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MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

**Social Impact Assessment of Additional
Financing of SUFORD**

Prepared

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TO BE ADDED

FIRST DRAFT

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Acronyms

(to be updated)

DAFO	District Agriculture and Forestry
DOF	Department of Forestry
EC	Evaluating Committee
FMA	Forest Management Area
FMU	Forest Management Unit
FMP	Forest Management Plan
FOMACOP	Forest Management and Conservation Project
GOL	Government of Laos
GVFO	Group of Village Forestry Organizations
LFNC	Lao Front for National Construction
LWU	Lao Woman Union
NAFES	National Agriculture and Forestry Office
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NPMO	National Project Management Office
NTFP	Non Timber Forest Product
PAME	Participatory Management and Evaluation
PCU	Provincial Coordination Unit
PFA	Production Forest Area
PFO	Provincial Forest Office
PSFM	Participatory Sustainable Forestry Management
SFM	Sustainable Forestry management
SUFORD	Sustainable Forestry and Rural Development Project
TA	Technical Assistance
VA	Village Association
VD	Village Development
VDF	Village Development Fund

VDU	Village Development Unit
VFA	Village Forestry Association
VFC	Village Forestry Committee

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Participation and Training

1. Having surveyed villages from a wide variety of ethnic groups in the prospective new PFA areas, the first conclusion is that current levels of social expertise are not sufficient to undertake the additional multi-ethnic challenges that will confront the second phase of the project. This holds true both for PSFM and for VD components of the project. Even in existing project areas the more remote Katuic villages are not capable of carrying out the necessary tasks. This is true for a variety of reasons, but primary among them is the lack of requisite anthropological understanding that would facilitate all of the project processes at the village level.

The EGDG anticipated these difficulties, and attempted to provide a means to mitigate the problems. The ethnographic studies were carried out and recommendations were made. Several things though, did not occur.

- I. Acquisition of relevant studies on the ethnic groups
- II. The information from such studies and from the project's own study of Katuic groups was not linked to the other project processes such as dissemination, consultation, materials preparation and guidelines, and so on
- III. The LFNC inputs did not have sufficient knowledge and expertise to deal with the complex communication and cultural issues
- IV. Dissemination was not carried out in local languages and the preparation of audio and visual materials in the languages spoken but the ethnic groups was not carried out although these were called for in the EGDG

It is fair to say though, in retrospect, that even had these been carried out or attempted, without the assistance of a full-time professional social scientist the likelihood of success would have been doubtful.

The fact that the VD part of the project has functioned better in villages of Lao-Tai ethnicity and where educational levels are higher supports this conclusion.

2. It was clear from the site visits in existing project villages that even for more savvy villages, the complex constellation of paperwork required for relatively mundane transactions such as buying a cow, not to mention calculating interest on loans, villagers, including those who have received training are baffled. This leads to a situation where only a privileged few have the necessary skills and can begin to dominate the project. Furthermore, other villagers experience this lack of access to funds and as a lack of ownership. In some cases even district level officials lack understanding because there may be changes in personnel responsible for the project at that level. Worst of all, the

displacement of time and energy spent on excessive paperwork detracts from the real purpose of village development.

3. There is an additional problem that in the existing project villages there was no written documentation available to villagers that could be reviewed or studied. Most had forgotten what had been presented orally in disseminations and training. Whether this is due to a lack of available documentation or to villagers' own lack of a system for storage and retrieval, the problem needs to be rectified.

4. At another level, the interaction between PSFM and VD needs to be more complementary. Villagers do not compartmentalize these and for purposes of common understanding in the village they need to be strongly linked.

5. The inland villages which were both ethnically Brou Makong (Eastern Katuic), one in Mahaxay (Khammouane) and one in Phalanexay (Savannakhet) both said they did not really understand the project. Changeover of DAFO personnel was a problem as well leaving the districts with little continuity and project memory. Interestingly, the villagers blame themselves for the lack of understanding and feel that the district personnel were sincere in their attempts to present the project.

6. Likewise, in the district closer to the Mekong, the Phou They appear to have benefitted more than all of the others. The Katang village in Song Khone District estimated that about 50 percent of the people understood and benefitted from the training.

7. The inland Makong villages had little understanding of the training and in the Phalanexay village only the village chief had trained in the district though in principle he should have been accompanied by the village representative of the Lao Front for National Construction and the head of the Village Development Fund. Training was generally considered as insufficient in these villages. And again, whatever was presented has mostly been forgotten.

8. All villages said they liked the methodology of the training, but they would have liked to have received written materials, manuals of textbooks as well so they could consult these when questions arise. They also requested a cabinet to keep documents and materials as well and training in how to manage all of the paper that was being generated.

