



Laos People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity and Prosperity

Mekong Integrated Water Resource Management Project
(M-IWRMP)

**Lao PDR: Ethnic Groups
Development Framework (EGDF)**

15 OCTOBER 2010

PREFACE

This document is called the Ethnic Groups Development Framework (EGDF) for Lao PDR. It is developed on a basis of outcomes from the Initial Environmental and Social Examination and a series of consultations as a standalone document. The EGDF is connected to overall safeguard instrument namely the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) for the Mekong Integrated Water Resource Management (M-IWRM) project for Lao PDR. This framework will be applied to all investments to be financed by the World Bank for technical and/or financial support from the M-IWRM project for Lao PDR that involve Indigenous Peoples (OP 4.10).

The national Project Management Units (PMU) of the Water Resource and Environment Administration (WREA) who is responsible for overall coordination of Lao PDR activities and the respective Project Implementing Units (PIUs) of the Department of Livestock and Fisheries (DLF) and the Department of Irrigation (DOI) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) who are responsible for implementation of specific subcomponent are responsible for ensuring compliance with the EGDF, including keeping proper documentation in the project file for possible review by the World Bank.

This document is considered a living document and could be modified and changed in line with the changing situation or scope of the activities. Close consultation with the World Bank and clearance of the revised EGDF will be necessary.

Lao PDR: Ethnic Groups Development Framework (EGDF)

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Section I. Introduction

1. Main objective of the Mekong Integrated Water Resources Management (M-IWRM) is to establish key examples of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in the Lower Mekong Basin (LMB) at the regional, national, and sub-national level and more detailed description are given in *Annex 1*.

2. Implementation of Component 3 (*Improved Floodplain and Aquatic Resources Management in Regionally Significant Areas*) in Loa PDR would involve ethnic groups. The Lao PDR subcomponents will include:

- Subcomponent (3.1) *River Basin and Floodplain Management in the Lower Part of Xe Bang Fai (XBF) and Xe Bang Hian (XBH) in Lao PDR*, key activities would include:

(3.1.1) supporting the development of river basin organizations and a basin planning framework focusing on “hotspots,” development of a floodplain management plan for the lower XBF and XBH, focusing on the junction between the tributaries and the mainstream Mekong; the Project would support technical assistance, training, and minor goods and office renovation;

(3.1.2) rehabilitating existing flood gates to restore flood-plain management and fish migration on 14,000 hectares and re-habilitation of irrigation infrastructure to support restoration of flood-plain rice cultivation and fish spawning on 8,500 hectares, together with providing support to improved, more water-efficient rice cultivation systems through civil works, equipment and extension support; and

(3.1.3) providing logistical support to the provincial administration of WREA and the Ministry of Agriculture (irrigation and fisheries departments) for the subcomponent implementation.

- Subcomponent (3.2) *Support for Improved Management of Aquatic Resources in Lao PDR and Cambodia*, addressing the richest spawning grounds for the Mekong River, and key activities would include:

(3.2.1) Supporting community-managed fisheries management organizations in Champasak, Attapeu, Sekong Provinces (Lao PDR), and Stung Treng and Kratie Provinces (Cambodia), including development of participatory management plans, training on fisheries management and conservation, development and implementation of small scale livelihood demonstration activities (e.g. livestock raising, aquaculture) and commune development plans including support to priority rural infrastructure; the Project would provide training, establishment of the grievance mechanism, community outreach, operating costs, goods and minor civil works;

(3.2.2) Strengthening Public Sector Fishery Management for provincial and district fisheries institutions, in: (a) fish catch data collection, monitoring and regulation, together with the community fisheries organizations; (b) extension activities; and (c) support for indigenous species aquaculture and stocking through rehabilitation of hatcheries, technical assistance and study tours for fishermen. The Project would finance goods, works, training and operational costs; and

(3.2-3) Providing logistical support for component management to the fisheries departments in Pakse, Champasak province (Lao PDR) and in Phnom Penh (Cambodia), including operating costs and minor office renovation.

