oversee project interventions and continually collect gender data, which will be combined with the findings from community surveys at mid-term and the end of the project. This brief will highlight the most vital components of the projects Gender Action Plan and outline the specific gender targets across the various project interventions.



COMPONENT 1. TECHNICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING TO PLAN, DESIGN, IMPLEMENT AND MAINTAIN INTEGRATED URBAN ECOSYSTEM - BASED ADAPTION (EBA) INTERVENTIONS FOR THE REDUCTION OF CLIMATE-INDUCED FLOODING

Output 1.1: Strengthening of institutional capacity for integrated flood risk management and implementation of urban ecosystems- based adaptation and males and females with increased awareness of climate threats.

Gender Target: Equal inclusion of women and men in training and capacity building in urban EbA.

Activities	Gender Targets
1.1.1. Build the capacity of national and local representatives for using urban EbA to manage climate change-induced flooding.	• Women shall be engaged in these technical activities. • In certain cases gender balance (50% women) can be achieved, but perhaps less so for the highly technical areas where women have traditionally shown little interest. • The international knowledge-exchange trip will include at least 30% women.
1.1.2. Establish a national knowledge hub that produces and disseminates information on urban EbA interventions locally, regionally and internationally.	• Given the smaller female presence in engineering enrolments at the university and in public service, the project will strive for gender balance (30% women), within reason. • At local levels, gender parity is more likely.
1.1.3. Conduct awareness- raising campaigns in each of the four target cities for communities and the private sector on urban EbA and flood management.	• Awareness raising will be carried out by women and men through existing local community groups including the National Women's Union. The campaign will also be designed to be relevant, and accessible to men and women, and will aim to reach equal numbers of women and men.

Output 1.2: Integrated Climate-resilient Flood Management Strategies and urban EbA guidelines and effective Flood Risk Management Committees as coordination mechanisms.

Gender Target: Planning should include separate sessions for women and men in communities after which plans can be merged through consultation and mutual agreement. At the government-level planning is carried out in joint sessions.

Activities	Gender Targets
1.2.1. Conduct economic valuation of urban ecosystem services.	• 50% of those consulted/surveyed should be women. • 30% of the enumerators and researchers contracted should be women. • Socio-economic surveys should be gender-disaggregated and include questions that illustrate gender dynamics at the household level.
1.2.2. Conduct hydrological assessments and climate risk assessments.	• Village-level consultations for wetland assessment in Paksan will include separate focus groups with women and men. • 50% of those consulted/surveyed should be women. • 30% of the enumerators and researchers contracted should be women.
1.2.3. Develop the ICFMS and mainstream urban EbA into relevant policies.	• Stakeholder consultations for the development of ICFMS will survey women equally in affected communities, while consultations with the private sector will aim to include at least 30% women. • The ICFMS will include clear gender components and considerations.
1.2.4. Develop national urban EbA guidelines for Laos.	• Guidelines will be gender-sensitive and contain articles mandating the gender balanced inclusion of women and men.

*Hydrological assessments will be conducted by a technical firm and a gender budget has therefore not been allocated to this activity





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COMPONENT 2. REHABILITATION AND PROTECTION OF ECOSYSTEM IN RESPONSE TO CLIMATE VARIABILITY AND CHANGE

Activities	Gender Targets
2.1. Area of wetland restored contributing to flood reduction and sustainable management of the Nong Peung wetland in Paksan.	• 50% of stakeholders engaged in the development of the plans are women. • 30% of those hired for restoration or work are women.
2.2. Area of urban streams restored contributing to flood reduction and sustainable management of urban streams in Savannakhet and Pakse.	• Women and men participate equally in the sustainable management with training provided as necessary. • Minimum 50% of participants involved with trainings and with management are women.
2.3. Area of permeable paving solutions installed in public areas contributing to flood reduction in Vientiane, Paksan, Savannakhet and Pakse.	• Women and men from villages surrounding target public institutions are equally involved in the design process. • Minimum 50% of stakeholders consulted and involved in the design process are women.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Formulate gender specific targets and outcomes

- Once baseline analysis occurs ensure context appropriate gender goals are revised and set.

Communicate gender targets with relevant government entities

- Early, regular and formal communication to concerned government counterparts on gender goals are vital to the project's success.

Certify that teaching materials and workshops are accessible to women

- Include social issues when designing the content of trainings, workshops and study trips.
- Ensure the date, time, duration and location of the workshops and trips are accessible for men and women.
- Monitor and Gender Officer to support the design of context-appropriate messages that can promote gender-equitable participation in EbA and flood management activities.
- Map out the different needs and preferred information channels of both women and men.
- Use multiple channels to disseminate the information, including those that can reach out to both women and men.

Ensure there is a balanced perspective of EbA policies and issues

- Extend invitations to non-technical experts, participants from other ministries and civil society organizations.

Gender-disaggregate responses from surveys

- Organise separate focus group discussions with women and men as needed.

Pursue a gender balanced hiring process

- Include in the Terms of Reference and advertisements that gender balance and gender knowledge will be selection criteria.
- Include 30% women on the hiring panel.

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