Participatory Sustainable Forestry Management

9. The villages closest to the Mekong that were visited had both been a part of the previous FOMOCOP project and so their involvement with SUFORD and PSFM has been much greater and more meaningful. In these villages it was said that no logging had taken place under SUFORD because most of the commercially valuable trees had already been cut under the previous project. And both reported that illegal logging had ceased as well. Both regretted that they had not been consulted on tree selection and the subsequent selection of the

logging company and the sawmill. Appropriate payment of 25,000 kip per day had been received for their work in the forest under SUFORD and this is one of the attractive aspects of the project. A lot of the training has been forgotten and this has been most strongly felt where certain technical skills are required such as measurement and calculation of the amount of timber in terms of cubic meters. Written manuals were not provided and so they feel they are at a disadvantage in this respect.

10. Women are generally not involved in forestry-related decisions, but are usually not well represented on the village committees either as this is left to the men. One woman identified as a part of the village committee was not even aware that she was a member.

Village Development Fund

11. Villagers noted that in many cases, especially when the bureaucratic aspects of the paperwork are too arduous, it is DAFO officials that make decisions on activities and that again, for bureaucratic reasons, diverse community needs and selections are simplified to entail only a single project, for example, all cows (Mahaxay and Phalanexay), all goats (Xé Bangfay), or all buffaloes (Song Khone).

12. The poor households with the desire and the labor force were in fact identified well and a real attempt was made to assist this target group. In all cases the money was provided as a loan or as a revolving fund and not as a grant to the households. At least in one village (Song Khone), only a small amount was actually recovered and the village committee members admitted they had little hope that the remaining poor households would ever afford to repay the money.

13. Because of the system requirements, villagers felt generally that the decisions had been made too fast and without ample time to consider the options. There has been no attempt to investigate local traditional decision-making processes and how these might be incorporated into the planning process. There is a definite preference for agricultural and livestock activities as opposed to infrastructure. In Mahaxay villagers expressed the opinion that though roads were good for communication, it was difficult to protect their forest from outside intruders who came by road to exploit NTFPs for commercial purposes.

Village Development and PSFM

14. There was a good understanding of the relationship between PSFM and VD in all but one of the villages visited. The Brou Makong village in Phalanexay understood PSFM as forest protection and VD as poverty alleviation. They did not comprehend the relationship nor how benefits were shared despite having been a part of the FOMOCOP project.

15. Villagers maintain that protection of sacred groves, cemeteries and other places of cultural importance have always been protected by the villages long before SUFORD, but

the prohibitions and interdictions associated with these continues under the project. There were no infringements on traditional rights and usage of the forest reported in the villages visited. Likewise there has been no negative impact on traditional livelihoods by the project.

16. The Katuic villages have the most difficulty with the project concepts and while they deny that language is a problem, it seems evident from the difficulties experienced in understanding that language and communicational problems are an issue. The Brou Makong stated explicitly that they preferred traditional, natural, livelihoods over those that focus mainly on wet rice cultivation

New AF Villages

17. Ethnicity of villages located in the newly created PFAs to be under SUFORD-AF differ substantially from those encountered in Phase 1 of the project. In the south, in Attapeu and Xékong a large portion belong to the Bahnaric branch of Mon-Khmer, while in the north Khmou (Khmuic), Phong (Vietic), Hmong and Lu Mien are included. For the Lao-Tai groups, Moey, Nyo, and a number of others will also be present. This added diversity will present additional challenges to project implementation.

18. Encroachment by outside private sector concession interests on village and PFA lands represents an obstacle to implementation in the PFAs of Attapeu, Xékong and Borikhamxay. Concessions have been granted without consultation of villagers.

19. Due to such disturbances, there is considerable distrust of the government and of ethnic Lao officials. This was found to be true in all villages and during the consultations it was the villagers primary concern that they are thoroughly consulted and participate in all stages and aspects of the project.

20. It was also the case in most villages that they would like to improve their livelihoods and have technical assistance in agricultural areas, crops and livestock to help them.

21. While relocation and village consolidation have been a problem in the past, no new resettlement was found to be taking place in the PFA villages. Livelihood problems resulting from former relocations do exist and these will have to be addressed by the project in the normal course of planning and development.

22. Although not stated explicitly, many villages in Xékong and Attapeu appear to survive mainly by quietly returning to their former homes in the mountains where the cultivate swiddens as before.

23. The level of district capacity and ethnic sensitivity is low and lacking in appreciation for indigenous knowledge.

24. Without exception, all of the villages consulted in the new PFAs have had bad experiences with unscrupulous logging companies. And this is one of the main reasons that they are interested in the SUFORD project where they anticipate they will be fairly treated in terms of payment for labor and trees, and at the same time be able to protect their forests.