3. In addition, it is also planned that under the Component 1 (Regional water resources management), which would be entrusted to the MRC, some support would be provided to nurture trans-boundary dialogues and actions regarding fisheries management in the Lao-Cambodia border area.

4. Scope of the Lao PDR activities under Subcomponent 3-1 would cover the lower part of Xe Bang Fai and Xe Bang Hian while those for the Subcomponent 3-2 would cover the Mekong mainstream near Lao-Cambodia border at Champasak and in Sekong River flowing through Sekong and Attapeu provinces. These areas, especially in Champasak wetlands, are considered the most critical habitats (mainly for refugees during the dry season and spawning season) for many long migratory species, including endangered fish species such as *Pangasius krempfi*, and *Pangasianodon gigas* and mammals like the critically endangered Irrawady dolphin (freshwater dolphin). It is also known that this area is inhabited by various indigenous peoples and they may be affected (positively and negatively) by the project.

5. To avoid potential negative impacts on these ethnic groups and to comply with the World Bank (WB)'s safeguard policy on Indigenous peoples (OP 4.10), an Ethnic Groups Development Framework (EGDF) has been developed to ensure that these indigenous peoples has equal opportunity to share the project benefits and that any potential negative impacts are properly mitigated. The EGDF will form a basis for project implementation and for monitoring and evaluation of how the project deals with indigenous peoples issues. The EGDF follows Government of Lao PDR (GoL) regulations, and WB's indigenous people's policy (O.P. 4.10).

6. Section II below outlines background condition regarding indigenous peoples and related regulations in Lao PDR while Section III describes the objective and basic principles of OP 4.10 and how it is applied to the M-IWRM (the Project), including actions that have been and will be undertaken by M-IWRM. Section IV provides a technical guideline for consultation framework with ethnic groups in Lao PDR which has been applied during the preparation of M-IWRM. Scope for preparation of an Ethnic Groups Development Plan (EGDP) is also provided if adverse negative impacts on ethnic groups are anticipated.

Section II. Background

2.1. Overview of the Ethnic Groups in Lao PDR

7. *Definitions and Categories.* The term 'indigenous peoples' is not used in Lao PDR, as is also the case in Vietnam and China. Rather the term 'ethnic groups' that corresponds to the Lao term, *xon phao* is used to describe all ethnic groups in the country. Official terminology for the classification of "ethnic groups" according to the 1991 Lao constitution and a review by the National Edification Committee (August 2000) consists of a two-tiered system with 49 main ethnic groups and over 100 sub-groups. There are four main ethno-linguistic categories in the country: Lao-Tai, Mone-Khmer, Sino-Tibetan and Hmong-Iewmien groups.

8. In addition, there are three terms most commonly used by the government and by the population itself when describing the classification of ethnic groups in practice:

- Lowland Lao (mainly Lao Tai), groups living in the lowland regions of the country that for the most part cultivate paddy, practice Buddhism and are integrated into the national economy. These correspond to the Lao-Tai group and represent approximately 65% of the population.
- ‘Slope Dwellers’ (mainly Mone-Khmer), groups dominating the middle hills that for the most part practice swidden agriculture, are reliant on forest products and to some extent are isolated from the dominant lowland culture. Many groups, however, exhibit varying degrees of assimilation and adaptation to Tai-Lao culture. These groups are the original inhabitants of Southeast Asia and consist of the Austro-Asiatic or Mone-Khmer ethnic groups (approximately 25% of the population).
- ‘Highland Lao’ (Sino-Tibetan and Hmong-Iewmien), groups dwelling in the highland areas practicing swidden agriculture and include the Sino-Tibetan and Hmong-Iewmien ethnic groups. Many of these groups are relatively recent arrivals from Southern China and Vietnam and form about 10% of the population. There are also examples of these groups settling in lowland areas.

