

Gender Assessment and Strategic Action Plan of the Tourism Sector in Lao PDR



Volume I

With the Key Findings & Recommendations

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List of Acronyms and abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
DTO	District Tourism Office
GRID	Gender Resource Information and Development Center
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFP	Gender Focal Point
INGO	International Non Governmental Organisation
LaoNCAW	Lao National Commission for the Advancement of Women
LNFC	Lao National Front for Construction
LWU	Lao Women's Union
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MTDP	Mekong Tourism Development Project
NBCA	National Biodiversity Conservation Areas
NGPES	National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy
NTA	Lao National Tourism Administration
PTO	Provincial Tourism Office
SNV	Netherlands Development Organisation
TOR	Terms of reference
UN	United Nations

Glossary of some key gender terms

❑ *Empowerment:*

Empowerment refers to a process in whereby women and other disadvantaged groups become aware of the many aspects of their oppression and the subsequent actions aimed at and resulting in and improvement of their living conditions and positions.

❑ *Equality and Equity:*

Equality is about the same, having the same characteristics. Equity is about the value that is attached to these characteristics.

❑ *Gender:*

This refers to the roles, tasks and responsibilities of men and women in a particular society.

❑ *Gender analysis:*

Research that aims to reveal inequalities between men and women and how these express themselves in personal and social relations. Its purpose is to reveal the connections between gender relations and the development problem to be solved.

❑ *Gender assessment:*

An assessment to find out if a sector, or an organisation and their staff have the capacity to mainstream gender in their work and programs in collaboration with their partners or stakeholders - with a view to identify ways to improve what they are doing.

❑ *Gender equality:*

Gender equality implies offering the same opportunities and the same treatment of men and women for benefiting from development.

❑ *Gender focal points:*

Persons/change agents that take the responsibility for spearheading, supporting and sustaining gender work.

❑ *Gender Mainstreaming:*

The process of gender mainstreaming aims to integrate gender in all activities, and not to establish a separate gender component or set of activities.

❑ *Gender sensitive work:*

This means realizing that everything we do affects existing gender relations and consciously focusing the work and channeling the effects towards improving the position of women (compared to men). A gender sensitive approach therefore means that all activities are assessed in terms of how they affect the relationship between men and women, and how they affect the position of women.

❑ *Practical gender needs and Strategic gender interests:*

Practical gender needs derive from the existing division of roles, tasks and responsibilities of women and men, based on an existing division of works and, as such, they do not affect this division. Strategic gender needs are derived from the wish to change the unequal division of roles, tasks and responsibilities between men and women in order to improve the position of women

❑ *Promotion of women and women's (self-) development:*

Promotion of women and women's (self-) development means that extra efforts are made to facilitate an active participation of especially the more disadvantaged women.

❑ *Sex dis-aggregated data:*

Sex dis-aggregated data provide an impression of the situation, roles and participation of both men and women

Executive Summary

Tourism is an important sector in the poverty eradication strategy of the Lao PDR¹ and in the 20-Year Plan of the Government of the Lao PDR. Tourism provides many opportunities for both men and women to generate income and to improve their well being and that of their families. The Government of the Lao PDR recognises that it will not be able to realise the goals of reducing poverty without the active participation of all women, particularly poor and ethnic minority women in all sectors. This is due to the fact that Lao women play a very critical role in maintaining their families' food security and socio-economic development.

Therefore, the Mekong Tourism Development Project (MTDP) of the Lao National Tourism Administration (NTA) has a gender policy and a gender component in its programme of activities. Training events have been organized to raise gender awareness and Gender Focal Points (GFPs) have been established in the four Provincial Tourism Offices (PTOs) participating in the project.

In order to review the current status of gender equality and women's empowerment within Lao tourism, a participatory gender assessment was carried out together by joint SNV, MTDP, and NTA research team. The purpose of the gender assessment was to assess the promotion of gender equality in the Lao Tourism Sector and to use that information to develop a National Gender Strategy and Action Plan for the NTA to mainstream gender and thereby enhance its contribution to the alleviation of poverty in the Lao PDR.

Interview with the NTA Vice-Ambassador Mr. Rattannavong

Between March and May 2005, the assessment was conducted through desk study, interviews and consultative workshops with staff and management of the NTA and four PTOs, as well as with representatives of mass organisations at all levels, tourism service providers and villagers from target villages of the MTDP project.



The key findings of the gender assessment reveal that the management of tourism offices is committed to mainstreaming gender in their work and there is basic gender awareness among government staff working in tourism. Nevertheless, gender mainstreaming in the tourism sector is not yet institutionalised. There is no a clear mechanism for mainstreaming gender the sector, neither in government offices nor the tourism service providers of the private sector.

¹ National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy of the Lao PDR.

Availability of better information about gender in tourism and how it can enhance tourism's poverty alleviation potential will not only enhance gender awareness among stakeholders, but is also crucial for capacity to mainstream gender in day to day work. The information presented in Volume II (the raw data produced by this gender assessment) is one contribution to improving critical information resources.

Another key finding of the assessment is that gender expertise within government tourism offices is not well developed. Therefore, the establishment of a Gender Unit within the NTA is recommended. Such a unit would strengthen the gender focal points in the PTOs, develop in-house gender capacity, as well as monitor the implementation of this gender strategy and action plan. In order to make gender mainstreaming concrete in programs and projects, a follow up programme to previous gender awareness training is recommended for all levels and with all stakeholders. Working in partnership with other organisations that have gender expertise or gender programs is an important strategy to support gender mainstreaming.

At the village level, participation of women in tourism programs is limited, which is a result of men's control of community management and women's low education, and self-confidence, limited mobility and heavy workload. Activities that address these causes will improve participation, ensuring all women and men benefit fairly from tourism.

The Gender Strategy and Action Plan for the tourism sector was developed according to the above mentioned key findings and recommendations for the period 2006 – 2008.



1. Background of the gender assessment

1.0 Introduction

This document provides the main results of the participatory gender assessment, conducted in the Vientiane Capital, and the provinces of Khammouane, Champasak, Luang Prabang and Luang Namtha, from 4 March to 20 May 2005. The purpose of the gender assessment was to assess the promotion of gender equality in the Lao Tourism Sector and to use that information to develop a National Gender Strategy and Action Plan for the NTA to mainstream gender and thereby enhance its contribution to the alleviation of poverty in the Lao PDR. The specific objectives of the gender assessment and strategic action plan are to ensure (a) that Lao women and men together engage in tourism-related planning and decision making; and (b) that Lao women receive an equitable share of the employment, educational, and other socio-economic opportunities and benefits the Lao tourism industry generates.

These key findings and recommendations are derived from the Status Report (Volume II), finalized in September 2005. In addition to presenting key findings and recommendations, this volume describes the context of gender and development, tourism in Lao PDR, the role of gender in tourism, and presents an overview of good practices. This volume concludes with the Gender Strategy and Action Plan of the Tourism Sector in Lao PDR 2006 - 2008.

1.1. Rationale for gender equality and gender mainstreaming

Men and women are born with equal rights as human beings. However, in reality many women are not able to exercise their rights because they do not have the same opportunities as men to access productive resources, social services, and educational facilities. As a result, more women are poor, unemployed, illiterate or have less education and skills. In addition, in many countries women outnumber men but their representation and participation in development planning and decision making is very low. Gender equality calls for equity and equality of opportunities for women and men, and recognition of the human rights of all. Equality of access to development opportunities, skills training and education is necessary if more women are to become change agents and help bring about sustainable development and economic growth. Evidence shows that when women gain access and opportunities, productivity increases, and poverty is reduced.

Box 1: What is Gender Mainstreaming?

