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Final Report:

Gender Mainstreaming Framework and Strategy

CAWA Project, November 2017



INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE

Table of Contents

- Summary 1
- 1. Introduction 1
 - 1.1 Background to CAWA Project..... 1
- 2. Rational for Gender Mainstreaming in the CAWA Project 1
- 3. Definition of Gender Mainstreaming..... 2
- 4. Summary Recommendations from Gender Analysis 2
 - 4.1 Strategic Interventions and actions.....4
- 5. Gender Mainstreaming in the CAWA project 7
 - 5.1 Theory of Change 7
- 6. Strategic Considerations for Mainstreaming Gender in the Outputs of the CAWA Project 10
 - 6.1 Political will for gender equality..... 10
 - 6.2 Selection and design of gender sensitive/ gender responsive actions 10
 - 6.3 Cross-cutting issues..... 10
- 7. Conclusions 12
 - 7.1 Next Steps..... 13
- Annex 1: CAWA Project Results Matrix..... 14

Acronyms

ARO	Asia Regional Office
BKN	Beung Kiat Ngong
CAWA	Climate Adaptation in Wetland Areas
CC	Climate Change
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CEDAW	Convention on Eliminating All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DEQP	Department of Environmental Quality Promotion
DONRE	District Office of Natural Resources and Environment
EBA	Ecosystem-Based Adaptation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FCZ	Fish Conservation Zones
FSP	Full Sized Project
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IRAS	Improving the Resilience of the Agriculture Sector in Lao PDR to Climate Change Impacts
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LArrec	Living Aquatic resources research center
LWU	Lao Women's Union
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MRC	Mekong River Commission
NCAW	National Commission for the Advancement of Women
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NTFP	Non Timber Forest Product
PDR	People's Democratic Republic
PoNRE	Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment
PPG	Project Preparation Grant (GEF)
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
VA	Vulnerability Assessment
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
XCP	Xe Champhone

Summary:

The CAWA Gender Mainstreaming Framework and Strategy has been developed to facilitate integration of gender equality in the design, planning and execution of activities promoted and supported by CAWA.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background to CAWA Project

The CAWA project - Climate Adaptation in Wetlands Areas - focuses on the Beung Kiat Ngong (BKN) and Xe Champhone (XCP) wetlands, protected under the Ramsar Convention. The project seeks to reduce climate change vulnerability of communities and wetlands ecosystems by helping communities adapt to the impacts of climate change and contribute to the sustainability of their livelihoods, by supporting the restoration and sustainable management of the globally important Ramsar-designated wetlands on which they depend on.

The main components of the project include: i) Improvement of knowledge and understanding of climate change (CC) impacts and risks, ii) Implementation of appropriate climate change adaptation and risk reduction measures, and iii) Integration of tested and cost-effective climate change adaptation and disaster management measures into critical planning processes at local and national levels.

The project adopts an ecosystem-based adaptation (EBA) approach to safeguard the capacity of the wetlands to buffer local peoples' livelihoods against CC impacts through a combination of; improved planning and governance, direct investments in climate change adaptation (CCA) measures and livelihoods strengthening, and support to CC resilient forms of sustainable use, with a strong focus on creating lasting capacities among national stakeholders at all levels to sustain and replicate these benefits.

2. Rational for Gender Mainstreaming in the CAWA Project

Gender and environment are intimately linked as women and men have unique relationships with, dependencies on, and expertise regarding their environments. Gender roles, responsibilities and expectations therefore shape all forms of human relationships to the environment, and the involvement, contribution and role of both men and women, are of paramount importance to the functioning and wellbeing of natural resource dependent communities, although often not well understood.

Women in particular play a critical role in providing, managing and safeguarding wetland and water resources globally, making it necessary to identify solutions to enhance their participation in wetland and water management. Poor understanding of the distinct roles and contributions of men and women often leads to lack of recognition of their distinct needs and interests in policies and programmes. This lack of recognition can result in failure to meet sustainable livelihood goals in wetland dependent communities.

Gender equality is also recognized as an integral part of the stakeholder empowerment process, essential for achieving social justice, and for ensuring equitable and sustainable human development for all. Given the interdependence of humans and the environment, men and women's roles, and behavior and attitudes towards the environment differ, and are heavily dependent on local social, political, economic and environmental conditions. In this respect it is considered important that the CAWA project take account of gender gaps in the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluations of results.

3. Definition of Gender Mainstreaming

Mainstreaming gender, or a gender perspective, is the process of assessing the implications for men and women of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs/projects, at all levels. It is a process of making women's, as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, programmes and projects in all political, economic and social spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. It is a comprehensive approach which pertains to all activities related to development and human rights, and ensures that both women and men can influence, participate in and benefit from these.

The ultimate goal of gender mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality. Gender mainstreaming therefore involves a process of change or transformation, to form relatively unequal social and institutional structures into equal and just structures for both men and women. Gender mainstreaming is not about adding a women's component or even a gender equality component into an existing project or activity, but goes beyond increasing women's participation by bringing the experience, knowledge and interest of women and men to bear in the development agenda.

Gender mainstreaming recognizes the following key points:

1. Roles of men and women are interdependent and complimentary, therefore one cannot be changed without also affecting the other;
2. Gender issues are not confined to one sector but must be addressed as part of an integrated approach;
3. Gender issues are not confined to the population of programme "beneficiaries" but must be addressed also at macro (policy) and meso (institutional/delivery systems) levels;
4. Gender issues must be addressed at every stage in the programme cycle, beginning with identification and formulation, and continuing through implementation, monitoring and Evaluation.

Adapted from 'Mainstreaming gender into project cycle management in the fisheries sector (FAO, 2011).

4. Summary Recommendations from Gender Analysis

The Gender Analysis conducted in Xe Champhone in January 2017 provided useful information in validating the content of Annex 8. of the CAWA Project Document 'Gender Analysis and Strategies' and provided some key recommendations, that together with the results of the Social Ecological Vulnerability Assessments shape the gender mainstreaming strategy for the project.

The prevailing socio-economic environment presented some challenges in relation to living conditions of women and men and the community as a whole. While most communities were food sufficient there is a small subsection, generally less than 10% of the population in each of the village communities where

women in particular (as well as men) still face poverty despite working hard. Lack of social capital, lack of livelihood assets, and poor access to knowledge and skills to develop new opportunities, are considered contributing factors.