9. Lao PDR is a diverse and multi-ethnic state whose citizens consist of 49 distinct ethnic groups grouped into four main ethno-linguistic groups: (i) Tai-Kadai comprises of 8 ethnic groups (66.2%), (ii) Austro-Asiatic of 32 ethnic groups (23%), (iii) Hmong-Yu Mien of 2 ethnic groups (7.4%), and (iv) Sino-Tibetan of 7 ethnic groups (2.7%). The Tai-Kadai ethno-linguistic group (or Lao Tai) accounts for about 66% of the nation’s population, and is the largest ethnolinguistic group in only 4 of the 18 provinces: Attapeu, Champasack, Khammouane, and Savannakhet. (Population and Housing Census, 2005).

Table 1: Percentage of Ethnic Groups by Target Province

Province	Population	Largest Group	%	Second Group	%	Third Group	%	% of Total Ethnic
Attapeu	87,229	Lao	36.9	Lavae	17.4	Oey	16.4	63.1
Champasack	501,387	Lao	84.4	Laven	4.9	Xuay	2.4	15.2
Khammouane	272,563	Lao	59.4	Phutai	21.7	Makong	13.4	40.6
Savanaketh	672,758	Lao	57.5	Phutai	18.9	Katang	8.7	42.5

Source: Lao Front for National Construction, Department of Ethnic Affairs, 1999.

10. There is considerable population of Mone-Khmer group, mainly ethnic Makong, found in the Xe Bang Fai floodplain, whereas majority of the population are Lao in the fishing villages in Champasack. Xebang fai is mainly Lao (71%) and it is followed by Phouthyai (25%), Mangkong (3%) and King (1%). There are several ethnic groups living in Attapeu, each with its distinctive language, culture and belief systems. Ethnically, Lao Tai (majority Lao) make up only 38% of the population, and the remaining 62% are Mone-Khmer, considered to be “ethnic minorities”. The highest concentration of Lao Tai is found in Samakkixay District around Attapeu town. The Mone-Khmer in Attapeu include the Lave

(Brao), Talieng, Oy, Harak, Yea and Cheng. Of the 13 ethnic groups identified in the province, 12 speak languages in the Mone-Khmer ethno-linguistic classification.

2.2 Legal Framework and Regulations

11. Constitution of Lao PDR, ratified in 1991, uses the term “citizens of all ethnicity” throughout the document. It specifically recognizes the need to incorporate the concerns of ethnic groups in developing policy in all sectors, and has reaffirmed its commitment to strengthen the rights of all ethnic groups in various congresses, conferences, decrees, and laws since the 1980s (Articles 8 and 22). Article 75 of the Constitution specifically indicates that “the Lao language and script are the official language and script.

12. The 1992 Ethnic Minority Policy of the Lao PDR¹ towards ethnic minorities identifies three essential tasks: (i) strengthening political foundations, (ii) increased production and opening of channels of distribution in order to convert subsistence-based economics towards market-based economics, and (iii) a focus on the expansion of education, health and other social benefits. Of direct relevance to this Project this 1992 Policy states that the Lao PDR must discourage ethnic minorities from continuing their practices associated with shifting cultivation through arranging for small scale livelihoods for such groups so that the benefits of other forms of agriculture outweigh those associated with shifting cultivation. Basically the Lao PDR considers that many of its upland minorities (and this especially includes the Khmou and Hmong) observe “backward traditions that are reflected in their production lifestyle”. In practice the Lao PDR realizes that it is quite impractical to change all these “backward” practices it attributes to ethnic minority groups because even many Lowland Lao are involved in some forms of upland agriculture.

Section III. Key Issues and Application of EGDF to M-IWRM

3.1 World Bank’s Operational Policy: Indigenous People (OP 4.10)

13. The WB’s Operational Policy 4.10 (Indigenous Peoples) requires that special planning measures be established to protect the interests of ethnic groups with a social and cultural identity distinct from the dominant society that may make them vulnerable to being disadvantaged in the development process.