The United Nations defines **Gender Mainstreaming** as:

"The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, legislation, policies or programs & projects in any sector/area at all levels..."

It is a strategy for making sure the:

"...concerns and experiences of women & men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring & evaluation of policies and programs in political, economic & social spheres, so that women & men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated."

As a development strategy, gender mainstreaming ensures equal opportunities to rights to men and women, as beneficiaries, participants and decision-makers.

1.2. Legal, policy and institutional framework for gender equity

In Lao PDR, the legal framework for promoting gender equity consists of the Constitution (1991), the new Law on Women Development and Protection, among other laws. Article 24 of the Lao Constitution grants women and men equal rights in political, economic, cultural, social, and family affairs. The objective of the Law on Women Development and Protection is to protect women's rights (political, economic, socio-cultural and familial areas) and benefits of women, promote equality between women and men, combating trafficking in women and children, and reducing domestic violence. It also promotes women's health, education and skills development by enhancing knowledge and capacities of professional training.

The policy framework for promoting gender equity is articulated in the Government's National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES) and policies regarding population, human resource development and education, etc. The NGPES ensures that gender, as an inter-sectoral issue is addressed in each sectors plan development and implementation. The Government is taking concrete steps in all key economic sectors and through national programs to support poor women's economic activities, improve their access to basic services such as education and health, increase their use of productive resources (i.e. agriculture extension services), involve them in local decision-making, and generally ensure national policy is responsive to the needs of poor women.

Internationally, the Lao PDR has ratified and is committed to various United Nations Conventions for promoting gender equality and women's advancement such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1981), the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs, 2000).

At institutional level there are two key actors: the Lao Women's Union (LWU, established in 1955) and the Lao National Commission for the Advancement of Women (LaoNCAW, established in 2002). The LWU and LaoNCAW are constitutionally mandated and politically endorsed to represent and protect the "rights and interests" of Lao women from all ethnic groups. They work with the Government, UN, INGOs and bilateral organizations for national development. While the LWU promotes and monitors the implementation of the Constitution, laws of the country, and government policies, the task of the LaoNCAW is to monitor the implementation of CEDAW and to provide guidance in formulating national gender policies and strategic action plans gender equity in the country.

1.3. Gender and Poverty Reduction in the Lao PDR

The Government of the Lao PDR recognises that it will not be able to realise the goals of reducing poverty without the active participation of all women, particularly poor and ethnic minority women in all sectors, including tourism. This is due to the fact that Lao women play critical roles in agriculture and other economic activities, and are primarily responsible for maintaining their families' food security and health. Under the guidance of the LaoNCAW, all line ministries are taking some strategic responses to mainstream gender issues in pursuit of an equitable poverty reduction.

1.4. Tourism Development in Lao PDR

Tourism is an important sector in the poverty eradication strategy (NGPES) and in the 20-Year Plan of the Government of the Lao PDR. Its contribution to the national income is almost 8% of the total GDP as a result of an increase of the number of international tourists from 14,400 in 1990 to almost 900,000 in 2004. Lao tourism attracts many international tourists because of its beautiful and unspoiled natural environment, rich cultural heritage and historical sites, and ethnic diversity². As one of the fastest growing sectors and a labour intensive industry, tourism contributes directly to poverty reduction through formal and informal employment and self-employment, as well as through trade, small and medium enterprise development. Job opportunities arising out of the growing tourism in Laos range from service provision i.e. transport and travel, hospitality industry (accommodation-hotels, guest houses, lodges, restaurants, etc), handicrafts, selling/retail, product development, visitor attractions, performing arts. It can also contribute to rural development, nature and environment conservation, and cultural heritage preservation.

The focus of the Lao National Eco-tourism Strategy is “on pro-poor, community-based tourism development, enhancement of specific tourism-related infrastructure improvements, and sub-regional tourism co-operation”³. The strategy outlines nine guiding principles for the development of eco-tourism; gender equity concerns and actions can be identified in relation to these principles.

Box 2: Guiding Principles for the Development of Ecotourism in Lao PDR

Guiding Principles	Related Gender Actions
1. Minimize negative impacts on Lao nature and culture	Prevent sexual exploitation of children and growth of sex work. Promote informed community tourism planning.
2. Increase awareness among all stakeholders as to the importance of ethnic diversity and biodiversity conservation in the Lao PDR	Increase awareness of importance of gender equity—full participation in decision making by men and women in their community’s development.
3. Promote responsible business practices, which work cooperatively with local authorities and people to support poverty alleviation and deliver conservation benefits	Promote equitable hiring and promotion of women in tourism industries.
4. Provide a source of income to sustain, conserve and manage the Lao protected area network and cultural heritage sites	Ensure women have equal opportunities to participate in conservation planning and related activities.
5. Emphasize the need for tourism zoning and visitor management plans for sites that will be developed as eco-destinations	Ensure concerns of local women are solicited in management plans.

² National Tourism Strategy, National Tourism Administration (NTA), 2004.

³ Lao Tourism Strategy Document, 2004.

6. Use environmental and social baseline data, as well as long-term monitoring programs, to assess and minimize negative impacts	Disaggregate data by gender. Establish and continually monitor diversity indicators.
7. Maximize the economic benefit for the Lao national economy especially local businesses and people living in and around the protected area network	Support women-owned enterprises.
8. Ensure that tourism development does not exceed the social and environmental limits of acceptable change as determined by researchers in cooperation with local residents	Consult women directly for feedback on tourism impacts and establishment of limits of acceptable change.
9. Promote local styles of architecture and infrastructure...in harmony with the Lao culture and environment...	

1.5. Gender in the Tourism Sector

Tourism, especially community-based ventures in rural areas, has the potential to impact local cultures and norms both positively and negatively. Potentially, participation in tourism may reduce poverty levels, expand women’s educational opportunities and increase their self-confidence. However, some initiatives (such as homestays) may increase their workload with little opportunity for recognition or compensation for their efforts because their labor is considered a ‘natural’ extension of their traditional reproductive tasks. Women may be unable to take advantage of new employment or training opportunities, or can only be able to do so if they remain unmarried.

Women in Lao PDR are constrained by gender norms that expect them to defer to men in public decision-making and in family leadership. Reproductive (family) labor and productive work combine to ensure they work longer each day than most men. For ethnic Lao women, entrepreneurship and the associated control of money is considered ‘normal’ behavior; in ethnic minority cultures, traditions vary. Women may have less economic freedom and may rarely leave their local area. Minority women often have limited educational opportunity and may only speak their local language.

Currently most opportunities in tourism sector are in urban and peri-urban areas. Women are employed by hotels and guesthouses, food service providers, bars, travel agencies, and by tour companies. Women are generally underrepresented in management levels⁴, but predominate in customer service and sanitation. Transport and repair services are almost exclusively male operated. Exceptions are usually found in smaller, family-run businesses, which tend to have less rigid gender stereotyping in hiring. Self-employment offers women greater independence—it is common for women to make and sell handicrafts to tourists and operate food/drink stands.

⁴ Assessment informants rarely reported female managers. However, the managing director of one of Lao’s largest travel agencies, Diethelm Travel, is a woman.

Community-based tourism is still new in Lao PDR and women have already assumed significant roles where tourism has successfully been established at the community level. Women prepare and sell food, provide accommodation, and have been trained as trekking guides—one of the higher status positions available to women in tourism. Handicrafts are an important sector in the rural economy. Production is dominated by women (especially in textiles), though men are silversmiths, woodworkers, and commonly produce basket ware when farm work is complete.