1. There are two key challenges for addressing gender equality at the local level in XCP. Firstly the importance of gender power relations. Whereas power relations appear equal at the household level, this is not the case outside the household, within the wider community, local market and local government structures. The second major challenge is access to information which can strengthen the capacity of women.
2. There is a need to strengthen gender focused policies on the ground and strengthen linkages vertically from local government to provincial and national government, as well as horizontally; by building the capacity of women's groups locally, improving access to information and management, in particular with regards to wetlands based livelihoods (fisheries, rice, agriculture, forest productivity), and better understanding the influence of local institutions and socio-cultural norms and customs in shaping women's capacity to engage.
3. In particular, opportunities should be sought to strengthen the effectiveness of the Lao Women's Union (LWU) structure at the village and provincial level through, capacity building of leaders and members of LWU and if possible the provision of capital assets for investments in community development programmes that support the overall objectives of wetlands conservation and social empowerment of women and ethnic minority groups. The overall strategy for promoting gender equality through development programmes should be on promoting the advancement of women and the implementation of policy on gender equality and to raise the role of women in both government and social positions. The Lao Women's Union at the provincial and district level do have working plans, but cannot always implement some of the activities due to budget constraints. In general it is considered important to coordinate with all district level organizations concerned, to raise awareness on implementing government policies, constitution, laws and the various international instruments concerning the rights and interests of women, by organizing seminars, workshops, and trainings, and disseminating information and advocating through various kinds of media.
4. With respect to Ramsar Management it is important to take heed of the current overall situation. There is currently a poor level of understanding, engagement and participation in decision making and management of wetlands resources across the Ramsar Site by both men and women, although some villages are active in protecting small patches of habitat there is no inter-village collaboration over the management of common resources. Added to this, the prevailing social norm and perception that 'technical matters' such as wetland resources management is a male domain/ interest and concern, and not the domain/ interest of women. It should be noted that based on the survey it is apparent that women hold significant knowledge of wetlands resources that should be taken into account in planning long term management and livelihood development opportunities.
5. The national law and land tenure policy is considered a significant milestone for protecting women's rights in Lao PDR. Conjugal land property requires both the names of the husband and wife by law, providing significant social security to women and men. It is important that wetland management initiatives engage DONRE and local land management bodies in designating and regulating land and water use for conservation/ protection as well as for livelihood purposes. In so doing it is equally important to continue to support, the land titling process to protect the rights of wetland resource dependent communities, both men and women.

6. With respect to livelihoods development, it is considered important to work with the agriculture and fisheries sectors to promote and create conditions for women that improve their production knowledge, develop their labor skills and encourage the processing of agriculture, fisheries and handicrafts products as commodities, with the aim to reduce the burden of work on women through good production practices, create more job opportunities for women and contribute to family income. To support this, opportunities should be created for women to access financial resources, improve knowledge on operating SMEs and increase access to markets for handicrafts and other products of which women are the major labour force.

4.1 Strategic Interventions and actions required (incorporating potential project activities)

The below list of potential strategic interventions and actions (Table 1) is adapted from the CAWA ProDoc Annex 8 and includes those that have been validated and/or updated by the gender analysis. Some interventions were combined where appropriate and some excluded where the gender analysis didn't highlight information to validate. Also included are the additional recommended actions based on gender analysis findings and summarized from section 4 (highlighted). Interventions-actions have been assessed and fit under the applicable 'Components and Outcomes' of the results matrix. Further needs assessment and identification of specific project activity needs will be undertaken following analysis of the Vulnerability Assessment data, and recommendations for adaptation planning made.

Table 1: Potential strategic interventions and recommended actions for CAWA project

Strategic interventions	Actions Required
Component 1: Improved understanding of climate change impacts and risks in Xe Champhone and Beung Kiat Ngong wetlands	
Outcome 1: Improved understanding of climate change impacts and risks in Xe Champhone and Beung Kiat Ngong wetlands	
Research and capacity building to improve understanding of climate change impacts and risks in XC and BKN wetlands for men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness campaigns that can relate to both men and women's roles and interests in resource use and conservation - Include women in workshops and trainings; increasing the role and recognition of women in decision making processes. - Encourage a new norm that 'technical matters' such as wetland resources management is not gender biased - Increase access to business information for women
Village Level Needs Assessments for Select Target Villages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Target Village Level Needs Assessment to explore the differential gender needs and concerns, social and cultural norms and practices, existing legal frameworks and practices to bridge the gender gaps, structural and systematic barriers 	Village Level Need assessment should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Differential needs and concerns of specific community groups- men, women, children and other social groups- ethnic groups - Assessment of the gender division of labour existing at the village level in the particular society, structural and cultural barriers; differential access to resources, technology, participation in decision making, political participation etc. limiting women's coping capacity to climate change. - Assessment of different livelihood activities, existing and future prospects from gender perspective providing insights about tools, methodologies, and technologies to break the existing social, cultural and structural barriers for women and other vulnerable

	<p>groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding the interaction of gender dynamics with other social variables such as class, economic status, age etc. - Assessment of legal/ policy frameworks for ensuring rights and entitlements to different marginalised groups including women, and awareness of the community about the different legal frameworks and policies.
Component 2: Efficient and cost-effective adaptation measures	
Outcome 2: Efficient and cost-effective adaptation measures in place to reduce the impacts of climate change and natural disasters on wetlands eco-systems and local livelihoods	
	-
Promotion of climate smart agricultural practices that capitalize on men's and women's knowledge and development capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognition and promotion of women's role as seed keepers, planters, harvesters of crops and providing nutrition for the household - Involvement of women in crop selection processes to ensure varieties meet their needs - Women led seed banks supported as a platform to exchange/provide knowledge on climate change as well as collect and exchange resistant varieties of seeds. - Opportunities provided to target women through extension services and increase access to resources - Training on flood tolerant crop varieties to address the need to adapt and reduce risk
Small-scale and efficient irrigation systems targeted and tailored to local gender context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involvement of women in design and selection of irrigation options - Engagement of women in local level planning processes that will increase their roles in decision-making and management of irrigation interventions
Gender sensitive selection of and improved husbandry and veterinary care of small and large livestock varieties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involvement of women in the selection of smaller, more heat resistant livestock varieties and processes to ensure these meet the needs according to their expertise - Promotion of increased participation of men in rearing of small livestock to ease the workload of women - Support women's involvement in the planning of family livelihood strategies in order to optimize the balance of productive activities with differentiated implications for men and women (e.g. large vs. small livestock)
Protection of wells and other water sources for livestock, domestic, communal purposes use etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish differentiated wells for livestock and wells for domestic use - Encourage participation and involvement of women in local governance of water sources e.g. increased female participation in water source conservation activities through local committees - Involvement of women in decisions on where/what infrastructures are put in place
Gender responsive processes in	- Encourage active involvement from women and women's groups