14. The Policy defines that ethnic groups can be identified in particular geographical areas by the presence in varying degrees of the following characteristics:

- (a) a close attachment to ancestral territories and to the natural resources in these areas;
- (b) self-identification and identification by others as members of a distinct cultural group;
- (c) an indigenous language, often different from the national language; and
- (d) presence of customary social and political institutions.

¹ Known under its full title as Resolution of the Party Central Organization Concerning Ethnic Minority Affairs in the New Era

15. As a prerequisite for Project approval, OP 4.10 requires the borrower to conduct free, prior and informed consultations with potentially affected ethnic groups and to establish a pattern of broad community support for the Project and its objectives. It is important to note that the OP 4.10 refers to social groups and communities, and not to individuals. The primary objectives of OP 4.10 are:

- to ensure that such groups are afforded meaningful opportunities to participate in planning that affects them;
- to ensure that opportunities to provide such groups with culturally appropriate benefits are considered; and
- to ensure that any project impacts that adversely affect them are avoided or otherwise minimized and mitigated.

16. In the context of M-IWRM, the ethnic groups in the Project areas (Xe Bang Fai, Xe Bang Hian, Champasak, Sekong, and Attapeu) are likely to receive long term benefits through the support on community fisheries and small scale livelihood demonstration activities, but they may be negatively affected by the capacity building activities of national and local fisheries agencies, including monitoring of fish catch. For the M-IWRMP, therefore, the EGDF has focused on ***consultation to make sure that the ethnic groups have an opportunity to voice their concerns and agree to participate and benefit from the Project. Therefore, the identification process, consultations with ethnic communities carried out to date constitute 'free, prior and informed consultation leading to 'broad community support'.*** Subsections 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 below describe the activities that have been undertaken during preparation of M-IWRM project and those to be carried out during implementation.

3.2 ***Identification of Ethnic Groups and Impacts Assessment of M-IWRM***

17. The Project was designed to incorporate the need to promote a 'meaningful' participation by poor and disadvantaged sections of society by establishing a participatory planning process. Special consultation was also made during the finalization of an Initial Environmental and Social Examination (IESE) and preparation of safeguard instruments (including this EGDF) of the Project. This is to ensure that indigenous peoples are (i) consulted in matter relating to each investment, (ii) provided opportunities for participation in decision making related to the investments, and (iii) provided opportunities for participation in Project activities should they so desire. The consultations were carried out by the agencies assisted by a team of an international social specialist and national consultants and active participation of the WB's social specialists. The consultation process conducted has resulted in establishment of community consensus and support for the project. A consultation report has been prepared and will be made available for public disclosure at national and local levels.

18. The IESE suggested that the ethnic groups in the Project areas (Xe Bang Fai, Xe Bang Hian, Champasak, Sekong, and Attapeu) would receive the overall positive impacts but may be affected by the resource use restrictions and after consultation, the following approach was accepted, in principle, by the local communities and the local government as well as the local and international non-governmental organizations active in the Project area:

- First, better fisheries management would benefit the local communities in the long run by establishing sustainable fisheries management;
- Second, the fisheries management plan would be developed through full participation and ownership of the respective communities; and
- Third, the Project also envisages provision of livelihood development options (which will be selected through participatory planning with affected populations) in order to mitigate potential negative impacts.

19. Finalization of the proposed investments will be carried out during implementation and *a rapid social assessment* process will be undertaken to define the nature and scope of impacts on the indigenous peoples among the affected populations. By gathering both qualitative and quantitative data in the project areas through a range of Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) techniques, the basic social and economic profile of beneficiary population or project affected people will be developed. The priority investments to be financed under the Project will be in line with the principles and procedures described in Subsection 3.3 below. A grievance procedure will also be established, supervised, and monitored.

3.3 Principles and Procedures Applied to M-IWRM

20. The Project Management Unit (PMU) of the Water Resources and Environment Administration (WREA) and the Project Implementation Units (PIUs) of the Department of Irrigation (DOI) and the Department of Livestock and Fisheries (DLF) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry will ensure that free, prior and informed consultations are undertaken, in a language spoken by, and location convenient for, potentially affected ethnic groups. The views of ethnic groups are to be taken into account during preparation and implementation of investments, while respecting their current practices, beliefs and cultural preferences. The outcome of the consultations will be documented into the Project documents.