However, tourism may also cause negative impacts. The Gender Equity Action Plan of the MTDP specifically identified two direct risks for women associated with the growth of tourism. First, that increases community-based tourism may lead to a reduction in girls' school attendance if families assign girl children to help mothers with their tourism-related work. Secondly, that an influx of tourists may lead to the growth of sex work and, consequently, further the spread of HIV/AIDS.

1.6. Gender assessment of the Tourism Sector in Lao PDR

Box 3: What is a Participatory Gender Assessment?

The purpose is to find out if an organisation and their staff have the capacity to mainstream gender in their work and programs in collaboration with their partners or stakeholders - with a view to identify ways to improve what they are doing.

An assessment focuses on the conditions that an organisation or ministry has created to realise gender equality, women's empowerment and gender balance; what is actually being done to achieve these goals; the perception of achievement of those involved in the programme and associated with it; and the formulation of recommendations for improvement.

It aims at improving the organisation's performance with respect to gender equality and women's empowerment and should lead to proposals for change. Unlike a regular evaluation, the gender self-assessment is based on self-assessment and not on external evaluation.

The gender assessment of aspects of the Tourism Sector in the Lao PDR was conducted in a participatory manner according to a six-element framework:

- Gender issues in Lao tourism; and the link with women's machinery.
- Mainstreaming gender in Tourism Strategy and Program Activities
- Existing gender capacity and competence; procedures and tools for program analysis, planning, monitoring and evaluation from a gender perspective.
- Information and knowledge management; availability/accessibility of gender information on Tourism.
- Cooperation and Networking among the Tourism Service Providers.
- Human Resources Development/Personnel: recruitment, career perspectives, selection and training.

Many methods were used (please refer to table 1, 2 and 3 in annex 1) to conduct the gender assessment of the Tourism Sector of Lao PDR. Workshops, interviews and group discussions were held at the national, provincial/district and target village level, and with the NTA Vice-Chairperson, Directors and Deputy Directors of PTOs/DTOs, Heads of Departments/Units; NTA and PTO support staff, Service Providers, (i.e. owners of tour

companies, hotels, restaurants and guest houses), and mass organisations (i.e. Lao National Front for Construction, Lao Women's Union, Lao Revolutionary Youth, and Lao Trade Unions).

In total, 18 workshops and several interviews were carried out involving 424 people, in four provinces, eight districts, and 19 target villages, in the provinces of Khammouane, Champasak, Luang Prabang and Luang Namtha, during 4-18 March and 9-20 May 2005. Table 3 of annex 1 shows the dates, venues and number of people that participated in the gender assessment and consultative workshops.



Discussions and presentations at one of the gender assessment workshops



2. Overview of Good Practices and Opportunities

2.1 Good Practices

Commitment from Government and Management of Tourism Sector

Commitment to promote gender equality and women's empowerment is high on the Government agenda. The leadership of the Tourism Sector is also committed to implement the Government policy of promoting gender equality to reduce poverty.

Training and Capacity building

Basic gender awareness training has been conducted in the four MTDP provinces for government staff in tourism and from mass organizations and for some managers and staff of tourism businesses (i.e. hotel and guesthouse owners, tour guides, and restaurateurs). Women are invited and participate in large numbers in almost all training programs organized by the NTA or



Gender focal points have been established at the Provincial level in five provinces. Some training has occurred for these new posts; gender focal points of the MTDP have participated in study tours, social problem prevention programs, project monitoring data collection, and the field work for this gender assessment. MTDP Gender Focal Points have TORs and their appointments were endorsed by senior NTA management.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation system of the MTDP fully disaggregates data by sex, for both quantitative and qualitative indicators. Monitoring data collection is gender sensitive; it includes women on field teams and interviews both husbands and wives (not only the household head) when gathering household level data.

Prohibition and Prevention of harmful activities

The NTA has partnered with the Australian NGO Childwise to combat commercial sexual exploitation of children in Lao PDR. The MTDP has presented programs to raise awareness of social problems linked to the tourism sector (sex work, trafficking, HIV/AIDS) for public and private stakeholders in four provinces.

Certain activities are prohibited in Tourism Sector in the Lao PDR. For example it is prohibited for hotels, lodges or guesthouses to engage in illegal activities such as illegal trade, smuggling, gambling, prohibited goods, drugs, trafficking in persons, prostitution and displaying pornographic films, VDO, slide, CD Rom for promotion of prostitution.

2.2. Opportunities

The environment is highly conducive to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Existing frameworks, laws, policies and strategies support gender equality protect the rights of women and children against discrimination and trafficking. The acknowledgement of international instruments for women's advancement and gender equality, which include CEDAW, Beijing Platform and MDGs reinforce this commitment to gender equity.

The creation of LaoNCAW will support on-going gender mainstreaming across all line ministries, including the NTA. The LWU and the NTA have a strong work partnership in place, particularly at the district and village level.

3. Key findings and recommendations

3.0. Introduction

The key findings below are grouped according to the six analytical categories that describe the dimensions of the gender assessment. Worthwhile to mention is that almost all findings were confirmed by interviews at all levels: village to national level and for each different type of informants: representatives of the mass organizations, villagers, private sector service providers, and government staff. While the data in volume II specify the outcome per group of interviewees, this chapter will not go into that detail.

3.1. Gender in the Tourism Program Cycle: Integration and implementation of gender mainstreaming in the tourism policy, strategies, and programs

- Tools and procedures to integrate gender issues in program planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation are very limited at all levels of the NTA itself (a lack of operational mechanisms to institutionalise gender mainstreaming).
- Most data at the NTA, PTOs and DTOs is not disaggregated by sex. Information and documentation on gender issues is very limited at all levels.
- The MTDP of the NTA is pioneering the integration of gender into tourism programming at the NTA: it has a clear gender policy, a comprehensive gender equity action plan, and a monitoring program that disaggregates data by sex, involves women on data collection teams, collects gender-sensitive qualitative data, and includes both women and men in household-level data collection.
- Few gender issues are integrated in the design and planning of tourism programme activities, product development and promotion outside of the MTDP.
- Very few women currently participate explicitly in the design and planning of tourism program activities, product development and promotion, according to interviews at village level and with service providers.
- The environment is enabling for the promotion of gender equality—policies are in place, senior management is public in its support for gender mainstreaming, and external funding opportunities exist to fund improving the integration of gender into the work of the NTA and, thereby, the Lao tourism sector.
- Recent national tourism strategy setting has made poverty alleviation (along with cultural and environmental preservation) the clear goal for the Lao tourism sector. This explicit people- centred, pro-poor outlook is very advantageous for gender mainstreaming as it focuses attention directly on benefits and beneficiaries.

3.2. Institutional Mechanisms for Gender Mainstreaming

- The institutional basis for gender mainstreaming has not been established within the NTA; nationally, there is no department, unit, or staff position responsible for ensuring gender is mainstreamed in programs and projects.
- Provincial GFPs have been appointed in five provinces, but are not yet fully active and their core work responsibilities are generally prioritized above GFP responsibilities (There are pairs of GFPs in the four provinces of the MTDP and a GFP committee in Savanakhet).

Box 4: Learning from Savanakhet Experiences

In 2003, SNV collaborated with the Savannakhet Provincial Tourism Office to organise gender mainstreaming workshops that analysed the Ecotourism Program in Savannakhet. Objectives and activities were analyzed from a gender perspective; gaps were identified, and a Gender Action Plan was developed

The Provincial Gender Action Plan resulted in:

- Institution of a 40% quota for female guides through affirmative action
- Establishment of women's revolving fund for income generation
- Establishment of Gender Focal Committees for the PTO, DTOs, and the three target villages. Members are men and women who can influence decision-making
- The training and employment facilitation of women tour guides, which has enhanced their social and economic status and self-confidence
- Decision to make monitoring the implementation of the gender action plan at provincial, district and village levels a priority

Savanakhet PTO decided to establish a gender committee (rather than appointing one staff as a GFP) due to a determination that the important task of gender mainstreaming cannot be successfully done by one person alone.