watershed protection and reforestation activities	<p>in implementation of watershed protection and reforestation activities e.g. species selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involve women in design of activities in order to empower them and ensure that the activities are compatible with their priorities and workloads e.g. leading in re-vegetation of river banks as they generally plant trees and protect the watersheds
Gender equality in small scale fisheries and aquaculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involvement and training of women in production, design, processing and marketing of aquaculture products - Development of increased access and links to markets for selling fisheries products that specifically benefit women - Facilitate increased access to credit for women
Gender equality in fish conservation zone activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of alternative livelihood during the early stages of fish conservation zones to compensate for possible loss of income - Involvement of women in decision-making on fish conservation zones - Training for women in processing aquatic products and maintaining and repairing fishing gear
Ecotourism opportunities provided for men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve knowledge of women on operating SMEs and access to markets for handicrafts and other products of which women make up the majority of the labour force - Sharing of lessons learned from women's groups regarding weaving and other handicrafts; - Training for women to take on technical and leadership roles in natural resources management and ecotourism; - Training for women on homestays; women tour guides and porters; promote organic/green tourism – organic vegetables, food preparation etc.
Value-adding of existing local/wetland products for women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support NTFP value chain improvement with focus on women and vulnerable groups as key stakeholders - Support women's capacities to analyse compatibility of value-adding with existing workloads
Strengthened community-level governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-management of community group meetings: ensure women's participation in meetings and management decisions - Encourage female representation on the village committee to make it easier for women to engage and take a more active role and speed up the process of coordination - Strengthen the effectiveness of the Lao Women's Union structure at the village and provincial level through; capacity building of leaders and members of LWU; and the provision of capital assets for investments in community development programs that support the overall objectives of wetlands conservation and social empowerment of women and ethnic minority groups
Increased confidence and leadership skills for women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase access to education opportunities for young girls and women - Capacity building opportunities for leadership and confidence building for young girls and women

Component 3: Integration of climate change adaptation and disaster management measures into planning processes

Gender Mainstreaming in the Project Planning and Design of interventions for Implementation Phase by incorporating gender concerns and needs, prioritising interest of the most vulnerable communities/ subsection of the communities and targeting the marginalised community in the programme activities, incorporating training and capacity building needs of the target groups.

Incorporating gender and other social concerns in the project implementation by prioritising needs and concerns of the vulnerable group (gender and social) in the programme activities, planning activities considering the social and cultural norms etc. Gender training of programme implementation team.

Outcome 3: Efficient and cost-effective climate change adaptation and disaster management measures in wetlands integrated and budgeted in local and national planning processes

Management of dams to ensure ecological flow maintained downstream	- Engagement of women in local level planning processes that will increase their roles in decision-making and flow management
Strengthening of spatial planning capacities of men and women	- Ensure participation of women in village land use activities and local governance processes
Development of investment plans through gender integrated planning	- Support improved participation of communities and increased participation of women in the formulation of investment plans and access to resources.

Outcome # (to be addressed) Gender Sensitive Programme Monitoring and Evaluation

Gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation by creating gendered M&E system to capture data on differential project outcomes for women and men and that demonstrates how the project addressed concerns of women e.g. how many women were able to increase access to services, leadership roles etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish gender baseline data for targeted villages - Ensure gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation process is in place - additional indicators, generated from the gender analysis, village level assessments and stakeholder engagement, should be measured. <p>Quantitative indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of female-headed households / direct beneficiaries of projects interventions / activities ; number of women and other vulnerable groups that participate in the capacity building workshops, meetings etc.; Climate change adaptation projects e.g. number of women and other vulnerable groups members have access to institutional credit, government schemes, and subsidies etc., new livelihood opportunities, increased household income, holding leadership positions <p>Qualitative indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities created for women and men groups to generate additional income; Time-saving for women as a result of reduction in labour required for agricultural, fisheries, water management practices etc. prior to the implementation of the project; Gender differences in workload as a result of introduced practices or new technology; Change in gender division of labour as a result of the project implementation
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5. Gender Mainstreaming in the CAWA project

Mainstreaming gender in a project for which implementation and milestones have already been decided upon involves a fundamental conceptual shift, review and consideration for the ways in which 'gender' is written in the project document. Developing a Theory of Change can support this process because it opens up opportunities for building flexibility in the project design and implementation.

5.1 Theory of Change

The Theory of Change approach is a process of project planning and evaluation which maps the relationship between the long term goal of a project and the intermediate and early changes that are required to bring it about. It requires the project team or group of stakeholders to explain how the project is understood to reach its goals, and the process through which change will occur. The approach emphasizes the theory and assumptions underlying the pathway of change from the implementation of selected interventions and activities to the intended outcomes. This is relevant to the mainstreaming of gender in natural resources for several reasons; (i) It is a progressive approach that embraces the complexity of change, demonstrates how results can be achieved, and promotes locally/ nationally-owned development; (ii) It is recognized as being able to help move beyond 'business as usual' by developing greater contextual awareness and clarity about the rational, assumptions and long-term goals of development projects; (iii) Since gender is a cross cutting and complex issue it is best captured through flexible, non-linear frameworks.

Theory of Change also helps with the strategic planning and monitoring and evaluation of projects. Following the principles of the Theory of Change and Outcome Mapping, Figure 1 describes the process by which the CAWA project can move from project outcomes to impact, from a gender perspective, i.e. how the project contributes towards improved gender equality through effective mainstreaming of gender in its activities. Figure 1 also presents the possible gender related outcomes and impacts/goals of the CAWA project (based on the defined Project outcomes and expected impacts outlined in the Project Document). Intermediary steps can also be developed to mark progress and to monitor the uptake and effectiveness of the gender mainstreaming process. Developing a gender-sensitive, outcome based monitoring and evaluation plan also provides an ideal entry point for integrating gender into the CAWA project M&E system.

To guide this a review of the Results Matrix for the CAWA project is presented in Annex 1 highlighting areas where gender has already been integrated in project planning (these are highlighted in yellow) and providing suggestions for new areas for integrating gender into project planning (these are presented in Track Change). Identifying the long-term gender goal of the project and the assumptions behind it, mapping and connecting the pre-conditions and requirements necessary to achieve the goal, and identifying interventions that the project will perform to measure the desired change in gender relations supports the identification and development of gender-sensitive/ gender- responsive pathway(s) of change.