21. During the first 3 months of the Project implementation, PMU/PIU will carry out a more detailed assessment of the nature and extent of positive and negative impacts on ethnic groups and identify priority investments as mentioned in paragraph 19 above. If the social assessment indicates that the potential impact of the proposed investments will adversely affect the ethnic groups, an EGDP will be carried out following the guidelines provided in Section IV. The EGDP will be submitted to the World Bank for clearance before investments implementation begins. If the ethnic groups reject the EGDP, the investments will not be approved.

22. If the ethnic groups conclude that the investments will be beneficial to them, and that any adverse impacts can be mitigated, a plan to assist them will be developed based on consultation with ethnic groups and local Lao Front for National Construction (LFNC) representatives. The community should also be consulted to ensure that their rights and culture are respected. The assistance may also include institutional strengthening and capacity building of ethnic villages and community groups working with the investments.

23. A series of training to all implementers and local agencies preparing and implementing EGDPs will be provided and LNFC will be invited as a resource person to provide training and perspectives on ethnic policy in Lao PDR.

3.4 Monitoring, Documenting, and Reporting for M-IWRM

24. The PIUs, in close consultation with the project management unit (PMU) and the Lao Front for National Construction (LFNC), is responsible for supervision and monitoring of ethnic groups related issues, including documentation and reporting. Results will be included in the Project progress report. The Bank supervision missions will periodically review the progress to ensure that the investments affecting indigenous peoples afford benefits to, and mitigate any adverse impacts on, them.

25. Given the small nature of civil works and the fact that selection of priority investment would follow the participatory planning and consultation process described in this policy, adverse negative impacts to indigenous peoples are not expected and therefore, independent monitoring will not be necessary. However, upon WB's request, an independent monitoring would be conducted.

Section IV. Technical Guidelines for Consultation Framework with Ethnic Groups Affected by Investment

26. The consultation framework aims to ensure that ethnic groups are well informed, consulted and mobilized to participate in the investments to be supported by a project. Their participation can either provide them benefits with more certainty, or protect them from any potential adverse impacts of investments to be financed by the project. The main features/process of the consultation framework includes a preliminary identification process, then an environmental and social impact assessment to determine the degree and nature of impact of each subproject to be supported by the project, and an action plan will be developed if warranted. Consultations with and participation of ethnic groups, their leaders and local government officials will be an integral part of the overall Ethnic Group Development Plan (EGDP), which should be prepared along with the project feasibility report. Key elements of the guidelines are discussed in more details in Subsections 4.1-4.8 below.

27. A series of training to all implementers and local agencies preparing and implementing EGDPs will be included. The Lao Front for National Construction (LFNC) will be invited as a resource person to provide training and perspectives of the GoL on ethnic policy in Laos.

4.1 Preliminary Identification

28. To determine if ethnic groups reside in the project area, the preliminary identification process may include a social assessment and/or consultation that provide a comprehensive baseline data on social, economic and technical aspects of each investment. This includes also participatory mapping of community access to road and other key services. If the social assessment confirms that no ethnic group communities reside in the project areas, no further action is necessary. If the social assessment indicates that there are potential social issues on indigenous populations because of the investments, the responsible project sponsor will

undertake specific measures to consult with, and give opportunity for indigenous populations in participating decision making related to the investments, should they so desire. The social assessment process itself is often the method by which such consultations are undertaken however they can be undertaken as a separate exercise.

29. All investments areas which have ethnic group communities and are candidates for project support will be visited (at the time of first consultation with communities) by project implementers and relevant local authorities, including personnel with appropriate social science training or experience. Prior to the visit, respective project sponsor will send notice to the communities informing their leaders that they will be visited by the respective project sponsor and local authorities and consultation will be conducted on the investments. The notice will request that the communities invite to the meeting representatives of farmers, fishermen, women associations and village leaders for discussion on the investments. During the visit, the community leaders and other participants will present their views with regards to the investments.