- The NTA subcommittee of the LaoNCAW has not been established yet (mostly due to the fact that LaoNCAW is very new and has limited resources) and there is a general lack of understanding about the roles and responsibilities of LWU and LaoNCAW (see Annex 2).
- Mechanisms to monitor the way the gender issues in tourism sector are being addressed (e.g. violations of women's rights & opportunities, prevention of sex tourism, etc.) do not exist.

3.3. Gender Mainstreaming Capacity and Expertise in the Tourism Sector

- Many members of tourism management teams are aware of the Government gender policy and are knowledgeable of the main gender issues in the tourism sector.
- Gender awareness training has not yet occurred at the central NTA level, though many PTO staff members have attended basic gender awareness training through the MTDP gender and development program.
- Existing internal NTA gender capacity and knowledge is not adequate to effectively facilitate the mainstreaming of gender in all aspects of Lao tourism.

- Very few documents exist on gender issues in relation to the Lao Tourism sector; this gender assessment was the most extensive research completed to date.
- NTA and PTO staff lack skills in gender analysis and gender-sensitive programming, though some PTO staff have completed gender awareness training.
- Established Gender Focal Points have very little technical gender expertise and few training opportunities that could further develop their capacity; one short course has been conducted to explain their responsibilities and introduce gender mainstreaming fundamentals. This problem is compounded by the relative junior status of those women staff who were chosen to become GFPs; they lack general professional experience as well.
- The NTA currently has access to gender expertise (the MTDP team includes two Gender and Social Specialists) but as these are external consultants, and institutional mechanisms for knowledge transfer are poor, little expertise will exist after the consultancies are completed.
- There is a limited understanding on how to safeguard the rights of women within the tourism sector by all stakeholders.

3.4. Opportunities, benefits, and participation of women and men in the Tourism Sector

- Women, compared to men, do not benefit equally from the many different employment and development opportunities offered through the expanding tourism industry. This holds especially true for women of ethnic minorities. It is difficult for women to become tour guides, due to cultural values and division of labour 'at home'. Women are involved in handicraft production, but generally the production is low and with only small sale benefits. Women are involved in providing services, but generally they are not in the position to negotiate good salaries or benefits resulting from those services.
- Very few women currently participate explicitly in the design and planning of tourism program activities, product development and promotion, according to interviews at village level and with service providers.



Participation of women and men of ethnic minorities in the discussions

- A limited market is among the main constraints for the expansion of women-dominated CBT income generation activities such as handicrafts production and sale of non-timber forest products.
- There is limited information on marketing and credit facilities, for especially women from ethnic minority groups.
- Most women involved in tourism have limited information about developing attractive tourism products, especially ethnic minority women.
- Across the Lao PDR, women's education levels, professional skills, and mastery of Lao and English (the languages most used in Lao tourism) are low. These human resource constraints undermine women's self-confidence and men's confidence in women's abilities, this in turn affects women's participation in decision-making and ability to move into higher-paying male-dominated jobs such as tour guiding, infrastructure development, etc. (Noted for women at village level, within private service providers, and inside the NTA).

Box 5: Promotion of women's (self-) development

Generally, development activities in Lao PDR are aimed at both men and women. In practice, however, the **participation** of particularly poor women, especially women of ethnic minorities is often much more limited due to among others:

- the cultural position of women that defines women are traditionally
 - o shy and lack self-confidence toward outsiders or in public
 - o do not speak or voice their opinion in public
 - o are not supposed to travel far from home
 - o have a larger share of the domestic chores which keeps them to home;
- the lower educational levels (which also has its roots in the traditional culture); many women are illiterate and do not speak well (i.e. ethnic minorities) the main Lao language;
- and because of this, women have less access to all kinds of skills/knowledge development opportunities;
- women are often less informed about development activities (they read less or not at all) or are not specifically invited or are less present at public meetings, most of which are organized by men, if invited most women do not speak much as tradition does not allow them to be vocal/outspoken;
- the contribution of women to the (economic) development of the family/village/nation is not always recognized (women should remain at home);
- Women have often less access to resources such as credit, knowledge.

In this regard therefore, women's development is often not given the due attention it needs. This all together results in a limited participation of women in public meetings, in all kinds of training events (e.g. on how to set up a business, how to market handicrafts, how to become a tourism guide, etc) and many other organised development activities. Women's lack of, or limited participation in those activities makes it difficult for their specific interests and needs to be taken in to account and to get the knowledge and skills for development, which men relatively get more easily. This leads to an underutilization of many women's capacities for self-development and that of their families, and for the country as a whole.

Promotion of women and women's (self-) development therefore means that extra efforts are made to facilitate **an active participation of especially the more disadvantaged women**. This can be promoted through:

- literacy classes for young and adult women; including improving the (lao-)language skills;
- training that enhances the self-confidence of women;
- training that improves the technical skills of women (for instance with regards to computer use, business development, marketing, tourism guides, etc.)

- activities that facilitate a more active involvement of women, which include: where to organize the event (closer to the village), when to organize (not when women are busy), duration (not too long as their daily schedule is busy), etc.
- Provision of specific coaching to make that women develop the self-confidence and self-esteem through a learning by doing
- Improvement of the information provision to women about and invitations for development activities (for instance make use of the radio, invite women specifically, etc.)
- opening up for women the access to resources such as credit, computers & internet, knowledge sources, etc.

- Both at village level and among service providers, interviews revealed that women had difficulties accessing credit.
- Women (and men) in MTDP target villages recommended that tourism development should support village development priorities, such as small infrastructure, electricity, improved water sources, etc (see Annex 4).
- Male employees outnumber female employees at both the NTA and PTOs; the number of women staff is low (about 24%). There are even fewer ethnic minority women—nationally 17% of staff are from ethnic minorities, but only 4% of those are women (see Annex 3).
- There is a gender pyramid at the NTA and PTOs: men mostly occupy the top positions (i.e. director, deputy director, team leader) while women are concentrated in lower-skill jobs (i.e. receptionists, assistants, cleaners) which do not influence decisions and have few opportunities for training and upgrading. (see Table 4 in Annex 3).

Box 6: The Recruitment Process of PTOs

- Hiring of government staff for NTA, PTO, and DTO offices follows a multi-step process. The following is an example of steps followed to hire PTO staff:
- The Provincial Administration announces the quota for staff at the PTO.
 - If the quota exceeds the current number of staff, the PTO will advertise the positions available.
 - The PTO reviews the applicants and selects their choice for new staff and submits their request to the Provincial Administration.
 - The candidate is evaluated by the personnel department of the Provincial Administration and if approved to be a government employee, the Governor formally signs agreement.

- At private sector service providers (tour companies, hotels, restaurants, etc.) senior managerial positions are predominantly occupied by men.
- Village committees are crucial in the development of successful community –based tourism initiatives, but women rarely occupy decision making positions on these committees.
- The Lao tourism sector (public and private, in cities and rural communities) is accepting of and friendly to women working within traditional gender roles (i.e. secretarial support, accounting, servers, sales persons, handicraft producers, or travel agents)
- However, women who attain leadership positions, take on public roles, and/or attempt to have more participation in formal decision making processes in the tourism sector experience may face discrimination and lack support.