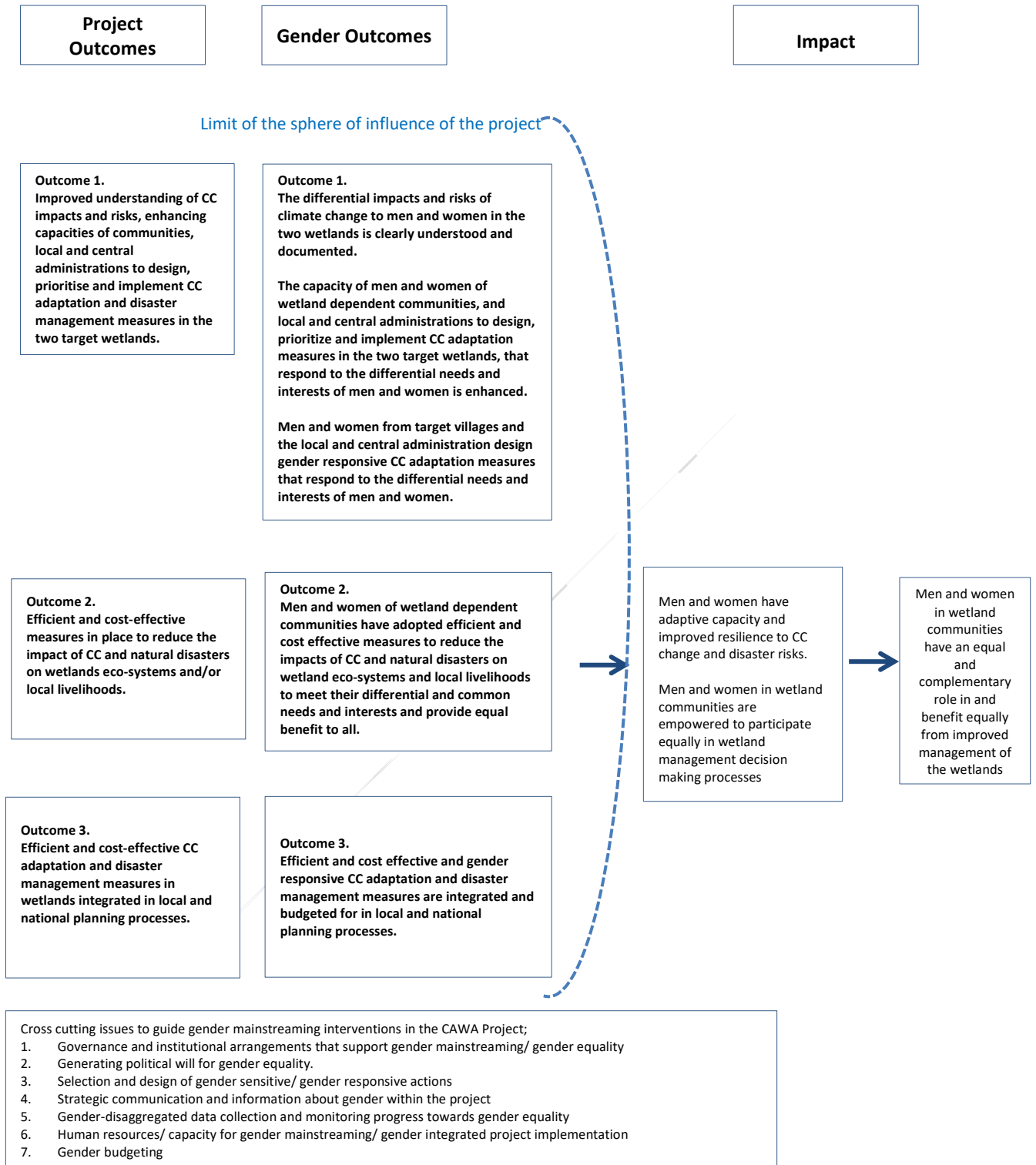


Fig 1. Outcomes to impacts: the influence of gender mainstreaming in the CAWA project

6. Strategic Considerations for Mainstreaming Gender in the Outputs of the CAWA Project

Intentions to influence meaningful change need to be made explicit in the project document and strategic outputs, reflecting a process of questioning (to be undertaken by project staff) that challenge current views and broaden the outlook on the ways project interventions are meant to ultimately benefit men and women (target beneficiaries of the project).

6.1 Political will for gender equality

Bringing key project stakeholders together to agree on the changes that need to be achieved and outcomes that should be aimed for is a prerequisite for effective and fair environmental decision making, and leadership commitment is particularly important for achieving long-term change in mindset and organizational culture required for gender mainstreaming.

6.2 Selection and design of gender sensitive/ gender responsive actions

Inclusion of gender responsive actions is the most obvious way to ensure that gender concerns are taken into account in the CAWA project. But, local field projects / activities should aim to go beyond simply writing women in to the design. In this respect project activities and actions should specify the groups they are targeting (e.g. actions / activities for men, for women, for addressing the relationship between them). For example, in the case of improved governance of wetland resources, women need to participate in, and be consulted during meetings to discuss management arrangements, and have their opinions heard and taken into account in the decision-making processes.

Another example, in the context of project Component 2 Developing cost effective measures to reduce the impact of climate change and natural disasters on wetlands ecosystems and local livelihoods; is for the CAWA project to undertake specific gender analyses in select target villages to determine actions/ projects that support the differential interests and needs of men and women and to design, implement and monitor gender sensitive/ gender responsive interventions/ actions accordingly. (See Recommendation 6 - Summary of the Gender Analysis (Section 4.).

Ensuring that the actions/ activities of the CAWA project are gender-sensitive / gender responsive involves asking “Will this action/ activity affect men and women differently? If the answer is yes (which is most likely) then the planned action/ activity needs to be refined and basic gender analysis carried out to determine the extent and the reason(s) for that difference. Exploring the gender equality implications of each action/ activity may lead to a complete re-think of the way each action/ activity is developed and implemented. It may also necessitate the need for the project to address a different set of issues or to reassess the prioritization of issues to be addressed.

6.3 Cross-cutting issues

Many cross cutting issues such as human capacity, institutional and organizational arrangements, communication, data/ knowledge management and budget allocation as well as the process of monitoring and evaluation, influence the speed and direction of change. These cross-cutting issues are important to gender mainstreaming, as they are important entry-points for tackling gender issues and can open up opportunities for progress towards gender equality.

