

APPENDIX 8. Gender Action Plan

Gender Action Plan
Document Stage: Draft for Comments
Project Number: R-PPTA 7459 (GMS)
September 2010

GMS: Biodiversity Conservation Corridors

The Gender Action Plan is a document of the borrower. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of ADB's Board of Directors, Management, or staff, and may be preliminary in nature.

GENDER ACTION PLAN

1. The GMS Biodiversity Conservation Corridor Project (BCI 2) aims to result in climate resilient transboundary biodiversity conservation corridors sustaining livelihoods and investments in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam. It is envisaged that by 2017, the GMS Biodiversity Conservation Corridors are established with supportive policy and regulatory framework in the three countries that maintain ecosystem connectivity and services. It has four components with corresponding indicative activities¹, (i) Institutional and community strengthening for biodiversity conservation management, (ii) Biodiversity corridors restoration, ecosystem services protection, and sustainable management by local resource managers, (iii) Livelihood improvement and small scale infrastructure support in target villages and communes/ clusters, and (iv) Project management and support services.

2. The approach is a response to the increasing developmental threats (construction of hydroelectric dams, mining and economic concessions for rubber plantations and logging) that abound within the region that result in fragmentation. The fragmentation of ecosystems decreases its capacities to provide services to both upstream and downstream users. BCI 2 aims to show that livelihood activities, agriculture, and some selected development activities could co-exist and be integrated in a conservation landscape as it encompasses conservation and development, protection and livelihoods for sustainable use and management. It fosters links between protected areas and connecting corridors consisting of linear or stepping stone forest blocks that allow for restoration of ecosystem connectivity. The proposed Project promotes zoning with the intention of safeguarding forest access and tenurial rights of the poor and ethnic groups living in remote mountain villages and clusters considered to be the stewards of the ecosystem. All subProjects for investment therefore are community driven, rooted on active stakeholder participation otherwise, conservation and sustainable use cannot be possible.

3. BCI 2 targets an estimated 4,700 beneficiary households in the 69 target villages found in 5 districts of 3 provinces (Attapeu, Champasak, and Xekong) of Lao PDR.

A. Gender Status and Issues for Proposed Project

1. At the National Level

4. The Lao PDR Constitution and various laws guarantee gender equality and the National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES) – the government's national development plan – highlights gender as a cross cutting priority.² There are two main institutions tasked as oversight for women: the Lao Women's Union safeguards the rights and interests of Lao women and children of different ethnic groups while the National Commission for the Advancement of Women (NCAW) assists the Government to formulate national policy guidance and strategic action plans to promote women's advancement and gender equality.

5. However, the UNDP's Gender Development Index (GDI) shows that while all GMS countries have a higher life expectancy for women, literacy and school enrolment rates lag behind for women, particularly in Lao PDR. Women's opportunities are considerably lower, as they tend to dominate the agricultural work force and the informal economy, whereas men are able to seek better opportunities in the urban manufacturing and service sectors.

6. Poverty³ is more pronounced among the rural population and ethnic minorities, especially women. Of the four main ethno-linguistic groups, the Mon Khmer is the poorest, with more than half of this group living under province-based poverty lines. This is in contrast to the majority Lao-Tai group, which has the lowest incidence of poverty (25%). The further populations live from urban settlements; the lower is their access to basic infrastructure, services, incomes and

¹ See Appendix 1 on Project DMF.

² Lao PDR Gender Profile. 2005. Gender Resource Information & Development Center (GRID). With the Support of the World Bank.

³ Lao Gender Profile. 2005. Gender Resource Information and Development Center with support from the World Bank.

livelihoods options. The Mon Khmer households earn the lowest amounts of cash wages, which may contribute to the high incidence of poverty within this group.