3.5. Institutional Cooperation on Gender in the Tourism Sector

- The NTA has a record of successful cooperation with the LWU at the provincial, district, and village levels, especially on implementation of the MTDP gender and development program. However, some misunderstanding exists about the respective roles and responsibilities of the NTA and LWU around gender mainstreaming in tourism. (The role of the LWU is elaborated in Annex 2.)
- Although cooperation between government offices involved in tourism exists at all levels and has improved over the years, this cooperation extend to include cooperation on gender mainstreaming initiatives.
- There is limited cooperation between organizations and insititutions with gender expertise and tourism sector development.
- There is currently no mechanism for GFPs of PTOs to network together, share information, or seek assistance from national or international organizations.

3.6. Knowledge and information management: Collect and Disseminate Information on Tourism and Gender Development issues

- Very few documents exist on gender issues in relation to the Lao Tourism sector. Information and documentation on gender issues is very limited at all levels. There is limited information about how to safeguard the rights of women within the tourism sector. More information collection and dissemination is important for the aim of improving the understanding about gender mainstreaming; to improve gender mainstreaming process in the planning, implementation and monitoring of tourism programs.
- A lot of the documentation produced by the NTA, PTOs and DTOs is not disaggregated by sex.
- Most women involved in tourism development activities have limited information about developing attractive tourism products, especially ethnic minority women. There is limited information on marketing and credit facilities, for especially women of ethnic minorities.
- Gender issues are still mainly addressed as a separate issue instead of addressing the issue in relation to all day to day activities. In training events, workshops, meetings, reporting, documentation and other information dissemination and capacity building events, gender is generally not addressed.

4. Gender strategy and action plan of the tourism sector Lao PDR 2006-2008

4.0. Introduction

This National Gender Strategy and Action Plan is based on the results of the Gender Assessment of the tourism sector in the Lao PDR. The Strategy and Action Plan is a response to the Government's efforts to reduce poverty by promoting gender equality and women's empowerment through a gender mainstreaming approach. It consists of strategic objectives and activities, the implementation of which will rest mainly with the NTA, PTOs and the DTOs. The MTDP is needed to support the implementation of this Strategy and Action Plan. The execution of this strategy will only be effective if it involves active participation and contribution by all staff and management of the NTA, PTOs and DTOs.

Many of the proposed activities (for instance related to the specific objectives 1, 2 and 5 below) do not need large sums of funds. Activities under specific objective 3 and 4, however, will require additional funds, as far as these will be implemented through programs of the NTA, PTOs and DTOs.

4.1. Goals and objectives

Goal of the Gender Strategy and Action Plan of the Tourism Sector in Lao PDR:

To ensure that tourism program activities provide equal access, opportunities and benefits to both men and women irrespective of ethnic backgrounds.

Strategic Objectives:

- (1) Improve the integration and implementation of gender mainstreaming in the tourism policy, strategies and programs;
- (2) Establish institutional mechanisms to monitor gender mainstreaming in all aspects of Lao tourism;
- (3) Enhance and institutionalise the gender mainstreaming capacity and cultural sensitivity of government tourism staff, service providers and mass organisations;
- (4) Enhance opportunities of Lao women and men to participate in, and benefit from tourism related planning and decision-making, access to tourism resources and services;
- (5) Strengthen linkages with organisations with gender knowledge, programs and projects for cooperation and support; and
- (6) Systematically collect and disseminate information on tourism and gender development issues.

4.2. Action Plan

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Improve the integration and implementation of gender mainstreaming in the tourism policy, strategies and programs					
Activities	Time-line	Output	Indicators	Means of Verification	Responsibility
1.1.1 Update and implement MTDP Gender Action Plan 1.1.2 Integrate the gender specific activities in the 6-monthly MTDP plans	Oct. – Dec. 05 March 06, Sept. 06	MTDP Gender Action plan updated MTDP 6 monthly plans are specific on activities planned for gender mainstreaming	Gender Action Plan for the MTDP has put a new time frame for the planned activities	The Gender Action Plan	NTA, PTOs, DTOs
1.2 Monitor the MTDP Gender Action Plan	March and Sept ⁵ . 06	Report about the implementation of MTDP Gender Action Plan	Progress of the implementation reported on a six monthly basis	MTDP report and/or any specific report on the Gender Action Plan	MTDP, Gender Unit
1.3 Integrate and highlight the gender specific activities in the annual plans of NTA, PTOs and DTOs	Dec. – Jan. 06, 07, 08	Attention to gender issues made concrete in the “day to day activities” of NTA, PTOs and DTOs	Annual plans of NTA, at least 4 PTOs and related DTOs have indicated at least 2 activities where attention to gender and/or social inclusion is made concrete and explicit	The Annual Plans of NTA, PTOs and DTOs	NTA, PTOs, DTOs. Gender Unit, Gender Focal Point/ Committees
1.4 Integrate attention to gender mainstreaming and social inclusion in activities and expected results for new projects and programs	When emerging	Project and program proposals have integrated attention to gender issues.	New projects and programs specify for at least 5 activities and expected results what is planned with regards to gender equality and social inclusion	New project and program proposals	NTA, PTOs, DTOs. Gender Unit, Gender Focal Point/ Committees
1.5 Ensure recognition of the contribution of women and of ethnic minorities in planning and implementation of tourism activities	Ongoing	Improved gender and cultural sensitivity by NTA, PTO, DTO staff	Staff of NTA, PTOs and DTOs acknowledge the contribution of women and ethnic minorities in meetings	Meeting reports	NTA, PTO and DTO staff

⁵ This refers to the MTDP for its first phase; if the project will be extended or start a new phase, the support by MTDP-II to gender mainstreaming is hoped to continue

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2:					
Establish institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming in all aspects of Lao tourism					
Activities	Time line	Output	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Responsibility
2.1.1 Establish a Gender Unit within the NTA	Nov. – Dec. 05	Gender Unit established and operational	Members of Gender Unit selected and ToR agreed upon by NTA management not later than December 05	Memo informing staff ToR	NTA
2.1.2 Develop Terms of Reference and a clear mandate for the Gender Focal Points/ Committees	Nov. – Dec. 05				
2.2.1 Establish Gender Focal Points/ Gender Committees at all PTOs, DTOs	Jan. – April 06	All PTOs and DTOs have an operating Gender Focal Point or Gender Committee with a clear ToR and Mandate	Gender Focal Points/ Committees in at least 80% of the PTOs and 50% of the DTOs established not later than May 06.	Memo or any other internal information procedure on this issue ToR	NTA, PTOs and DTOs, Gender Unit
2.2.2 Develop Terms of Reference and a clear mandate for the Gender Focal Points/ Committees	Jan. – April 06				
2.3 Establish procedures to ensure consultation of women and ethnic minorities in design and planning of tourism related activities at village level	April 06	All staff of PTOs and DTOs know when and how to involve women and ethnic minorities	Clear procedures approved and distributed by April 06	Procedures and the distribution list	NTA, Gender Unit
2.3.1 Develop procedures for combating sexist attitudes and negative cultural attitudes in tourism services	June – Sept 06	All staff of NTA, PTOs and DTOs understand what are sexist & negative cultural attitudes related to tourism and how to address them	Procedure disseminated	Procedures and dissemination memo	Gender Unit, in cooperation with LaoNCAW/LWU, NTA management
2.3.2 Disseminate the procedures and inform staff of NTA, PTOs and DTOs	Oct. 06				
2.4.1 Develop clear guidelines on reinforcing Government laws to protect women's rights and to combat sex tourism, trafficking and spread of HIV/AIDS and unlawful activities	Oct. – Dec. 06	All staff of NTA, PTOs and DTOs understand the Government laws and Law on Women Development and Protection	Guidelines discussed during workshops/training at least 75% of the PTOs and DTOs by April 2007	Workshop/ Training reports	Gender Unit, in cooperation with LaoNCAW/LWU, NTA management
2.4.2 Organise workshops at PTOs and DTOs to disseminate the guidelines	Jan. – April 07				

