



BACKGROUND

Lao PDR is endowed with a wealth of natural resources, including water, forests, and minerals. The country draws on its natural resources to propel economic growth, making it one of the fastest growing economies in the East Asia and Pacific region. However, this economic growth has come with a large environmental footprint, and the unsustainable extraction of natural resources threatens the livelihoods of the country's most vulnerable people. Increased reliance on non-extractive resource sectors and inclusive green growth strategies is crucial to protect the country's rich natural resources for future generations.

ACTIVITIES

The Asia Foundation's environment program supports community-based projects that enable Lao citizens to both benefit from and protect the natural resources that are critical to their livelihoods. Spearheading the Community-based River Basin Management (RBM) project, the Foundation is collaborating with the Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment in Khammouane Province. By applying the principles of Integrated Water Resource Management and RBM strategies, communities take a more active and informed role in stewardship of their local water resources. Activities include improved waste management, Good Agriculture Practices to reduce the use of agrochemicals, and mitigating flood and drought using nature-based solutions (i.e. green infrastructure).

KEY OUTCOMES

The Foundation's environment program works with communities and government partners to build capacity on data collection tools, as well as a transparent and equitable approach for river basin planning and protection. Activities include water quality monitoring using biomonitoring protocols, hazard risk assessments, community land use planning, and designing and implementing village level water resources projects, including green infrastructure, to build community resilience for disaster and climate change resilience.

In 2018, the Foundation adapted the U.S. Community Emergency Response Team training manual for the Lao context and carried out Disaster Risk Management (DRM) training in four villages in Xieng Ngeun District, Luang Prabang province.

Working with villagers in three communities along the Xe Bang Fai River, the Foundation's Environment Team designed and implemented a wetland enhancement activity that included building protective embankments around the wetlands to prevent agrochemical runoff from infiltrating into the wetlands, digging deeper pools to improve fish habitat, and developing a participatory Wetland Management Framework. The framework introduced benefit sharing plans and regulations, set up fish conservation zones, as well as wetland monitoring and maintenance activities to improve wetland management. This resulted in increased fish and other aquatic animals, and more resilient wetlands that survived one of the worst droughts in the last fifty years in Lao PDR.



2016-2019



Water quality monitoring training in

3 villages in Xe Bang Fai

> **90**
government staff
(26 female)

> **290**
village volunteers
(110 female)

> **56**
teachers and
students

2018



DRM training carried out for:

> **25**
district representatives
(2 female)

> **25**
national and provincial
government staff
(4 female)

> **58**
villagers
(11 female)

2018-2019



3,710

villagers benefited from
wetland improvement

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