7. Since certain ethnic groups predominate in certain provinces and geographic settings, many of which are remote and mountainous, they tend to have the least physical access to public-financed resources. Within this context, women tend to experience poverty differently, with women working longer hours because they are primarily responsible for their households' food security. This is a responsibility that is especially difficult for highland families that have relocated to lowland areas, in response to government policies to reduce shifting cultivation. If families cannot grow sufficient rice in their new location, they may return to their old shifting cultivation fields, which could be a considerable distance away.⁴

8. Key issues related to the BCI 2 concerns as cited in the Lao Gender Profile (2005) are:

- (i) More than half of those employed in agriculture are women, with men and women making different contributions to food security and household income
- (ii) Women contribute significantly to rice production
- (iii) Women play an important role in collecting and gathering forest products
- (iv) Women participate in the establishment of irrigation systems, and community development projects, but are absent from decision-making
- (v) While women and men enjoy equal access to land under the law, customary practices tend to over-ride these; Land documents tend to be registered in men's names
- (vi) Poor women are affected by environmental hazards and degradation
- (vii) Wood fuel is linked to the daily lives of Lao women

2. Gender Issues in BCI 2 Sites

9. This gender impact analysis is based on (i) seven sample villages (See Appendix 1 for list and associated sociodemographic characteristics); (ii) national, provincial, district and village consultations with women of different ages and ethnic groups, government officials, and mass organizations (See Appendix 2 on consultations conducted during R-PPTA).

10. **Sociodemographic Characteristics in Sample BCI 2 Sites.** Table 1 (details in Appendix 1) shows the key facets of BCI 2 seven sample villages. The table further shows that the total affected ethnic group population in BCI sites is about 53% of the total population, the highest being in Xekong, followed by Attapeu and Champasak the least.

Table 1. Summary of BCI 2 Sociodemographic Characteristics in Lao PDR

PARAMETER	ENTRY
BCI Area (km ²)	6980
BCI Population	27,368
Population Density	4
Covered Provinces	3
Covered Villages	69
Covered Households	4,689
Covered Poor Households	1,639
% Estimated Poor from BCI Population	35%
Covered Ethnic Group	14,505
% Affected Ethnic Group from BCI Population	53%
Female Population	14,341
% Female Population	52%

11. Among total households in BCI 2 sites, an estimated 35% are poor living in areas where population density is low at 4 persons per km². Poor households mostly are found in Xekong BCI 2 sites, followed by Champasak (27%) and Attapeu with 15%. The least dense BCI 2 sites are found in Xekong with 5.6 persons per km². Attapeu sample Project sites are more dense with

⁴ Ibid.

35.3 persons per km² with Champasak at 19.4 persons per km².

12. In Attapeu BCI 2 sites, it was established that Khanmaknao is a relatively newer settlement of the Lavae ethnic group and is situated next to Sompoy, also in Xanamsai, Attapeu. Sompoy is the most progressive of the 7 sample villages and largely is comprised of the Lowland Lao with minimal ethnic group (3%; mixed) and incidence of poor households pegged at 4%.

13. In Ta Ong, Champasak poor households comprise 92% of the total, and ethnicity is declared at 57% Lavae. This is misleading since declaration of ethnicity was based on mother tongue (as in the National Census). The field visit in Ta Ong validates 100% ethnicity within a settlement known to be hundreds of years in its current location. In Songkhone, Kaleum, Xekong however, 100% of the total population is affiliated with the Ngea-Klieng ethnic group.

14. As regards educational attainment, participants to FGDs aver that women generally only reach primary schooling as compared to males who are able to reach secondary level. In Attapeu Province of Lao PDR, women FGD participants stress the need for education to bail their families out of poverty.

15. **Household Labor Allocation Between Males and Females.** Household labor between males and females as regards NTFP collection is more equal as compared to crop production where disparities in time allocation are noted. NTFPs are an important source of dietary supplements, and are used for medicinal purposes and cash income, especially the Malva nut. Women collect bamboo shoots, roots and wild vegetables as food supplement and as a coping strategy when there are seasonal food shortfalls..

16. With respect to crop production, men are more visible at land preparation: ploughing, making bunds and preparing seedbeds. Women on the other hand are more visible during transplanting of rice, weeding, harvesting, threshing and post-harvest operations. In BCI 2 sites of Xekong, gender roles changed due to lack of male labor, resulting in labour demands for women increasing in agri-crop production. Women make decisions regarding household expenditure and are responsible for selling surplus rice. Despite all these responsibilities, women get minimal, if at all, extensions services on improved rice cultivation practices as well as livestock and poultry production.

17. Shifting cultivation is more evident in Attapeu and Xekong BCI 2 sample sites. It was noted that such a practice takes its toll on women (Appendix 3) as they walk long distances to the rice fields, and transporting rice and other crops back home for family consumption. Women spend additional time and energy collecting, fuelwood, food preparation and taking care of children after returning from the fields..