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Enhance gender mainstreaming capacity and cultural sensitivity of Tourism staff and Service Providers and Mass organisations					
Activities	Time-line	Output	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Responsibility
3.1 Follow-up on previous gender trainings focusing on “applying gender mainstreaming” through coaching and backstopping for staff a. workshops b. coaching/discussion sessions c. feedback on plans, reports and specific events	2006 - 2008	Increased understanding and skills of staff of NTA, PTO and DTO to mainstream gender	At least one workshop and coaching session each per year	Workshop reports, progress reports	Management NTA, Gender Unit with other partners
3.2 Train Gender Unit staff in gender analysis, planning and monitoring	2006	Gender Unit members able to do a gender analysis, and to prepare and monitor gender responsive plans	GU is monitoring the implementation of the Gender Strategy and Action Plan 6 monthly by September 2006	Progress reports (separate or integrated in MTDP report)	NTA, MTDP
3.3 Enhance gender skills and capacity of Gender Focal Points/Committees; and provide backstopping and coaching d. regular coaching by gender experts e. workshops/training	2006 - 2008	Gender Focal Points/Committees are able to contribute to gender mainstreaming in the activities carried out by PTOs and DTOs	Gender Focal Points/Committees have at least 5 concrete recommendations on gender mainstreaming for the annual plan of the PTO/DTO by June 2007	Meeting minutes, annual plan, recommendations (if in writing)	NTA, PTOs, DTOs and Gender Unit
3.4 Organise study tours within Lao PDR and in the neighboring countries to exchange & share experience and knowledge on gender mainstreaming	Nov. 06, 07	Representatives of NTA, PTO, DTO and target villages have visited good practices on gender mainstreaming in tourism	Participants have documented lessons learned with clear action points for follow up	Study tour reports	MTDP, NTA, PTOs, DTOs and selected Target villagers
3.5 Develop and introduce gender and tourism curriculum at Lao National Tourism Training Centre and Hotel Management Training colleges.	2006	Students of the Lao National Tourism Training Centre and Hotel Management Training colleges have learned about the main lines of “what and how” gender mainstreaming	Gender in relation to tourism is part of the curricula of the Tourism Training Centre and other Hotel Training Colleges by December 07	Curricula	

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: Enhance opportunities of Lao women and men to participate in, and benefit from tourism related planning and decision-making, access to tourism resources and services.					
Activities	Time-line	Output	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Responsibility
4.1 Organise training for women in target villages, especially from ethnic groups on planning and designing tourism program activities at all levels	2006 - 2008	Women, particularly of ethnic minorities, in target villages have acquired the basic skills of participatory planning	Tourism activity plans in at least 50% of the target villages have been made with an active participation of women.	Reports on the planning process and participation	MTDP, NTA, PTOs, DTOs with other development partners
4.2 Develop and organise programs to boost women's self-confidence and esteem, skills and capacities	2006 - 2008	Women, particularly of ethnic minorities, in target villages have increased self-esteem and confidence	An increased number of women, 30%, are participating actively in village meetings by Dec. 07	Village meeting reports (2005 – 2008)	MTDP, NTA, PTOs, DTOs with other development partners
4.3 Develop and organise literacy programs; English and Lao language lessons for women in target villages, especially of ethnic minorities.	2007 - 2008	Women, especially of ethnic minorities have benefited from literacy classes	At least in 30% of the target villages, 15 women have participated in a literacy program organized or facilitated by NTA by June 08	Reports on the literacy program	MTDP, NTA, PTOs, DTOs with other development partners
4.4 Improve social and physical infrastructure (roads, health, water and sanitation, etc) in target villages	2005 - 2008	Reduced workload of women that allows more participation of women in tourism related activities and improved living conditions	Less complains about lack of time for tourism by women in relation to participation in tourism activities by Dec. 07	Consultation reports	MTPD, NTA, PTOs, DTOs and other development partners
4.5.1 Organise training on business development 4.5.2 Facilitate access to micro-finance facilities	2006 - 2008	Improved tourism related businesses run by women	- More women are successfully running a tourism related business - Business run by women have increased income by Dec. 08	Consultation reports	MTDP, NTA, PTOs, DTOs with other development partners.
4.6 Explore and build internal mechanisms for facilitating women to enter higher positions by building their capacities and competences	2006 - 2008	More women are working in decision making positions in the NTA, PTOs and DTOs	- The number of women in decision making positions in the NTA, PTOs and DTOs increased with 25% in 2008	Employment records	NTA, PTOs and DTOs
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: Strengthen links with organisations with gender knowledge, programs and projects for support and networking.					
5.1 Establish a working relationship with LWU, LaoNCAW and other relevant organisation for gender mainstreaming and women's economic empowerment - clarifying roles and division of tasks	2006 Jan. –	NTA, PTOs and DTOs have established partnerships for mainstreaming gender in the tourism sector	At least 2 partnerships have been established by December 2006	Partnership agreements	Gender Unit, NTA

between NTA & LWU / LaoNCAW - inventory of organizations that have gender expertise - exploring opportunities of cooperation with other organizations that have gender expertise/gender specific programs	Feb. 06 March – June 06 March – June 06				
5.2. Stimulate the integration of gender issues in the training/education on tourism organized by other institutions in Lao PDR through network meetings	2006-2008	NTA has discussed the issue and importance of gender mainstreaming in tourism with knowledge providers in Lao PDR	Gender mainstreaming is in the agenda of NTA's network meetings at least once a year in 2006 - 2008	Meeting reports	NTA , Gender Unit
5.3. Explore opportunities to develop joint projects with other development organizations on gender mainstreaming in tourism	2006 - 2008	Additional funds and other resources secured from supporters for gender mainstreaming activities in tourism	At least 2 gender mainstreaming project proposals developed with other organizations until December 2008	Project proposals implemented	NTA, Gender Unit

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6:
Collect and disseminate information on tourism and gender development issues.**

Activities	Time-line	Output	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Responsibility
6.1 For general reporting and planning purposes - systematically collect, display and disseminate information in a sex and ethnic disaggregated ⁶ manner, and if possible in other socio-economic categories - establish procedures for data collection - establish instructions for using the data in reporting - ensure access to the data for planning and reporting purposes	May – July 06 August 06 August 06	Information available for gender responsive planning, monitoring and reporting available	Documentation at NTA, PTOs and DTOs is disaggregated by sex and other relevant categories by Dec. 06	Documents	NTA, PTOs and DTOs, Gender Unit
6.2.1 Produce, and disseminate Audio Visual Materials (AVMs), reports, good practice cases for training and	2006	All kinds of information materials displaying materials on gender and tourism	At least 3 different materials developed during 2006	Produced materials at NTA, PTOs,	NTA, Gender Unit

⁶ Sex disaggregated data provides an impression of the situation, roles and participation of both men and women. Examples are: in the economy (e.g. agriculture, employment, etc), social (e.g. education, health and transportation sectors) and in political spheres (e.g. number of men and women in the national assembly, village development committees, or in other government public decision-making positions), at national and provincial, district level and in village level. Sex-disaggregated data is either presented in the form of numbers, percentages, charts, graphs or tables.