FIRST DRAFT

Introduction

The SUFORD Project, Additional Financing, and the Social Impact Assessment

The overall goal of the SUFORD project is to institute systematic management of natural production forests nation-wide to alleviate rural poverty, protect biodiversity and enhance the contribution of forestry to the development of national and local economies in a sustainable manner.

The development objectives of the project are to:

- *improve the policy, legal and incentive framework enabling the expansion of sustainable, participatory forest management throughout the country by assisting the Government in its implementation of policy reforms described in its Letter of Forest Management Policy.*
- *bring the country's priority natural production forests under participatory sustainable forest management (PSFM); and*
- *improve villagers' well-being and livelihoods through benefits from sustainable forestry, community development and development of viable livelihood systems.*

These objectives will be attained by:

- *helping the government to develop its forestry institutions, including regulatory framework and organizational arrangements, and enhancing their capacity to provide training, extension, control and monitoring services to support PSFM;*
- *providing support for establishing a National Production Forest Area (NPFA) system that together with the National Biodiversity Conservation Areas (NBCAs), provincial conservation areas, designated watershed areas will form the permanent National Forest Area;*
- *supporting model development, forest management capacity building, piloting and scaling-up of implementation of PSFM systems;*
- *enhancing village development planning and implementation capacity in project villages and financing village development plan implementation to establish and institute viable sustainable livelihood systems and employment opportunities; and*
- *strengthening village organizations, their capabilities, access to assets and decision-making power to enable them to solve their priority problems and make sound decisions regarding the management of the surrounding forest land resources.*

The PSFM and VD components aims to put priority natural production forests under sustainable management and improve village livelihoods in the project area. It provides

support for training, preparation, implementation and monitoring of forest management and annual operation plans. It supports acquisition of satellite imagery, GIS mapping facilities; computers and printers; road upgrading, field and training equipment; vehicles; and incremental field operating costs such as per diems, fuel and vehicle maintenance. The *Village Development Sub-component* will support investments in small scale village infrastructure aimed at supporting villager involvement in forest management and at building local capacity.

The Participatory Sustainable Forest Management sub-component of SUFORD currently supports implementation of sustainable management practices in selected production forest areas of the Central and Southern provinces. With additional financing this will be expanded to five new provinces in the far south, the central region and in the north. SUFORD supports training of the Forest Management Unit (FMU) staff and training of villagers in sustainable forest management planning and implementation covering timber, NTFP and biodiversity resource inventories; forest land-use zoning for production, conservation, protection and other purposes; and preparation, implementation and monitoring of forest management and annual operation plans. Forest operations can be conducted on all types of forest within the context of approved management plans, including assisted natural regeneration, enrichment planting, forest protection, sustainable NTFP utilization and other operations. In principle, monitoring should cover all these aspects including NTFP utilization and wildlife/hunting trends.

The Village Development sub-component supports villagers in the project areas to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate their own development projects financed initially through project support but eventually it envisaged that revenues from sustainable forest utilization will be will take the place of project direct funding. The main project activities are providing guidelines and procedures; training in village organizing and development; creation and strengthening of village forestry committees and associations; village development planning; village development financial management; and village development plans and projects. The sub-component fund investments in village development, budgeted at USD 8,000 per village in two tranches of 3,000 and 5,000, complemented by villagers' in kind inputs such as labor and materials.

Now, the Government of Lao PDR (GOL) has requested the World Bank to continue supporting the forestry sector and proposed an extension of the Sustainable Forestry and Rural Development Project (SUFORD) to support the implementation of Participatory Sustainable Forest Management (PSFM) and Village Development (VD). GOL has proposed an expansion of the project to up to 22 priority Production Forest Areas (PFAs) in five new project provinces, including Xaynaboury, Vientiane, Borikhamxay, Xékong and Attapeu. These PFAs are located in 24 districts and include approximately 500 villages with an estimated population of 150,000. A large proportion of people in the extended project

areas are ethnic minorities, particularly in Xekong, Attapeu and Borikhamxay. (The final site selection is however pending.) The World Bank would provide support under the instrument of Additional Financing.

The main objectives of the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) are to:

1. inform potential stakeholders about proposed project and elicit information from them that may be useful for project design;
2. establish appropriate means for intended beneficiaries to participate in the project throughout the project cycle;
3. identify potential adverse social impacts and suggest appropriate means to avoid or mitigate them;
4. identify and enhance opportunities for equitable distribution of culturally appropriate project benefits;
5. help establish baseline socioeconomic information and indicators essential for effective project monitoring and evaluation.