Cross-cutting issues for consideration in the CAWA Project include:

Communication and information flows about gender within the project

Gender related information should be imparted to non-gender specialists, such as natural

resources management experts and officials involved in the CAWA project. This can be a challenge without having ‘gender experts’ on board. However the identification of gender focal points or ‘gender champions’ to disseminate gender-based knowledge across sectors at the national and field level and to provide informal backstopping and advice can help. Gender focal points should have a clear mandate, responsibility and functions for their roles to be credible and valued by project team members and stakeholders. The process of raising gender awareness and communicating gender issues should also be regularly monitored as part of the project.

Gender-disaggregated data collection and monitoring progress towards gender equality

It is crucial that the CAWA project collects gender-disaggregated data. This means that the figures and facts collected that relate to the project, relate to men and women’s conditions separately and also that the process of collecting data is gender-sensitive (i.e. careful planning and organization of meetings, FGDs, interviews) at the household/ community level.

Collection of gender-disaggregated data is crucial for the establishment of baseline data and the monitoring and evaluation of impacts; however it will not generate insights into the prevailing gender relations and the power balance between men and women. Therefore in addition to the collection of gender-disaggregated data it is important that the project collects gender baseline data and monitors progress towards the fulfillment of women’s strategic needs, the prevailing gender relations and power balances / imbalances between men and women, and any changes in relations that may result from the implementation and influence of the project.

To guide the monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming in the CAWA project, the key questions to ask are: How well is the project tackling and addressing gender issues in its design and implementation? To what extent have the project activities improved the lives of wetland resource dependent man and women? And, to what extent have the project activities contributed to women’s empowerment and gender equality?

Governance and institutional arrangements

Governance and institutional arrangements are critical to the realization of the impacts of the CAWA project and a key focus of Component 3 of the project. Legislation, policies and regulations relating to wetlands resources management have gender dimensions in that men’s and women’s access, use and benefits from local fisheries and agriculture are influenced both directly and indirectly by wetland (fisheries and agriculture) and environmental management regulations. The legislation governing natural resources requires careful examination for evidence of explicit or indirect discrimination against men and women, as well as for policy opportunities to uphold fairness and equality. For example the fact that women in Lao PDR hold equal rights to land inheritance and land ownership under national law is a positive example of how legislation can be used to secure equal access and benefit sharing of land assets, and the CAWA project should capitalize on the opportunity this provides for protecting and furthering the position of women within the agricultural economic sector and broader society (particularly for indigenous communities) – see Recommendation 5 of the Summary of the Gender Analysis (Section 4.) . Another policy/ institutional opportunity for the CAWA project is to support and strengthen the Lao PDR Women’s Union as an important institutional mechanism that supports gender equality and women’s empowerment from the national to the local level.

Recommendations 1-3 of the Summary of the Gender Analysis (Section 4.) in XCP elaborate on further opportunities for strengthening gender equality through institutional and policy arrangements from national to local level.

Gender-budgeting

It is important that adequate budget allocations be made if the project's gender mainstreaming (or gender transformative change) is to be achieved. In this respect specific funds should be earmarked for activities that directly and indirectly address gender issues. The allocation of specific funds for gender mainstreaming reflects high-level support from project managers and the commitment to impact. Budget allocations for mainstreaming gender in the CAWA project could focus on supporting:

- Women lead livelihood development projects (that support climate change adaptation) – component 2.
- Recruitment of gender expert to support the gender mainstreaming process.
- Gender training for staff and project partners.
- Monitoring of gender mainstreaming process.

The project should also track spending on gender mainstreaming and activities involving gender issues at national and local level. This will not only ensure sufficient funds are deployed to support gender-related activities in the project implementation phase, but also support monitoring of the efficiency and impact of the mainstreaming process itself.

Human Resources & Capacity Development

Strengthening human capacity of the project implementing team is central to ensuring that the sphere of influence of the project in terms of gender awareness and gender equality, and the impacts of the project on the ground, are as far reaching as possible. Skilled people are required to conduct gender analyses and to push forward a gender equality agenda throughout the implementation of the CAWA project.

Gender training/ capacity building should be made available to all project team members and key implementing partners in order to raise consciousness and equip individuals with the skills to enable them to recognize and address gender inequalities, raise awareness about gender issues, and their importance and ways to respond to them. Gender courses should be tailored to meet the diverse needs of the target audiences; including; government officials, NGOs and CBOs etc.

6. Conclusions

The focus of the CAWA project is to reduce climate change vulnerability of communities and the fragile wetland ecosystems upon which they depend. Yet the project is also serious about contributing to furthering gender equality and to women's empowerment. The Theory of Change provides a framework to design gender mainstreaming actions. The elaboration of a gender sensitive/ gender responsive pathway to expected impacts and the development of human capacity to embrace the changes in the project and its output requirements, must be supported by strong political commitment and adequate budgetary allocations.

Among the strategic considerations or entry points suggested, supporting gender training and capacity building at all levels is fundamental to ensure that gender mainstreaming becomes the responsibility of all "players". This will be particularly effective if mainstreaming is in line with the national policy frameworks and institutions in place, while at the same time using the project to influence change and progress towards gender equality on the ground (local condition).

The implementation of some of the steps proposed for gender mainstreaming may be more demanding than others. The integration of a system to monitor and evaluate gender mainstreaming and gender impacts (as part of the CAWA project M&E approach) and based on an agreed Theory of Change may require a shift in conceptual thinking in terms of appreciation of gender issues and in terms of overall project design and conceptualization of impacts. The CAWA project has the opportunity to lead the way in demonstrating gender mainstreaming and gender impacts in wetlands management and climate change adaptation both in Lao PDR and within the region.

7.1 Next Steps

The next steps will be for the CAWA 'project team' to read the recommendations for gender mainstreaming and take on board what is appropriate and of priority importance. Additional support for gender integration in the project planning and budgeting process can be provided by IUCN as appropriate.

Project planning and investment should prioritize the following actions:

1. Validation of Gender Analysis Report and discussion with CAWA project team on ToC for the project and for gender mainstreaming within the project.
2. Component 1.
Integration of gender analysis in the CC VDRA, VDRA trainings, and conduct of VDRA themselves.
3. Component 2.
Gender sensitive/ responsive planning (based on the results of the VDRA (and further assessments/ consultations with key stakeholders once the target villages are selected) and key findings from the [validated] Gender Analysis. The development of gender sensitive/ responsive, efficient and cost-effective measures to reduce the impact of CC and natural disasters on wetlands ecosystems and/ or local livelihoods.
4. Component 3.
Strengthening gender equality in local and national planning processes. The project should set reasonable targets that aim for equal (or more equal) representation/ participation of men and women in decision making processes that influence wetlands management and access and control over wetland resources. Capacity development and engagement of Lao Women's Union and identification and engagement of other 'gender champions' is an essential part of this.
5. Integration of gender indicators in the CAWA M&E framework and processes to measure gender investment and gender based outcomes. Collection of gender disaggregated data is part of this.