30. At this visit, personnel with social science training or experience will undertake a screening for ethnic group population with the help of ethnic group leaders and local authorities. The screening will check for the following:

- (a) names of ethnic groups in the affected village
- (b) total number of ethnic groups in the affected villages
- (c) percentage of ethnic people in affected villages
- (d) number and percentage of ethnic households within a described zone of influence of the proposed investments. (The zone of influence should include all areas in which investments-related benefits and adverse impacts are likely to be relevant.)

31. If the results show that there are ethnic group communities in the zone of influence of the proposed investments, a social assessment will be planned for those areas.

4.2 Social Assessment

32. The social assessment will be undertaken by qualified social scientists (or consultants) knowledgeable about the culture of the concerned ethnic minorities. The social assessment will gather relevant information on the following: demographic data; social, cultural and economic situation; and social, cultural and economic impacts - positive and negative.

33. Free, prior and informed consultations will be conducted through a series of meetings, including separate group meetings: ethnic village chiefs; ethnic men; and ethnic women, especially those who live in the zone of influence of the proposed work under subproject. All consultation will be documented in easily accessible locations. All will be carried out in relevant local languages Discussions will focus on investments impacts, positive and negative; and recommendations for design of investments. If the during the series of consultations the communities determines that the potential impact of the proposed investments will be significantly adverse or that the ethnic community rejects the proposal, the investments will not be approved (and therefore no further action is needed). If the ethnic group supports the subproject implementation an EGDP will be developed to ensure that the ethnic groups receive culturally appropriate opportunities to benefit from the investments

activities, and to address any concerns or negative impacts associated with the investments. The EGDP includes the following:

- A summary of results of the free, prior, and informed consultation with the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities that was carried out during subproject preparation and that led to broad community support for the subproject;
- A framework for ensuring free, prior, and informed consultation with the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities during subproject implementation;

4.3 Ethnic Groups Development Plan

34. The EGDP will describe consultation processes and results, and subsequent design considerations to ensure that ethnic groups benefit from investments activities, and that measures are provided to mitigate any adverse impacts on them. An EGDP will include:

- (1) legal framework
- (2) baseline data;
- (3) land tenure information;
- (4) information on consultations and local participation;
- (5) technical identification of development or mitigation activities;
- (6) institutional arrangement;
- (7) grievance redress mechanisms
- (8) implementation schedule;
- (9) monitoring and evaluation; and
- (10) cost and financing plan.

4.4. Implementation arrangement

35. The PMU² will be responsible for providing training to Project staff and local authorities to undertake the work of consultation, identification, social impact assessment, analyses, and preparation of EGDPs.

36. The project implementation unit of individual investments and local authorities are responsible for implementing EGDF (arrange adequate staff and budget).

4.5 Monitoring

37. Implementation of the EGDFs will be regularly supervised and monitored by the project management unit of the investment project. The findings and recommendations will be recorded in quarterly reports and to be furnished to the World Bank.

38. Investments with an EGDP will be subjected to external monitoring by the appropriate agencies and/or an independent qualified consultant. The external monitoring agency or consultant should be hired under terms of reference that specify frequency of

² This term project management unit (PMU) is used here to represent the agency responsible for monitoring and supervision of safeguard activities, including EDPF.

monitoring, sampling and interviewing methods, and reporting requirements. Monitoring reports should be maintained by project management unit and made available to the World Bank supervision team.

4.6 Schedule

39. The EGDP should have an implementation schedule that is coordinated with the investments implementation. Logically, social assessments and group meetings should be undertaken before investments designs are finalized. Monitoring should take place at the recommended times during and after civil work.

4.7 Budget

40. The EGDP will include information on detailed cost of mitigation measures and other rehabilitation entitlements for ethnic minority in the affected areas. Sources of funding for the various activities and financing plans will be clearly specified in the cost tables.