Specifically the objectives of the SIA for SUFORD - AF are to:

- a. Review the community participation mechanism for PSFM and VD established under SUFORD, and if needed make suggestions for strengthening effectiveness;
- b. Assess and describe baseline socioeconomic conditions in proposed project areas related to land use planning, land allocation and forest resource and indigenous knowledge about sustainable utilization of forest resources;
- c. Conduct free, prior and informed consultation with affected ethnic groups and elicit views from intended project beneficiaries regarding proposed project activities, particularly PSFM and VD, and encourage formation of community preferences regarding local priorities and project design features;
- d. Analyze social, cultural, economic and institutional or other factors that could contribute to inequitable access to potential project benefits.
- e. Ensure that appropriate safeguards instruments and community participation mechanism are in place in order to protect the interests of disadvantaged or vulnerable groups, particularly for ethnic minorities groups affected.

The SIA report is mostly organized in sections according to tasks set forth in the TOR. The only exception is Task 4 which is incorporated in Tasks 1 and 5.

Task 1: Review effectiveness of community participation in SUFORD

Task 2: Carry out a socioeconomic baseline survey

Task 3: Carry out consultation with affected ethnic minority groups

Task 4: Revise (or prepare) community participation guidelines and safeguards instruments as needed (This latter task has been amended to entail preparation of a consultations framework that will be included in the Village Development Operational Manual and will essentially replace the Ethnic Group Development Plan as well as address Gender, and Poverty as cross cutting issues.)

Methodology and Locations of SIA Research

To achieve the goals of the SIA the research was carried out in two broad geographical areas defined in the project as provinces and PFAs that will be added under the Additional Financing of SUFORD, and, forests where the existing project has been operational. In the first area surveys and consultations were carried out in the five new project provinces. Here an impact assessment was conducted to identify and recommend mitigations for potential impacts of the project on local communities. In the second area, existing project villages were studied to assess specifically the effectiveness of the participatory approaches and activities that have been carried out to date.

In the first area, methodologies included semi-structured interviews with key informants in villages and district offices, and focus groups with men and women separately. Socioeconomic baseline information was collected in one village from each of the new provinces. Villages were selected for their ethnic representativeness and diversity as well as locations in the recently selected PFAs. The selection was done in consultation with the PAFO, DAFO officials and the district level Lao Front for National Construction (LFNC).

In the second area an open-ended questionnaire of specific issues was employed together with some additional interviewing to determine the effectiveness of the participatory processes of the project.

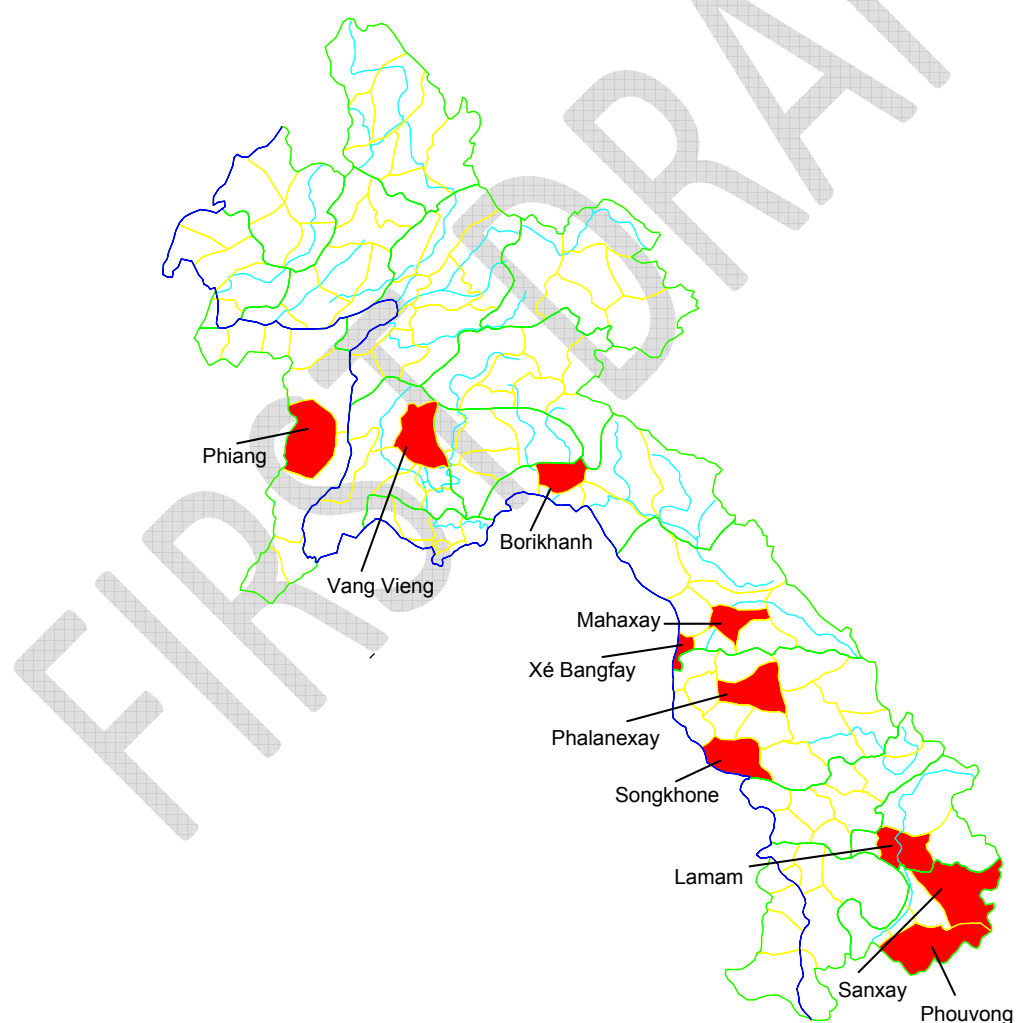
The bulk of the interviewing was carried out in the Lao language, mixed with Brou in Mahaxay District of Khammouane, with Khmou in Vientiane Province and with Hmong in Xaynaboury.