18. In Ta Ong, ecotourism is a growing income generating activity where homestays are made available. While women were active in the management of the activity, ecotourism management was a reflection of household dynamics in that women took care of washing, cleaning and cooking for tourists and guests, receiving fewer cash benefits than men who were allocated tour guide roles.

19. **Issues Raised.** Consultations with the Women's Union at the village, district and national levels, as well as the Lao Front, reveal that provision of social services is an important need for women. This is validated at the village level where the following issues and concerns were raised:

- (i) Absence or lack of rural and social infrastructure. Inter-village roads are far and difficult. Without means of transport, women spend much of their time walking to undertake household reproductive activities.
- (ii) Marked illiteracy rates feature among women, especially from ethnic groups.
- (iii) Poor household credit performance.
- (iv) Low income opportunities results in increased labor migration, especially by males,, leaving women behind to manage agricultural tasks and alone..

20. Priority investments were identified as rural inter-village roads, water supply, and electrification. In Sompoy, Attapeu, as well as Ta Ong, Champasak, the main concern identified was the lack of toilets. Such choices reflect the need to save on time to access markets and social services, most especially in relation to health and sanitation and education.

C. Project Gender Action Plan

21. The Project will largely benefit women by addressing the above issues and concerns. A Gender Action Plan (GAP) is prepared based on findings from the Social Assessment using the ADB Handbook for Social Assessment, and in close consultation with stakeholders that significantly include women and women leaders of Lao PDR. The GAP takes into account Lao PDR regulations and the ADB Policy on Gender and Development in particular, the Gender Guidelines of March 2010.

22. This GAP ensures (i) equal opportunities to access project benefits; (ii) active consultation and participation of women and ethnic groups; (iii) collection of gender disaggregated data including benefit monitoring and evaluation; and (iv) increased representation of women in decision-making bodies at all levels. The gender inclusive design elements presented in Table 2 are in response to constraints faced by women as presented in the social and gender analysis and prepared in consultation with stakeholders, particularly local women.

Table 2. BCI 2 Gender Action Plan

Project Component	Gender Action Plan Targets
COMPONENT 1: Institutional and community strengthening for biodiversity conservation management	• 30% participation of women during consultations; training in participatory land use planning, commune/village investment planning, GIS-based mapping, and functional literacy; capacity building in biodiversity corridor management, O&M, small enterprise development, assessment, and in working groups/committees to be established by the Project. • Gender sensitive training/IEC materials will be produced in local languages, (where applicable) to be prepared in close consultation with beneficiaries specifically, on land rights, credit, and access to resources and opportunities provided by the Project, linking up with on-going government and development partner programs on health/sanitation and HIV education, and climate change adaptation. • At least 50% of female heads of households receive forestland and land use certificates (LUC) collectively and/or individually where applicable, for livelihood purposes and productivity enhancement.
COMPONENT 2: Biodiversity corridors restoration, ecosystem services protection, and sustainable management by local resource managers	• Forest restoration activities (enrichment planning, NTFP planting, agro forestry) include at least 30% of women's labor input participation on cash basis; • National gender specialist to oversee preparation of community disaster risk and response plan, and conduct gender-responsive workshops ensuring access to information by women on mapping household vulnerability and livelihood options
COMPONENT 3: Livelihood improvement and small scale infrastructure support in target villages and communes/clusters	• Documented evidence of consultation with local women and women's groups (including women from IP/ethnic groups) prior to subproject approval. • At least 30% of Village Development Fund (VDF) investments targeted at livelihood activities (micro-credit borrowings) prepared and submitted by community womenfolk; • At least 30% of extension training directed at women producers (animal production, agriculture productivity) • At least 30% of VDF Management Board members are women. • Preparation of gender responsive designs for water storage/water harvesting systems to combat drought and water stress • Equal pay for men and women for work of equal type. • Training on Village Development Funds is gender responsive and gender sensitive
COMPONENT 4: Project management and support services	• Gender mainstreaming training for Project Management Units across levels at Project start. • At last 20% of staff is women at each level (senior management, technical and administrative / support staff). • Project Implementing Unit responsible for overseeing GAP implementation and reporting must include progress against the GAP in annual / semi-annual progress reports to ADB. • Participation of national institutions addressing concerns on women and ethnic groups across Project implementation units, especially in monitoring and grievance redress (Grievance redress mechanism disaggregated feedback and response by sex) • Both female and male staff given equal opportunity to participate in non-gender related training and capacity development programs. • A national social development/gender consultant recruited to (i) build capacity of Project management units across