4.8 Reporting/Documentation

41. If preparation of an EGDP is required, the project management unit (PMU) will prepare and submit the EGDPs to the World Bank for clearance before investments implementation begins. As stated above, the monitoring reports and quarterly reports will be prepared by the monitoring agencies and the PMU respectively and will be maintained in the PMU and made available for the Bank's review.

4.9 Transparency and Grievance Mechanism

42. The Gol Decree 192 on Compensation and Resettlement of People Affected by Development Projects requires an investment project to establish mechanism for grievance resolution and determines that the prime responsibility for handling grievances raised by PAPs is the project developers. This mechanism aims to ensure PAPs' satisfaction with implementation of the RAP, and provide the PAPs with a legal platform for on-the-ground monitoring and reporting on the RAP implementation. Specifically, the purposes of the grievance mechanism is to allow PAPs and persons who believe they are affected persons to seek satisfactory resolution to grievances they may have in relation to the restriction of access to aquatic resources, possible land acquisition other project interventions. The key principles of the grievance mechanism in line with the Decree 192 are to ensure that:

- a) The basic rights and interests of PAPs are protected
- b) The concerns of PAPs arising from the project implementation process are adequately addressed;
- c) Entitlements or livelihood support for PAPs are provided on time and accordance with the above stated government and World Bank's safeguard policies;
- d) PAPs are aware of their rights to access and shall have access to grievance procedure free of charge for the above purposes; and
- e) The grievance procedure will be a conflict resolution mechanism that is community-based, involving ethnic (groups) minorities and representatives of other vulnerable groups, and therefore, collectively managed.

43. The grievance mechanisms under the Project will be two-tiered: one internal to the communities concerned and the other, involving third-party/external mediation. At the beginning of the project implementation, Grievance Redress Committees will be established from villages to provincial levels built on the existing structures consisting of concerned departments, mass organizations, women and ethnic representatives. At the village level, the structure called as Village Mediation Committees are chaired by elder and/or spiritual/tribal leaders, which are largely acceptable to local communities, particularly the ethnic minority groups. The project will provide training and support to strengthen these existing structures for effectively and collectively dealing with possible grievances that may be raised by PAPs during the course of the RAP implementation.

44. PAPs, if not satisfied or unclear about the RAP implementation and compensation may raise their complaints to the village committees. The claim may be made orally or in writing with assistance from the village committees who shall provide response to the claimant within 5 days after receipt of the grievance. If the claimant is not satisfied with the decision made at the village level, s/he may submit the claim to the district level committee with support from the PIUs. Within 15 days after receipt of the claim, the district committees shall make decision and provide response to the claimant. The claim may be lodged with Provincial Court of Law whose judgment would be final.

45. All complaints and grievances will be properly documented and filed by the district and village committee as well PIUs addressed through consultations in a transparent and proactive manner. These grievance documents and report will be made publicly accessible. All costs associated with grievance handing process incurred by the claimant and /her/his representatives are to be covered by the project developer. The grievance handling process is described below:

Procedures	Venue	Response Time	Responsible Unit/Institution	Means of Verification/Documentation
Step 1 – Village Level	Public place accessible to complainant/beneficiaries or PAPs	Within 5 days	Village Leader and Village Committee	Written record of grievance, through the assistance of PIUs. Quarterly submission of names and pertinent information about the complainants, nature of complaint, dates the complaints are lodged, and resolution of the same to PIUs.
Step 2 - District Level	District authority's office	Within 15 days	District Authority/PIUs	Written record of grievance from the village committee, through the assistance of PIUs. Quarterly submission of names and pertinent information about the complainants, nature of complaint, dates the complaints are lodged, and resolution of the same to PIUs.