benchmarking 6.2.2 Disseminate at tourism meetings, training workshops, seminars, in news papers, radio and TV.		developed and disseminated.		DTOs, Target Villages, at Tourism/ Hotel Trainings and Service Providers	
6.3 Facilitate (with other agencies) and carry out research on tourism and gender development activities - In general - potential negative gender & cultural impacts of tourism	2006 - 2008	New and/or actualized information on gender aspects of tourism collected, particularly on prevalence of negative gender and cultural impacts.	At least 2 reports/documents on gender issues in tourism are produced each year in 2007 and 2008	Research Reports/ documents	NTA, Gender Unit, Gender Focal Points.
6.4 Facilitate the systematic dissemination of information about gender & social inclusion in tourism collected within and outside NTA and PTO's to Tourism Service Providers, Mass organizations - during internal meetings - during network meetings - within newsletter/ reports - in seminars	2006 - 2008	Dissemination of information on gender and tourism has become integral part of NTA's, PTO's and DTO's mechanisms for providing, sharing and exchanging information	Gender as a topic has been addressed during at least 5 events/ newsletters each year between 2007 and 2008	Event reports, newsletters, etc.	MTDP, NTA, PTOs, DTOs
6.5 Promote products/services produced by women and people of ethnic minorities to tourism service providers and tourists	2006 - 2007	Tourists and Tourist Service providers are better aware of products/services produced by women and people of ethnic minorities	At least 2 information bulletins, and part of 2 posters by Dec. of 2007	Information bulletins and posters	MTDP, NTA, PTOs, DTOs with other development partners
Activities	Time-line	Output	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Responsibility

ANNEX 1: Methods used in the Participatory Gender Assessment for the MTDP

Table 1: Methods of Gender Assessment and Consultations

	Method	Purpose
1.	Gender Quality Test	To assess gender capacity and competence and quality of implementing gender equality objectives NTA, PTOs /DTOs Directors, Deputy Directors, Heads of Departments, and Support Staff and Service Providers
2.	Culture of Organisation	To identify and assess culture of Lao Tourism if it is conducive to promoting or hindering gender equality and women's empowerment.
3.	Ideal Organisation Exercise⁷	To assess vision of NTA, PTOs/DTOs management and staff, and Tourism Service Providers and Stakeholders. i.e. What they would like the future Tourism sector to be – in which gender equality is assured?
4.	Mind-mapping Exercise	To identify people who make decisions on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, why and when. An inventory of types of decisions
5.	Venn Diagram	To identify and assess the level and quality of gender equality promotion in tourism development - by all the stakeholders
6.	SWOT Analysis	To assess the strengths and weaknesses of tourism from a gender perspective with the management of NTA; staff and management of PTOs/ DTOs and Service Providers; and we combined this with an analysis of opportunities and constraints in their own contexts.
7.	Gender Baseline Survey Techniques	To identify the roles, responsibilities and activities performed by men and women, in their homes, villages and tourism activities according to season (seasonal calendar); and to assess men and women's access to tourism socio-economic benefits, services and resources in the Target villages.

Table 2: Methods used for the Different Target Groups

Target groups	Methods used for each target group
NTA Directors & Heads	Mind mapping, Ideal Vision, SWOT, VENN diagram
NTA Support staff	Culture of organisation, Idea Vision
National level Stakeholders	SWOT, Idea Vision
PTO/DTO Heads	Mind mapping, Ideal Vision, SWOT, VENN diagram
PTO/DTO Support staff	Culture of organisation, Idea Vision
Provincial level Stakeholders	SWOT, Idea Vision
Villagers	Gender baseline survey tools: Activity, access, control, and benefit Profiles; Gender resource mapping; Gender seasonal calendar and Gender action planning

⁷ Based on: *The fifth discipline*, by Peter Senge et al (1995).

Table 3: Dates, Venues and Target Groups, at national, provincial, district and target village level

Date	Province	District	Venue	Participating Villages	Participants	Number of Participants	Consultation Level
04 March 2005	Vientiane Capital		NTA Office		NTA Directors & Heads of Depts.	8 (4 men and 4 women)	National
04 March 2005	Vientiane Capital		NTA Office		NTA Staff	14 (8 men and 6 women)	National
14 March 2005	Vientiane Capital		NTA Office		NTA Vice-Chairperson	1 (1 male)	National
18 March 2005	Vientiane Capital		Myrichit Resident		Stakeholders	42 (22 men and 20 women)	National
10 May 2005	Khammouane	Hinboun	Konglo village	North, central and South Konglo villages	Representatives from 3 villages	31 (23 men and 8 women)	Village
11 May 2005	Khammouane	Thakek	PTO Thakek		PTO Director, Heads of Depts. and Support Staff	8 (4 men and 4 women)	Provincial
12 May 2005	Khammouane	Thakek	LWU office		Stakeholders	35 (18 men and 17 women)	Provincial
18 May 2005	Champasak	Pathoump hone	Dondeang village	Sichantho, Sisouk, Vangsai, Poelao, Kiet Ngong, Houadonedang, Simongkhoun, Boungkham	Representatives from 9 villages	25 (14 men and 11 women)	Village
19 May 2005	Champasak	Pakse	PTO Pakse		PTO Director, Heads of Depts. and Support Staff	14 (11 men and 3 women)	Provincial
16 May 2005	Champasak	Pakse	Governor's office Pakse		Stakeholders	30 (22 men and 8 women)	Provincial
19 May 2005	Luang Prabang	Luang Prabang	PTO Luang Prabang		PTO Director, Heads of Depts. and Support Staff	8 (6 men and 2 women)	Provincial
17 May 2005	Luang Prabang	Luang Prabang	Naviengkham hotel		Stakeholders	35 (18 men and 17 women)	Provincial
18 May 2005	Luang Prabang	Ngoi	Ban Muangngoikao village	Muangngoikao village	Representatives from Ban Muangngoikao village	83 (27 men and 56 women)	Village
11 May 2005	Luang Namtha	Luang Namtha	PTO Luang Namtha		PTO Director, Heads of Depts. and Support Staff	13 (6 men and 7 women)	Provincial
12 May 2005	Luang Namtha	Luang Namtha	Governor's office Luang Namtha		Stakeholders	45 (20 men and 25 women)	Provincial
13 May 2005	Luang Namtha	Viengphokha	Ban Thaluang village	Thaluang, Thonglad, Nam Lo, Nam Aeng, Nam O	Representatives from 5 villages	32 (23 men and 9 women)	Village
TOTAL							

Key: Stakeholders include Lao Tourism service providers who are mostly owners of tour companies, hotels, restaurants and guest houses. They also include the Lao National Front for Construction, Lao Women's Union, Lao Revolutionary Youth, Lao Trade Union, and the Police.

ANNEX 2: The Roles and Tasks of LWU and LaoNCAW

LWU	LaoNCAW
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mass organisation that was established in 1955 originally known as the "Lao Patriotic Women Association", which had the tradition of mobilizing women's participation in the struggle for national independence. • Constitutionally mandated and politically endorsed to represent the Lao women of all ethnic groups, to protect their rights and interests • Focuses on socio-economic development at grassroots level to improve the living conditions of women and their families • Monitors the implementation of the Party and Government policies, the Constitution and the laws of the country as they relate to women's development. • Serves as a bridge between the People's Revolutionary Party and the Government and Lao women of different ethnic groups by reaching out to women from the national, provincial, district and village levels; and by implementing the "Three Goods" to be good citizen, to be good in development, and to have good cultural family. • Puts gender issues on the agenda of every government sector development plan • Works in cooperation with Government ministries and international INGOs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A State organisation established in 2002 to take the lead in mainstreaming gender concerns at national, provincial, district and village levels (Prime Minister's Decree Number 37 outlines the functions, roles, rights, important elements and organisational structure of the LaoNCAW). • Main tasks are to assist the Government in formulating national policy guidance and strategic plans of action to promote women's advancement and gender equality in all spheres and at all levels of society. • Functions as the Focal Point and coordinates closely, with local authorities and international organisations for the implementation of the party and Government policy on the promotion of gender equality and elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. • Supports, promotes and protects the benefits and legitimate rights of women of all ethnic groups in political, economic, social, cultural and family life as stated in the Party and Government policy, the Constitution, State Laws and as described in the international Conventions to which Lao PDR is a state-party. • Provides guidance to all Government Ministries to: - establish high-level gender working groups/focal points, collect sex-disaggregated data relevant to poverty reduction goals, develop gender strategies and action plans, identify issues/problems of women's participation and activities to resolve them, gender training and capacity-building, improve the gender and ethnic balance of staff at all levels, screening new policies, programs and projects from a gender perspective, and consult women in the design of new projects and ensure they participate in project activities. • Provides guidance to all Government Ministries to: - establish high-level gender working groups/focal points, collect sex-disaggregated data relevant to poverty reduction goals, develop gender strategies and action plans, identify issues/problems of women's participation and activities to resolve them, gender training and capacity-building, improve the gender and ethnic balance of staff at all levels, screening new policies, programs and projects from a gender perspective, and consult women in the design of new projects and ensure they participate in project activities.