Table 1 indicates the locations of the villages in the assessment of new project areas.

Table 1 – Locations of Villages in New PFAs

Province	PFA	District	Village	Ethnicity
Attapeu	Nam Kong	Phouvong	Viengxay	Brao
			Vongxay	Brao
	Nam Pa-Houay Vi	Sanxay	Dak Hiat	Harak (Alak)
			Mixay	Tariang, Harak
Xékong	Houay Pen	Lamam	Nang Nyong	Harak
			Pak Poun	Ngkriang (Ngè')
Borikhamxay	Phak Beuak	Borikhanh	Pak Heuang	Moey
Vientiane	Nong Pet Na Seng	Vang Vieng	Na Di / Phonxay	Khmou Am, Poua'
Xaygnaboury	Phou Phadam	Phiang	Khoun Phone	Mien, Hmong

Figure 1 – Map of District Locations in the SIA



The second group of villages were selected to capture the differences between ethnic groups in more developed areas compared to more remote and less developed parts of the project forests.

Table 2 – Locations of villages studied in existing project

Province	PFA	District	Village	Ethnicity
Khammouane	Phou Soy	Xé Bangfay	Keng Pè	Phou Thay
		Mahaxay	Kava'	Brou Makong
Savannakhet	Dong Sithouane	Song Khone	Lak 11	Katang
	Dong Kapho'	Phalanexay	Xieng Lè Khok	Brou Makong

[illegible]

Section I – Community Participation in SUFORD: The Project to date

Community Participation Effectiveness

This section outlines what has been learned from the implementation of SUFORD sub-components in Participatory Sustainable Forestry Management and Village Development, especially in the areas of information dissemination, village involvement in PSFM, community capacity building, and local governance. It also examines the impacts of the project on forest sustainability, non-Lao-Tai ethnic groups and their livelihoods, and land acquisition and resettlement.

The SIA team visited the two core provinces of Khammouane and Savannakhet and villages that were located in both the more developed areas closer to the Mekong river, and in the less developed eastern interior portions of the selected production forests.

In addition information is cited from the project's own study of the Katuic ethnic groups completed in March 2006 (Daviau 2006), and other project documents including the *Study on the Potential Impact of Village Development Funds on Sustainable Forest Management* (SPIVDF-SFM) that is dated April 2008.

The most substantial of these is the Daviau report since it took place over a longer period of time and was focused on qualitative ethnographic details that are often overlooked in development work generally. But there is in fact substantial agreement in the findings of all of these exercises and these need to be carefully considered in future analysis and planning.

A table of responses to the SIA questionnaire is included at the end of this section. (Table 1)

Information Dissemination

With respect to the dissemination of information about the project all of the villages visited by the SIA team said that district officials had come to the village to explain the project. However, all of the villages, regardless of whether they felt that they had fully understood at the time, said that they would like to have this repeated because much of what was presented has been forgotten, and no written documents were provided for reference. The villages closer to the Mekong had a better understanding of the project, and of these, one Phou Thay (Lao-Tai) and one Katang (Central Katuic), the Phou Thay had the best. But Katang villagers seemed to have workable understanding of the project though they said they had forgotten much and needed to be continually updated.

Ethnically, the inland villages were both Brou Makong (Eastern Katuic), one in Mahaxay (Khammouane) and one in Phalanexay (Savannakhet). Here both villages said they did not really understand the project. Changeover of DAFO personnel was a problem as well leaving

the districts with little continuity and project memory. Interestingly, the villagers blame themselves for the lack of understanding and feel that the district personnel were sincere in their attempts to present the project.