Step 3 – Provincial Level	Provincial government's office	Within 10 days	Provincial government/ PIUs	Written record of grievance from the village committee and District authority, through the assistance of PIUs. Quarterly submission of names and pertinent information about the complainants, nature of complaint, dates the complaints are lodged, and resolution of the same to PIUs.
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Annex 1. Brief Description of M-IWRM Project

1. M-IWRM project aims to establish key examples of integrated water resource management (IWRM) practices in the Lower Mekong Basin (LMB), at the regional, national and sub-national level. The activities will be implemented through the following three components:

- **Component 1. Regional Water Resources Management.** This component aims to increase dialogue, cooperation and understanding on IWRM principles among LMB countries. Key activities would include technical assistance, capacity building, meetings/workshops, study visits, and unlikely to trigger any Bank safeguard policies.
- **Component 2. National Water Resources Management.** Main objective is to support IWRM in Lao PDR, which accounts for over 30 percent of the Basin's flow. Key activities will include technical assistance, meetings, workshops, study visits, and other capacity building activities such equipment and vehicles, and rehabilitation of office and/or small building and unlikely to trigger the World Bank safeguard policies.
- **Component 3: Improved Floodplain and Aquatic Resources Management in Regionally Significant Areas.** The component aims to demonstrate a successful implementation of IWRM practices regarding: (a) flood-plain management in selected river basins in Lao PDR; and (b) development of transboundary fisheries management in priority areas of the Lao PDR and Cambodia. The activities will be implemented through the following three subcomponents:

(3.1) *River Basin and Floodplain Management in the Lower Part of Xe Bang Fai (XBF) and Xe Bang Hian (XBH) in Lao PDR*, key activities would include:

(3.1.1) supporting the development of river basin organizations and a basin planning framework focusing on “hotspots,” development of a floodplain management plan for the lower XBF and XBH, focusing on the junction between the tributaries and the mainstream Mekong; the Project would support technical assistance, training, and minor goods and office renovation;

(3.1.2) rehabilitating existing flood gates to restore flood-plain management and fish migration on 14,000 hectares and re-habilitation of irrigation infrastructure to support restoration of flood-plain rice cultivation and fish spawning on 8,500 hectares, together with providing support to improved, more water-efficient rice cultivation systems through civil works, equipment and extension support; and

(3.1.3) providing logistical support to the provincial administration of WREA and the Ministry of Agriculture (irrigation and fisheries departments) for the subcomponent implementation.

(3.2) *Support for Improved Management of Aquatic Resources in Lao PDR and Cambodia*, addressing the richest spawning grounds for the Mekong River, and key activities would include:

(3.2.1) Supporting community-managed fisheries management organizations in Champasak, Attapeu, Sekong Provinces (Lao PDR), and Stung Treng and Kratie Provinces (Cambodia), including development of participatory management plans, training on fisheries management and conservation, development and implementation of small scale livelihood demonstration activities (e.g. livestock raising, aquaculture) and commune development plans including support to priority rural infrastructure; the Project would provide training, establishment of the grievance mechanism, community outreach, operating costs, goods and minor civil works;

(3.2.2) Strengthening Public Sector Fishery Management for provincial and district fisheries institutions, in: (a) fish catch data collection, monitoring and regulation, together with the community fisheries organizations; (b) extension activities; and (c) support for indigenous species aquaculture and stocking through rehabilitation of hatcheries, technical assistance and study tours for fishermen. The Project would finance goods, works, training and operational costs; and

(3.2-3) Providing logistical support for component management to the fisheries departments in Pakse, Champasak province (Lao PDR) and in Phnom Penh (Cambodia), including operating costs and minor office renovation.

2. The M-IWRM is a regional project will be implemented over a period of six years (2011-2016). The Mekong River Commission (MRC) through its secretariat will be the implementing agency for Component 1 while the Lao PDR agencies under the leadership of the Water Resources and Environment Administration (WREA) will be the implementing agency for Component 2 and Subcomponent 3-1. The Department of Livestock (DLF) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) and its provincial offices in Champasak, Sekong, and Attapeu are the implementing agencies for the Subcomponent 3-2 for Lao activities. The Fisheries Administration (FiA) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF) is the implementing agency for the Cambodia activities under Subcomponent 3-2.