



Gender Issues in Fisheries and Aquaculture in Lao PDR

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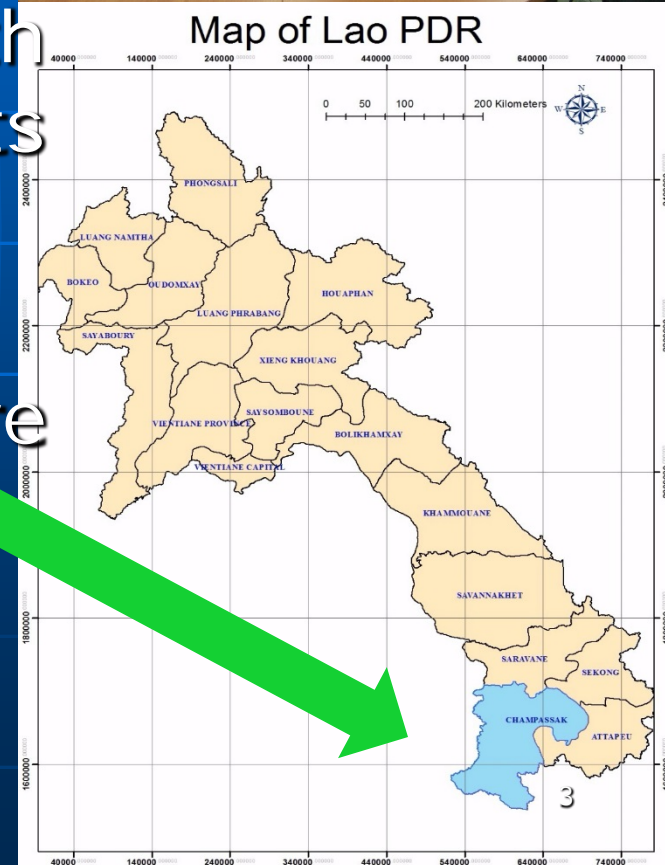
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National Policy on Gender Equality

- ❑ Lao PDR highly committed to promotion of equality between men and women and has articulated goals and priorities in the **National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy** (NGPES)
- ❑ Government of Lao PDR has promoted gender equity as a priority and established the **National Commission for Advancement of Women** (NCAW) in 2003
- ❑ **BUT** we know nothing about gender equality in fisheries and aquaculture in Laos PDR

Strategy

- MRC funded workshop to understand issues and develop study objectives and methodology
- Focus group engagement with District Fisheries Departments
 - Pakse District and Phonthong District
- Testing of study questionnaire
- Interviews with fisheries agencies and fishing community groups
- Analysis of results



Objectives of the study

- Identify gender roles in capture fisheries and aquaculture;
- Identify participation in decision making by men and women in capture fisheries and aquaculture;
- Study the gender situation and issues in community-based fisher organizations;
- Identify problems or constraints related to gender in fisheries and aquaculture development;
- Build capacity of Lao Network for Gender Promotion in Fisheries Development (NGF) to conduct studies on gender issues in fisheries and aquaculture.

Discussion with District Fisheries Staff

- Pakse District of Agriculture and Forestry Office has Advance Gender Master Plan at district level
 - Plan promotes gender equality and higher position for women at decision maker level (one head of section, one deputy head of section, two are project focus points)
- Phonthong district has same system
 - Few women staff and no woman yet promoted

Discussions with village head

Village Name	Main activity	Total house hold	Population		Female head of HH
			Male	Female	
Ban Khonelai (Pakse)	Fisheries	119	330	345	4
Ban Nonsavang (Pakse)	Fisheries and aquaculture	426	1136	1156	64
Ban Kang (Pakse)	Aquaculture	309	1,004	950	31
Ban Salao (Phonthong)	Fisheries	137	390	440	13

Capture fisheries households

Sample frame: 59 households with 353 people: 179 male and 174 female

- Only 10% of households fish as main job
- 66% of women involved with agriculture, 13.5% selling fish, 10% teachers
- Most men go fishing alone (5% with wife and 18% with child)
- Fish 7 days per week
- Most catch fish for household and for sale – women sell fish to trader
- Income from selling fish - max US\$ 2,500



Aquaculture households



Sample frame: 20 households with 148 people: 81 male, 67 female

- Main income agriculture (45%), cage culture (30%) and fish culture (20%)

- 70% work on fish farm but not full time (52% are women)

- Farm management decisions mostly by men (55%) but shared in other households (45%)

- Women share property ownership of house, land, car and motorbike

- Average annual household income 40,000 US\$ (does not account for



Fish processors Group

- Only two families are fish processors in Ban Nonsavang village
 - Dry and ferment fish
 - 14 years experience
 - no technical training.
 - sell their product in Pakse market and some transported to Vientiane by middle trader
- Can produce:
 - 100 kg dry fish per week
 - 300 kg fermented fish per week.



Fish Trader Group

- Women from cage culture households sell fish through women on markets through middle women
- Only one fish trader in Ban Nonsavang village
- Buy fish from fishers and sell in Daoheung Market in Pakse District
- Most traders are women
- Income from selling fish:
US\$ 4000-US\$ 45,000 annually



Issue in Fisheries and Aquaculture

Participation of men and women in fisheries and aquaculture

- Men do most of the fishing
- Women mostly do processing and marketing
- Women have little knowledge of fish farming, men responsible for planning, design, construction and water management
- Women responsible for feeding fish, selling produce and finances.



Issue in Fisheries and Aquaculture

Major Gender Issues

- NCAW lacks the capacity to provide assistance to sector ministries and district levels to integrate these goals into sector strategies and plans.
- No funds.



Recommendations

- Continue strengthening capacity of the gender staff to implement strategy at provincial level
- Promote gender staff by allocating bigger quota for civil service in gender office/ organization
- Implement of gender action plan at community/village level
- Building capacity of local staff who work with gender related activities
- Gender mainstream in fisheries and aquaculture and provide chance for them for their participation in the national/community event