With respect to the cross cutting strategic considerations for gender mainstreaming, the CAWA project should prioritize:

6. Documentation of the gender mainstreaming process in CAWA
7. Gender training for project team and key partners.
8. Hiring of gender expertise within the project team

Annex 1. CAWA Project Results Matrix – highlighting areas where gender has been integrated and suggesting new elements to be considered

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	End of Project Target	Means of Verification and Responsible Entity	Assumptions
Component 1: Improved understanding of CC impacts and risks in XC and BKN wetlands					
Outcome 1: Improved understanding of CC impacts and risks, in XC and BKN wetlands.	Outcome Indicator 1.1 Perceptions and understandings of CC impacts and risks resulting from training and from vulnerability assessments in PONRE, DONRE, PAFO and DAFO and communities around the target wetlands	Some limited awareness of CC vulnerability due to a) the CC and wetlands study in XC by the MRC, and in BKN due to Mekong Water Dialogues work and b) MRC CCAI work in Savannakhet, c) PPG discussions.	70% of members of PONRE, DONRE, PAFO and DAFO staff covering the target wetlands (28 out of 40) and 70% of members of community organisations (with equal numbers of both men and women) in the target villages are aware of CC impacts and risks	Awareness scorecards to be developed in Year 1. KAP surveys to be carried out in provincial and district offices (PONRE, DONRE and PAFO, DAFO), and communities around the wetland areas, in year 1, immediately prior to mid-term review and immediately prior to final review	Commitment among local authorities and community members Trained staff remain in the provinces
Output 1.1. Pilot methodological tool developed for participatory CC VDRA in wetlands	Output Indicator 1.1.1. State of development and use of pilot methodological tool for participatory CC VDRA in wetlands	CAM ¹ method has been used in XC, BKN and Siphandone wetlands and also in Xe Pian, (but not in a participatory manner there), and by Mekong ARCC in Phou Hin phoun.	Participatory CC VDRA tool available in Lao language for national replication, based on test and refinement at two wetland sites	Project reports, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly and annual progress of the project • Reports of training events • Review and assessment of quality of applications of CAM method and adaptation measures recommended 	
Output 1.2. Effective ² training program on CC/CCA ³ and VDRA ⁴ in wetlands	Output Indicator 1.2.1. Numbers of stakeholders trained in participatory CC vulnerability and DRM management (CCA Outcome 2.1 Indicator 5)	None ⁵	Totals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 PONRE & 15 PAFO staff in each target province (= 60) • 15 DONRE & 15 DAFO staff in each of 3 districts surrounding the wetlands (=60) • 400 villagers, of which 200 female (20 villagers in each of 20 villages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of meetings and trainings • Quarterly progress reports of project 	

¹ CAM = Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Methodology (<http://www.icem.com.au/documents/climatechange/cam/CAM%20brief.pdf>)

²“Effectively Trained” = based on good learning practices for effective capacity development in FAO Learning Module 3 on Effective Learning (www.fao.org/capacitydevelopment), including action-oriented peer-to-peer adult learning such as farmer field schools

³ CCA = Climate Change Adaptation

⁴ VDRA = vulnerability and disaster risk assessment

⁵ A learning needs assessment will be carried out in Year 1 at PONRE, PAFO, DONRE, DAFO and village level, to generate a baseline to be tracked through KAP methodology

<p>Output 1.3. Participatory VDRAAs carried out in BKN and XC wetlands</p>	<p>Output Indicator 1.3.1. Numbers of participatory VDRAAs carried out⁶ in wetland communities, addressing aspects of wetlands, wetland based livelihoods and gender.</p>	<p>VDRAAs have been carried out on XC and BKN, focused on wetland habitats and species and to some degree, livelihoods and gender analysis.</p>	<p>By year 2, one in each of 20 key villages, including focus on gender differences in vulnerability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports of participatory vulnerability assessments • Progress reports of implementation of adaptation plans • Project quarterly and annual reports 	
<p>Output 1.4. recommendations for appropriate adaptation measures based on analyses of CC-related issues affecting the target wetlands that meet the differential needs and interests of men and women equally (including traditional knowledge)</p>	<p>Output Indicator 1.4.1. *Number of studies generated⁷ on CC-related issues affecting the target wetlands, including analysis of gender dimensions (where relevant)</p>	<p>See endnote</p>	<p>Reports available on the following key topics available in English and Lao languages⁸:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allowable rates and locations of water extraction for irrigation - Spatial priorities for wetland re-opening - Acceptable fish off-take levels, timing of closed seasons, locations of no-take areas - Spatial priorities and technical recommendations for improved watershed management - Sustainable limits and locations for grazing - Integrated Pest Management options - Measures for management of invasive alien species - Appropriateness for controlled burning to protect valuable wetland habitats - Protection measures for key wetland species (e.g. crocodile, turtles). 	<p>Project publications</p>	

⁶ By District Implementation Teams (DONRE, DAFO, communities) with technical and facilitation support from Provincial Project Units

⁷ With support from external consultants hired by the project, working in collaboration with national and regional institutions

⁸ Indicative list, subject to ongoing review on the basis of needs analyses and discussions with local stakeholders

Component 2. Efficient and cost-effective adaptation measures					
Outcome 2. Efficient and cost-effective adaptation measures in place to reduce the impact of CC and natural disasters on wetlands eco-systems and local livelihoods providing opportunities for equal benefits to men and women.	Outcome Indicator 2.1: Numbers of families, in the 20 villages within the current Ramsar site boundaries, involved in adaptive agricultural practices, systems and infrastructure (e.g. climate smart agriculture, improved cropland management, dry and wet season rice cultivation, livestock production, aquaculture) providing opportunities for equal benefits to men and women.	Around 160 families are applying two or more of these practices.	1,280 families (total 8,400 family members) apply two or more of these practices providing opportunities for equal benefits to men and women	Farmer surveys, focus group discussions	Recognition of CC implications by community members and commitment to taking corresponding CCA actions and accepting short term costs Acceptance of EBA-based approach rather than “quick fixes” based on maladaptive practices Continuation of generally favorable governance environment at community levels
	Outcome Indicator 2.2 Numbers of families in the 20 villages within the current Ramsar site boundaries, who have acquired ⁹ at least one additional livelihood support option as a CC fallback option providing opportunities for equal benefits to men and women	50% of vulnerable people surveyed have no reliable fall-back livelihood support option if their main option fails due to climate change	800 families (total 5,250 family members), with equal benefits for men and women	Questionnaire applied to villagers in target wetlands (complemented by focus group discussions)	
	Outcome Indicator 2.3 Numbers of families in 40 other villages within the proposed expanded Ramsar site boundaries with improved and more providing opportunities for equal benefits to men and women sustainable access to wetland products and services	Baseline to be established in year 1	6,400 families (total 42,000 family members), with equal benefits for men and women	Questionnaire applied to villagers in target wetlands (complemented by focus group discussions)	