ANNEX 3 Number of staffs at Lao National Tourism Administration and Provincial Tourism Offices in Lao PDR

No.	LNTA and PTO	TOTAL Staff	Staff		Ethnicity	
			Female %	Male %	Female	Male
1	A. Lao National Tourism Administration	70	26%	74%	Lao Tai	khamae
	B. Cultural Ethnic National Park	13	15%	85%	Lao Tai	2 Makong
2	Phongsaly	4	15%	75%	1 Phu Noi	2 khmu
3	Huaphan	6	50%	50%	Lao Tai	
4	Xiengkhuang	7	43%	57%	Lao Tai	1 Hmong
5	Luang Namtha	14	50%	50%	2 Hmong	1 Phu Noi
	Tour Guide ** Provincial and Village level	150	19%	81%	Phu Noi 8 Phunoi, Khmu,Hmong	31 Akha(kaw) Khmu,Hmong
6	Oudomxay	11	36%	64%	Lao Tai	1 Lue
7	Bokeo	7	43%	57%	Lao Tai	Lao Tai
8	Xayabouly	10	40%	60%	1 Khmu	Lao Tai
9	Luang Prabang	13	23%	77%	Lao Tai	3 Khmu,Hmong
	Tour Guide** Provincial and Village	98	26%	74%	Lao Tai	26 Khmu, and Hmong
10	Vientiane Province	10	20%	80%	Lao Tai	Lao Tai
	Tour Guide** Provincial and Village	45	0	100%	Lao Tai	Lao Tai
11	Special Zone Xaysomboun*	3	33%	67%	Lao Tai	Lao Tai
12	Vientiane Capital	17	29%	71%	Lao Tai	1 Taideang
13	Bolikhamxay	9	22%	78%	Lao Tai	Lao Tai
14	Khammuan	16	31%	69%	Lao Tai	Lao Tai
	Tour Guide** Provincial and Village	39	21%	79%	Lao Tai	Lao Tai
15	Savannakhet*	13	46%	54%	Lao Tai	1 Phouthai
	Tour Guide** Provincial and Village	70	26%	74%	11 Phuthai, (Chili) Jri	40 Katang, Phuthai
16	Champassak	15	20%	80%	Lao Tai	1 Alak
	Tour Guide** Provincial and Village	30	20%	80%	Lao Tai	0
17	Saravane	5	60%	40%	Lao Tai	Lao Tai
18	Sekong	5	20%	80%	1 Katu	1 Ngae
19	Attapeu	6	33%	67%	Lao Tai	Lao Tai
	Total	686 per	24%	76%	24 (4%)	111 (16%)

* Female Headed PTO = 11% and Female Deputy Headed PTO = 11%

** The tour guides (villagers.) who belong to PTOs but have the income from tour guiding.

Remarks:

- The majority of the PTO staff have basic knowledge on Pedagogy and Teacher Training. 80% used to be teacher, and the others graduated in Forestry, Trade Law, Political Administration, and English Language.
- The total percentage of women is 24%; and men 76%.
- Women hold positions as technical and support staff, and are generally responsible for running the secretariat, accounting and administrative work.
- The ethnic minority staff (non-Lao, non-Lao Tai) comprise 20% (women 4% and men 16%).
- The highest numbers of ethnic tour guides (men and women) are in Luang Namtha Province and Luang Prabang Province.
- Tour Guides in Vientiane Province are 100% Lao Tai men.

ANNEX 4: Action plan recommended through the village interviews

Activities	Time frame	Responsibility
Reorganize the village tourism committees	2005	- PTO and DTO - Village committee
Establish the male and female handicraft groups for tourism activities	At the end of 2005	The voluntary villagers both men and women
Traditional arts rehabilitation	-2005 towards	- Village committee - All villagers both men and women
Small electricity installation for tourism activity	2006 towards	- Village committee
The village doctor with sufficient medical instruments	2005	- Village committee
Water pumps installation for livelihoods development and tourism service	2006	- Village committee
Training on English and Tour-guiding at village	2006	- Village committee - PTO and DTO
Environment conservation for tourism activity	-2005 towards	- Village committee - All villagers both men and women
Diversity ethnics and customs rehabilitation	From now on	- All men and women from different ethnics
Establish the male and female handicraft groups for tourism activities	2005	Voluntary villagers both men and women
Training on gender and tourism	2005	- Village committee - PTO and DTO
Having group organizing for village development fund or requesting the Khammouane PTO for revolving fund	2006	All villagers both men and women together with DTO, PTO and LNTA
Organize the training course on tour guiding and English for villagers both men and women	2006	Khammouane PTO and LNTA
Requesting for telephone installation for the villages	2006	Khammouane PTO and LNTA
Construct the restaurant for tourists service	2006	Village authority + villagers men & women with PTO/DTO and LNTA
Requesting the district public health office for medicine and doctor to be permanent at health centre of the village	2005	Village authority, DTO and Public Health Office of Hinboun district
Water supply system or water pump construction for villagers	2006	LNTA
Latrine construction	2006	All villagers both men and women together with DTO, PTO&LNTA
More English trainings for villagers	2006	DTO, PTO and LNTA
Construct the road access to village and Konglo tourism site	2006	PTO and LNTA
Provide women more opportunities to participate the training	Jan./2005	Village authority, DTO, PTO and LNTA
Organize the consultative workshop on income management and benefit sharing for home stays committee and members	2005	Village authority, DTO, PTO

Activity	Time frame	Responsibility
Reorganize and innovate the trails in order plan	2005	Village authority and all villagers both men and women
Roads renovation between village to village and other bridge cross Houay Horm stream and Houay Pheung stream	2006-2007	All villagers both men and women together with DTO, PTO and LNTA
Train women on tourist hospitality skill	2006	Champhon DTO, PTO and LNTA
Request the government to install the electricity for villages	12/2005	Related organizations, Champhon DTO, PTO and LNTA
Request the fund from the government for repairing it	2006	Champhon DTO, PTO and LNTA
English teaching for the villagers	2006	PTO and LNTA
Water pumps installation	2006	PTO and LNTA
Mobilize the budget donation together with some fund from villagers	2006	All villagers both men and women together with DTO, PTO and LNTA
Construct the restaurant service for tourists	2006	All villagers both men and women together with DTO, PTO and LNTA
Build the health care center and request the doctor to be permanent	12/2005	DTO, PTO, Public Health Office of Champhon and LNTA
PTO and LNTA should organize more trainings with women access	2005-2006	Village Authority together with DTO, PTO and LNTA
Provide loan to the villagers for small enterprise and agriculture	2006	District Administrative Office of Champhon and Agriculture Promotion Bank