Daviau notes:

In some district visited, the status of SUFORD is not clearly presented to the targeted communities. During discussions with key informants, we found evidences that the information handled to communities is fragmented and incomplete. Sometimes it almost seems like DAFO staff are trying to sell the Project to villagers, avoiding for instance to mention that SUFORD is supposed to promote participatory sustainable forest management in village areas but only emphasizing forest protection and community development support which of course sounds good to the people.

Training and Capacity Building

Likewise, in the district closer to the Mekong, the Phou They appear to have benefitted more than all of the others. The Katang village in Song Khone District estimated that about 50 percent of the people understood and benefitted from the training.

The inland Makong villages had little understanding of the training and in the Phalanexay village only the village chief had trained in the district though in principle he should have been accompanied by the village representative of the Lao Front for National Construction and the head of the Village Development Fund. Training was generally considered as insufficient in these villages. And again, whatever was presented has mostly been forgotten.

All villages said they liked the methodology of the training, but they would have liked to have received written materials, manuals of textbooks as well so they could consult these when questions arise. They also requested a cabinet to keep documents and materials as well and training in how to manage all of the paper that was being generated.

Daviau reports that:

At village level, there were at no time copies of committee's members, the regulations to set-up committee like VDC or VFC, documents have been lost and all the knowledge gone with it, village profile, LFA map, or even documents related to the SUFORD project. Project representatives get and take information away and people – especially ethnic minorities, are often not well versed in written down meetings and data, so there is no capitalization of exercise done.

The villages closest to the Mekong that were visited had both been a part of the previous FOMOCOP project and so their involvement with SUFORD and PSFM has been much greater and more meaningful. In these villages it was said that no logging had taken place under SUFORD because most of the commercially valuable trees had already been cut under the previous project. And both reported that illegal logging had ceased as well. Both regretted that they had not been consulted on tree selection and the subsequent selection of the logging company and the sawmill. Appropriate payment of 25,000 kip per day had been received for their work in the forest under SUFORD and this is one of the attractive aspects of the project. A lot of the training has been forgotten and this has been most strongly felt where certain technical skills are required such as measurement and calculation of the amount of timber in terms of cubic meters. Written manuals were not provided and so they feel they are at a disadvantage in this respect.

In Mahaxay, villagers generally feel they understand the principles of PSFM, but so far no tree cutting has taken place. They have been involved in trail making, marking trees and forest inventory activities but were not satisfied at being paid only 15,000 kip per day when they could earn 30,000 kip per day hiring out their labor working in neighboring fields.

Villagers in Phalanexay estimate that 50 percent of the Village Committee understands PSFM, but only 20 percent of the village as a whole. Here there was little motivation to become involved in the project, and no one volunteered to serve on the VDC and the village chief had to appoint members involuntarily. Some villagers had been involved under FOMOCOP, but they were not available for interview. Surveying and marking trees has been carried out under SUFORD.

While all villages noted that sacred forests were not being affected, and although it was not mentioned in so many words, there was a decided downplaying of indigenous knowledge and this needs to be addressed.

Daviau found for example that in Katuic villages:

Local Ecological Knowledge is crucial to the management of each of Lao Production Forest Areas (PFAs). There are traditional regulations to preserve fauna and aquatic resources from depletion but customary law and institutions are weakening and the inputs for community resource management become urgent. Forest timber and other resources located within villages boundaries are often taken without any or with low benefits for the communities.

Local Governance and Community Organization

Most of the facilitation appears to have been done by formal administrative committees and processes without consideration of local institutions. The only exception in the involvement of the representative of the LFNC, but again only in an official capacity. This

lends a certain aura of unnaturalness to decision-making. The degree to which government administrative organization is implemented and accepted of course varies, but this variation to a large extent may be attributed to ethnic differences.

Daviau writes:

In rural areas, responsibility and rights is a prerogative of elders and those are the one that we have to focus on working with. If SUFORD want to achieve efficiency in terms of financial expenditures, people need to accept the project and primarily elders need to understand; this is the prerequisite for the project to work since they have the authority and can considerably encourage participation. But as observed during the study, Project stakeholders when implementing SUFORD activities, usually meets with the chief of the village but never call the *chao kok chao lao* [important elders]. Traditional institutions and local holder of power are not respected and honored and their traditional role is often totally ignored. The risk is that if elders do not agree, the whole community will reject the activity or refuse participating; in our case if the elders do not conduct the ritual in the sacred forest because they are not involved and their role not respected, logging on the community forest or within the village boundaries will not be an option.