⁹ “Acquired” means that they are carrying out the additional livelihood support option(s) or that they have the capacities to do so, and that the additional livelihood support option(s) account(s) for at least 10% of their income (or has the possibility to do so)

	Outcome Indicator 2.4 Area of target wetlands under effective management and protection to promote resilience and the flow of ecosystem services	Baseline values to be determined in project year 1	Indices of management effectiveness are maintained at least at baseline levels over the entire area of the target wetlands (around 47,360ha)	Management effectiveness indices (adapted from GEF BD1 tracking tool) to be developed in project year 1 by knowledge management specialist and applied with participation of DONRE/PONRE, DAFO/PAFO and community organisations.	
	Outcome Indicator 2.5 Area of wetland habitats in XC and BKN under improved forms of direct management to address CC-induced risks	Practices	ha	ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CAM assessments and development of wetland management measures for each habitat •Implementation reports of adaptation measures •Reviews of effectiveness of management measures •Quarterly progress reports and annual reports
		Improved management of forests to increase resilience to effects of CC (floods, erosion etc.)	0	200 ha	
		Invasive species management	0	200 ha	
		Water flow improved due to wetland re-opening	0	20 ha	
		Protection of habitats and nesting sites (e.g. lakes for crocodiles, forest patches for bird nesting)	2,550 ¹⁰	600 ha	
		Controlled burning	0	200ha	
Output 2.1 Planning and inter-sectoral coordination frameworks for the two sites promoting CCA measures	Output Indicator 2.1.1. Numbers of plans that incorporate CCA, sustainable livelihoods and gender considerations	No specific planning for wetlands introducing CC adaptation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 CCA-friendly territorial LUP per wetland - 1 CCA-friendly financial investment plan per wetland - 1 specific CCA plan per wetland - All infrastructure, agriculture and rural development plans in target districts incorporate wetland-focused CC vulnerability assessment with corresponding CCA measures 	Review of plans	
	Output Indicator 2.1.2. Frequency of meeting of coordination mechanisms that embrace CCA in target wetlands and buffer zones with equal representation	Current meetings do not address CCA	Meetings/year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ramsar National Committee meets annually; - provincial Ramsar committees meet at least 2 times annually - Site specific wetland stakeholder 	

¹⁰ WCS has supported restoration of wetland habitat through community programmes to remove invasive weed species such as water hyacinth (*Eichhornia* spp), and has assisted nine communities to develop zoning of critical habitat areas (2,550 ha) and regulations to manage use of natural resources in these areas.

	from both men and women		committees meet at least 2 times annually - Both the Ramsar National Committee and Ramsar Provincial Committee have equal representation and engagement of both men and women		
Output 2.2 Capacities of water/natural resources/wetlands user groups strengthened to apply effective governance of NRM use and management	Output indicator 2.2.1: Capacities of user and governance groups ¹¹	Village clusters (<i>khet</i>) or “development clusters” (<i>khumban</i>) promote development and local governance, and have enforcement (militia) arms. Village councils are responsible for community resources such as village protection or production forests. Village leaders play important roles in managing small-scale irrigation, enforcing fishing rules and allocating land. Villager groups include: - Water user groups in charge for maintenance and monitoring irrigation activities and equipment. - Ban Houmuang (XCP) fisheries group, following the installation of fish conservation zones. - Ban Kiat Ngong village has a malva nut collecting group, in charge of monitoring nut harvesting.	User and governance groups covering all key areas ¹² of target wetlands have capacities ¹³ to apply effective governance, with a specific focus on adaptation and resilience issues and improving gender equality	Focus group discussions and KAP surveys	
	Output Indicator 2.2.2: Number of villages in wetland and buffer areas covered by effective governance groups and water user groups ¹⁴ with	Local governance groups do not currently address wetland management and do not specifically provide for CC adaptation measures	All target villages have governance groups and wetland user groups (with equal representation by men and women) with rules, providing for adaptation considerations, applied and adhered to.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note development and acceptance of rules covering water use and release. Note local application and adherence to water governance rules. • Specific VA report on water use 	

¹¹ Inspired by FAO Learning Module on Organizational Development and Analysis (<http://www.fao.org/capacitydevelopment/en/>)

¹² Those parts of the target wetlands with highest levels of threat and/or vulnerability

¹³ Formal groups have clearly defined mandates and rules, and meet regularly: formal and informal groups are considered by community members (in focus group discussions) to be effective and **inclusive of different gender and socio economic groups**

¹⁴ Village clusters (*khet*), “development clusters” (*khumban*), village councils and resource user groups

	equal representation by men and women			by each community • Quarterly and annual project reports	
Output 2.3 Direct investment in CCA strategies that respond to the differential needs and interests of both men and women.	Output Indicator 2.3.1: numbers of families (male and female led) benefiting from one or more forms of direct investment in CCA ¹⁵	NA	1600 families	Focus group discussions and questionnaires	
	Output Indicator 2.3.2: number of villages with value-adding facilities for NTFPs established, providing opportunities for men and women to benefit equally	NA	10 Villages	Focus group discussions and questionnaires	
	Output Indicator 2.3.3: number of villages with visitor facilities for ecotourism established, providing opportunities for men and women to benefit equally	NA	10 Villages	Focus group discussions and questionnaires	
	Output Indicator 2.3.4: number of semi-natural reservoirs established, providing opportunities for men and women to benefit equally	2 small/medium reservoirs	4 small/medium reservoirs	Focus group discussions and questionnaires	
	Output Indicator 2.3.5: Area of riparian forest replanted (ha)	NA	200ha	Focus group discussions and questionnaires	
Output 2.4 Strengthened individual capacities through effective programmes and innovation systems to support CC resilience strategies	Output Indicator 2.4.1: # men and women with increased knowledge and awareness to apply CC-resilient wetlands management, CC-resilient agricultural practices and/or non-agricultural livelihood	Knowledge and awareness TBD through baseline Knowledge, Awareness and Practice (KAP) surveys and learning needs assessment	50% of men and women's population in project target area Equal numbers of both men and women with increased knowledge and awareness.	KAP surveys	