Project Component	Gender Action Plan Targets
	levels, Project staff and facilitators in gender responsive design and analysis; (ii) preparation of gender sensitive indicators; (iii) preparation of checklists for evaluation of gender responsiveness of proposed subprojects; and (iv) coordination of relevant consultancies as appropriate. • Sex-disaggregated indicators established for Project performance M&E system; monitoring will be on-going to ensure activities are effectively carried out and targets reached; progress reports to include gender-related achievements and constraints. • Mid-term review Mission to assess gender related achievements and constraints to GAP implementation and propose, if required, adjustments for better Project performance.

23. **Implementation Mechanisms for the Gender Action Plan.** The Executing Agency (EA) for the proposed Project will be the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry who will delegate responsibility to the Department of Forestry. At the provincial level, the Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office will take charge of the day to day implementation and management of the Project. A provincial implementation team will be established and will include representation from the Lao Women's Union and the Lao Front for National Construction, in particular the unit tasked with oversight for ethnic groups. The Project will coordinate and complement activities of the Division for Advancement of Women (DAW) under MAF.

24. MAF at the national level will contract a qualified and experienced National Gender Specialist to assist gender specialists at the province level. The national level will assist the provincial implementing units in the preparation of social impact assessments and gender analysis for each participating district. Budget for GAP compliance are incorporated in the financial allocation per component.

APPENDIX 1

Summary Matrix of Socio-demographic Characteristics within Lao PDR BCI 2

Province/ District/ Village	Total Population	% Females	No of Households	Poor Households*	Total Ethnic Group Population	% Ethnic Group from Total Population	Ethnic Group Females	% Ethnic Group Females
TOTAL Villages	27,368	52.4	4,689	2	10,916	53.2	5,903	54.1
Champasak	13,241	48.9	2,309	1	470	7.2	237	50.4
Pathoumphone	13,241	48.9	2,309	1	470	7.2	237	50.4
Attapeu	9,073	50.5	1,591	1	6,176	68.1	3,235	52.4
Phouvung	1,117	44.9	193	2	887	79.4	472	53.2
Sanamxai	7,956	51.7	1,398	1	5,289	66.5	2,763	52.2
Xekong	5,054	58.8	789	2	4,270	84.5	2,431	56.9
Dakcheung	3219	66.4	487	2	2791	86.7	1506	54.0
Kaleum	1,835	51.2	302	2	1,479	81.0	925	62.5

* Poor households classified as 1=non-poor and 2=poor as per records at district offices.

APPENDIX 2
Attendance to FGDs and KIIs
Attendance to Focus Group Discussions by Village and Gender

Village	Male	Female	Total	
			Number	%
Saming	9	13	22	17%
Ta Ong	15	8	23	18%
Phoukuea	5	12	17	13%
Khanmaknao	14	18	32	24%
Sompoy	4	3	7	5%
Songkhone	13	5	18	14%
Ta Ork Yai	9	3	12	9%
TOTAL Number	69	62	131	100%
TOTAL %	53%	47%	-	-

LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Date	Name	Organization	Contact Address
04-21-10	Mr. Khamphay Luanglath Deputy head of Forestry Division	Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office, Champasak Province.	Tel/Fax: 856 31 212 177 Mobile: 856 20 553 59916 E-mail: khamplayL@hotmail.com , kp.luanglath@yahoo.com
	Mr. Sodxay Chaleurnsouk Director BCI Project	Biodiversity Conservation Corridors Initiatives between Xepian-Donghuasao NPA, Phathoumphone District, Champasak Province.	Tel: 856 30 5347 370 Mobile: 856 20 566 92884 Sodxay@yahoo.com
	Mr. Oneta	Xepian NPA, Phathoumphone District, Champasak Province.	Mobile: 856 20 554 39908
	Ms. Viengxay Director	District Investment Planning Office, Phathoumphone District, Champasak Province.	Mobile: 856 20 992 54038
	Ms. Lattana Assistant of Director	District Investment planning Office, Phathoumphone District, Champasak Province.	Mobile: 856 20 568 48150
	Mr. OnnTa Head of Land Mgt and Environmental office	District Land Management and Environmental office	
	Ms. Chanthone Silivong Deputy	National Lao Front office, Phathoumphone District, Champasak Province.	Mobile: 856 20 987 48166
	Mr. Khamphanh Deputy Director	District Agriculture and Forestry Office, Phathoumphone District, Champasak Province.	Mobile: 856 20 567 62389
04-25-10	Mr. Singsamouth Deputy, Forestry Section	Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office, Attapue Province.	
04-26-10	Mr. Somnuek Keokhambay Deputy, Agriculture and Forestry Office	District Agriculture and Forestry Office, Sanamxay District, Attapue Province.	Mobile: 856 20 998 34482
	Mr. Ummuay Savengsouk Rural Development Office	District Agriculture and Forestry Office, Sanamxay District, Attapue Province.	Mobile: 856 20 270 5677
04-31-10	Mr. Houan Chanphana Assistant Head of GMS National Secretarial	GMS National Secretarial, Water Resources and Environment Administration	Mobile: 856 20 556 55069 hcpn@hotmail.com
	Mr. Chanthavong Seneamatmontry Director General of Cabinet	Lao Front for National Construction	
	Mr. Sayasin Sikhotchounnamany Director of Institute for Cultural Research	Lao Academy of Social Science	Tel: 856 21 212009 Tel: 856 21 218652 Mobile: 856 20 9980 1457
	Mr. Khamphanh Sithilath	Institute for Cultural Research	Mobile: 856 20 9973 7434

Date	Name	Organization	Contact Address
	Music and Reforming, Art Department		E-mail: sithilathk@yahoo.com
05-02-10	Mr. Phouphath Singthavongxay Head of Statistical Data	Department of Statistics, Ministry of Planning and Investment	Tel: 856 21 264322 Mobile: 856 20 5568 5773
	Mr. Viraphon Novanesengsy Director	Law and Information Division, Environmental and Social Impact Assessment, Water Resources and Environment Administration	P.O.Box: 7864, Vientiane, Lao PDR Tel: 856 21 260 918 Fax: 856 21 244 398 Mobile: 856 20 220 6609 E-mail: viraphon99@hotmail.com
	Mr. Sengsoulin Deputy	Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office, Sekong Province.	
05-04-10	Ms. Philavanh Sec. of Lao Women Union	National Lao Women Union	Tel: 856 21 214 304
	Ms. Khamphul Phollurxa Lecturer - Anthropology	Faculty of Letter, National University of Laos	Tel: 856 21 770308 Mobile: 856 20 998 01385
	Prof. Dr. Sayamang Vongsak Voice President	Lao Front for National Construction	P.O.Box: 1828, Vientiane, Lao PDR Tel: 856 21 213758 Fax: 856 21 213758 Mobile: 856 20 980 1813 vsayamang@yahoo.com
05-07-10	Mr Sythao	Kaluem District Agriculture and Forestry Office, Sekong Province.	

APPENDIX 3
Male and Female Household Schedules in Select BCI 2 Sites

Time	Sompoy, Sanamxai		Songkhone, Kaleum	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
4:00 am			Go to garden	
4:30 am				
5:00 am			Cook sticky rice and feed animals	
5:30 am				
6:00 am	Go Fishing	Cook sticky rice		
6:30 am		Household chores		
7:00 am		Feed Monk (Sai Bath)		
7:30 am		Cook Breakfast		Cook and have breakfast
8:00 am	Breakfast			
8:30 am	Work in rice field or garden			Child care
9:00 am				
9:30 am			Tend farm and collect firewood	
10:00 am				
10:30 am			Go home	
11:00 am			Cook lunch	
11:30 am	Cook lunch			
12:00 pm	Lunch			Cook lunch
12:30 pm	Work in rice field or garden			
1:00 pm			Take lunch	
1:30 pm			Relax	
2:00 pm			Tend farm	
2:30 pm				
3:00 pm				
3:30 pm				
4:00 pm	Work in rice field or garden		Tend farm	
4:30 pm				
5:00 pm				
5:30 pm				
6:00 pm			Go home	
6:30 pm	Collect fuelwood and vegetables on way home			Cook, fetch water, feed animals
7:00 pm		Feed animals		
7:30 pm			Dinner	
8:00 pm	Dinner		Relax	
8:30 pm	Sleep			
9:00 pm	If raining, collect frogs / fish		Sleep	
9:30 pm				

* As phrased during FGDs in the presence of both males and females.