He also note that in some Kauic villages are reluctant to reveal valuable timber and NTFP resources to district officials for fear they will return on their own, not as part of the project, and exploit these resources without sharing the benefits. There is, he feels, an inherent conflict of interest because de facto DAFO personnel are involved in identifying commercial trees to loggers even under the project.

Women are generally not involved in forestry-related decisions, but are usually not well represented on the village committees which are left to the men. One woman identified as a part of the village committee was not even aware that she was a member.

Community Development Fund

Villagers noted that in many cases, especially when the bureaucratic aspects of the paperwork are too arduous, it is DAFO officials that make decisions on activities and that again, for bureaucratic reasons, diverse community needs and selections are simplified to entail only a single project, for example, all cows (Mahaxay and Phalanexay), all goats (Xé Bangfay), or all buffaloes (Song Khone). The poor households with the desire and the labor force were in fact identified well and a real attempt was made to assist this target group. In all cases the money was provided as a loan or as a revolving fund and not as a grant to the households. At least in one village (Song Khone), only a small amount was actually recovered and the village committee members admitted they had little hope that the remaining poor households would ever afford to repay the money.

Because of the system requirements, villagers felt generally that the decisions had been made too fast and without ample time to consider the options. There has been no attempt

to investigate local traditional decision-making processes and how these might be incorporated into the planning process. There is a definite preference for agricultural and livestock activities as opposed to infrastructure. In Mahaxay villagers expressed the opinion that though roads were good for communication, it was difficult to protect their forest from outside intruders who came by road to exploit NTFPs for commercial purposes.

There was a good understanding of the relationship between PSFM and VD in all but one of the villages visited. The Brou Makong village in Phalanexay understood PSFM as forest protection and VD as poverty alleviation. They did not comprehend the relationship nor how benefits were shared despite having been a part of the FOMOCOP project.

Impacts on the sustainability of forests

In PFAs and SFAs closest to the Mekong, most of the valuable trees have already been harvested under FOMOCOP, and no cutting has taken place under SUFORD. Illegal logging as mostly ceased as well. Depletion of NTFPs such as dammar resin, *yang bong*, rattan, sticklac, and *nyaan* was noted in Song Khone in the Dong Sithouan PFA, though villagers would like to preserve these resources for future generations. The extent to which this is attributable to logging of big trees from which saps and resins devive, to the villagers' over harvesting versus outside exploitation is unknown. Only in Phalanexay has some PFA land has been converted to rice paddies and gardens. In some cases, production land of the villages lies outside the PFA while the boundaries of the village include PFA land. For the inland villages, NTFP collection was reported to be continuing as always was little of no impacts from the project.

Impacts on Ethnic Groups and Livelihoods

Villagers maintain that protection of sacred groves, cemeteries and other places of cultural importance have always been protected by the villages long before SUFORD, but the prohibitions and interdictions associated with these continues under the project. There were no infringements on traditional rights and usage of the forest reported in the villages visited. Likewise there has been no negative impact on traditional livelihoods by the project. The Katuic villages have the most difficulty with the project concepts and while they deny that language is a problem, it seems evident from the difficulties experienced in understanding that language and communicational problems are an issue. The Brou Makong stated explicitly that they preferred traditional, natural, livelihoods over those that focus mainly on wet rice cultivation.

Land Acquisition and Resettlement

Resettlement was not found to be an issue in the project villages that were visited, though in a number of villages in the new AF provincial PFAs villages had already been resettled and

village land had been appropriated by illegal concessions. (This will be discussed later in the SIA report.)

Conclusions

The SUFORD project operates in a social and psychological space that is at the center of villager existence and culture, namely social organization, forests and territory. Furthermore, as the SPIVDF-SFM points out, the level of education and literacy in the project villages, is very low especially for the non-Lao-Tai groups and within these for women and the elderly in particular. The same source concludes that the welfare of project households has not improved when measured in terms of food security, de facto the welfare of the poor, as the result of VDFs. This indicates that a considerable communications gap exists and that there is a poor appreciation and understanding of the implications of ethnic diversity on the part of the DAFOs and PAFOs. The exemplary fieldwork on the ethnographic baseline carried out under the project and other anthropological literature that is available has not been sufficiently incorporated into the project manuals and guidelines or into implementation strategy of the project generally.

On the basis of the villages visited it is concluded that the degree of complexity in the procurement and financial reporting requirements are beyond the capacity of most villagers to readily understand. This furthermore leads villagers to feel they do not control the access to funds and to a lack of ownership. In several villagers it was suggested that VDF capital remain in the village where it may be readily accessed for development purposes without having to travel to the district seat and access a bank account where the co-signature of the district chief is a requirement. There seems little doubt that excess time spent on excessive paperwork detracts from development matters. To implement a VDF activity can involve thirty separate forms and papers and take up to 4-5 months. This can obviously be a major impediment to motivation and successful implementation.