¹⁵ e.g. CC-resistant livestock and cropping materials, small-scale irrigation equipment, improved veterinary facilities, access to wells with improved CC resilience, pilot aquaculture projects, rainwater harvesting and water storage equipment

	support options				
Output 2.5. Early warning, disaster risk reduction and early recovery measures and systems in place that take account of and respond to differential needs and interests of both men and women	Output Indicator 2.5.1. Effectiveness of early warning systems* in 20 target villages, as measured by promptness of receipt of, and effectiveness of response to, early warning messages	Early warning messages delivered on time to 10% of all events in year prior to project startup. Effective action taken by 5% of affected villagers	Early warning messages delivered on time to 100% of all events in target villages in year 5, and effective action taken in response by 50% of all affected villagers	• Interviews with provincial, district and communities after each early warning has been issued and passed to follow chain of warning and action being taken	
Component 3: Integration of CC adaptation and disaster management measures into planning processes					
Outcome 3. Efficient and cost-effective CC adaptation and disaster management measures in wetlands integrated and budgeted in local and national planning processes	Outcome Indicator 3.1: # local, regional and national level plans that incorporate gender integrated CC vulnerability assessments, gender responsive CCA measures and analyses (and mitigation measures as needed) of impacts on wetlands, with corresponding budget allocation	No local plans provide for application of CC/DRM assessment approaches At least 1 national plan provides for application of CC/DRM assessment approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All projects and plans developed by PONRE/DONRE and PAFO/DAFO that directly affect the target wetlands - At least 50% of all other provincial and district plans and projects in the target provinces and districts - BKN Ramsar site management plan - Water allocation and abstraction management plans/rules at district level in the target districts - At least 5 national plans related to natural resources management and agriculture¹⁶ provide application of CC/DRM assessment approaches. 	• Review of plans and project documents from national, provincial and district levels.	Continued political commitment to addressing CC implications Willingness to coordinate between institutions

* Effective early warning systems take account of and are designed to meet the differential needs and interests of both men and women

¹⁶ Including the 15 year MONRE Action Plan, the NAPA, the CC Sub-sector working group strategy and the National Strategy on Environment and Climate Change Education and Awareness

	Outcome indicator 3.2 Number of institutions adopting tools for participatory CCA and DM planning and M&E in wetlands	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participatory CCA and DM planning and M&E is used in 2 other districts within the province, and for 2 other wetlands nationally - DONRE and DAFOs in four districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community based climate events records. • DONRE/DAFO records • Reports to local and national Ramsar committees • Questionnaire on levels of adoption 	
	Outcome indicator 3.3: Perceptions of effectiveness of institutional coordination at national level in support of CCA	# of respondents by scorecard rating		Questionnaires/focus group scorecard ratings	
		TBD through baseline evaluation of perceptions	70% of members of the institutions targeted for improved institutional coordination have favourable perceptions of the effectiveness of this coordination with 50% representing perceptions of women and 50% representing perceptions of men		
Output 3.1. Methodological guidelines for integration of gender responsive CC adaptation DRM into local and national plans	Output Indicator 3.1.1. Numbers of methodological guidelines used in planning instruments at different levels	None	Guidelines used in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provincial and district plans and new proposals. - BKN Ramsar site management plan - Water allocation and abstraction management plans/rules at district level 	Review of plans	
Output 3.2. Effective learning programme for community, district and provincial stakeholders in planning and M&E for participatory CC adaptation and disaster management (with gender integration in project cycle management included)	Output Indicator 3.2.1 Numbers of stakeholders effectively trained in participatory adaptation and DRM planning and M & E	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 10 PONRE and 10 PAFO staff in Savannakhet and in Champassak - 10 DONRE and 10 DAFO staff in each of 3 districts surrounding the wetlands - 50 community members from surrounding wetlands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training meeting reports • Project quarterly and annual reports • Reports of progress of implementing adaptation measures 	

Output 3.3. Institutional mechanisms for intersectoral coordinating CC resilience in wetlands strengthened at national level with the Commission for Women's Advancement and the Lao PDR Women's Union represented	Output Indicator 3.3.1 Existence and frequency of meeting of coordination mechanisms for CC resilience in wetlands with equal representation of both men and women	Existing coordination mechanisms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Committee for Wetland Management and Ramsar Convention - National, Provincial, District and Village Disaster Committee (district and village levels not operational in the target areas) - National Steering Committee on Climate Change 	Revise members of committees to integrate new sectors into wetlands management.	Composition of members.	
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Baseline for Output Indicator 1.4.1: Studies generated to date on CC-related issues affecting the target wetlands

- ADPC for Mekong Wetlands Biodiversity Programme, 2005 (UNDP, IUCN); Vulnerability assessment of climate risks in Attapeu Province Lao PDR.
- Eastham, J. et al. 2008 Mekong River Basin Water Resources Assessment: Impacts of Climate change. CSIRO: Water for a Healthy Country National Research Flagship. Australia
- MRC/SEA START/IWMI – Hoanh, C.T., et al. Impacts of Climate change and development on Mekong flow regime. 2009Project: Reducing vulnerability of water resources, people and environment to climate change impacts led by CSIRO
- MRC Adaptation to climate change in the countries of the Lower Mekong. MRC Management Information Booklet Series No 1. 2009
- Arief Anshory Yusuf & Herminia A. Francisco: Climate Change Vulnerability Mapping for Southeast Asia. January 2009. Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia/IDRC/SIDA
- Norwegian Church Aid. November 2009 GROWING RESILIENCE Adapting for Climate Change in Upland Laos. A Report Prepared by Sean Foley, EcoAsia Limited
- Strategy on Climate Change of the Lao PDR; March 2010
- Rod Lefroy, Laure Collet & Christian Grovermann. July 2010 Study on Potential Impacts of Climate Change on Land Use in the Lao PDR. CIAT for Land Management and Registration Project (LMRP)
- World Bank, Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR): 2011 Climate Risk and Adaptation Profile – Lao PDR
- UNDP project document 2011 – Improving Resilience the Agricultural Sector in Lao PDR to Climate Change Impacts and website[1](IRAS)
- FAO. 2011 Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System. Managing Climate change risks for food security in Lao PDR. (RIMES)