Based on the SIA review of the project overall, certain aspects of the EDGP that were not implemented successfully, or not implemented at all, need to be reiterated or strengthened.

These include:

- a. The inclusion of an anthropologist consultant and ethnographic information into project planning:
 - i. a detailed ethnic survey and mapping of the project areas;
 - ii. acquisition of relevant studies that have already been carried out for those ethnic minorities in the project areas;
 - iii. short ethnographies on ethnic minorities undertaken by an experienced anthropologist together with Lao counterparts. The ethnographies will identify issues of general cultural, social and economic relevance as well as

particular issues relating to forest practices, such as ethno-forestry and ethno-ecology, that is, local taxonomies and classification systems of forests and the environment. The ethnographies will also identify relative strengths and potentials of the ethnic minorities, especially indigenous knowledge, which will feed into the planning process for both forest management and village development plans.

This was only partially carried out during a brief six month consultancy. The output was a good quality ethnographic overview (Daviau 2006) of selected Katuic villages that comprise the majority of the indigenous peoples in the project. The inputs of the consultant, however were too brief and the findings of the ethnographic report were never incorporated into the implementation of the project.

- b. The recommendations for participatory planning; a training plan for project staff on ethnic group issues; and recommendations on how to ethnic issues in SFM and how to incorporate indigenous knowledge into SFM, were not prepared explicitly and the implicit ones found in the ethnographic report have not yet been acted upon.

Addendum

Study on the Potential Impact of Village Development Funds on Sustainable Forest Management (SPIVDF-SFM)

This report is sometimes frustrating in that ethnicity was not a variable for disaggregation, and there is an underlying biased assumption that all increases in well-being derive from the government or from projects, rather than from people's own ingenuity. Nevertheless, there are many issues and insights that are of interest for estimating the extent of community participation from an economic point of view. Some of these are as follows:

- Wealth has increased in 9% of hhs.
- But the welfare of poor has not increased, and welfare of SUFORD households has increased only in households where income has also increased.
- VDFs in project have not yet had any impact on increased welfare in terms of food security.
- Low levels of education and literacy have had a negative impact on SUFORD implementation. And, the training impact has been weak. This leads to the report's conclusion that SUFORD has not been able to increase the welfare of those with low literacy and education levels, and these are de facto poor and from Mon-Khmer ethnic groups: Makong, Katang, Pacoh, Ta Oy, and Ngouan. In villages of these

ethnicities the majority of hhs are poor. (Souay and Laven [Jru'] were tentatively said to better off).

- Villagers are not satisfied with slow distribution of revenues from timber sales, and furthermore do not understand the benefit sharing system.¹
- Rice yields are far lower than the national average in project villages. This is attributed to the inclusion of upland yields in the figures. (However, the solutions are still to improve paddy cultivation rather than to improve upland agriculture.)
- Dry season rice was discussed in the report as a means to increased production, but without taking into consideration the increased labor demand, cash inputs for fertilizers to offset soil ferrollysis, and pesticides to cope with increased pest problems in this season, not to mention irrigation issues. In addition, other studies in areas adjacent to project villages have noted a diminishing hh labor supply caused by young people going to work in Thailand. (Oxfam 2008)
- No impact on proportion of non-rice crop production was found in project villages.
- VDCs have improved in development planning capacity, but not in financial management.
- The project lacks and adequate monitoring and evaluation system.
- The report cites need for increase of activities related to training and participation, awareness raising and information sharing.

¹ Daviau noted that Furthermore, villagers want more of a share for individuals in the process than for the common village DF and that this seems to be an outcome, albeit non-intended. This may be a danger and create local income gaps as well as village vested interest groups that control revenues from timber.

Table 3 - Community Participation Review

	Khammouane Province			Savannakhet Province		
District	Xé Bangfay District (outer)			Song Khone (outer)		Phalanexay (inland)
Village	Ban Keng Pè			Ban Lak 11		Ban Xieng Lè Khok
PF	Dong Phou Xoy			Dong Sithouane		Dong Kapho'
Background	Ethnic Phou Thay Old mono-ethnic village est in 1801			Ethnic Katang A recent village est in 1982 by villagers from Saravanh.		Ethnic Brou (Makong) Old village est some 3 generations ago
Population	94hh, 477 (251f)			73hh, 510 (260f)		68hh, 429 (209f)
Livelihood	1. wet rice 2. other agr and livestock			1. wet rice 2. other agr and livestock		1. wet rice 2. collection of forest products for own consumption
Well-being (own definition)	medium			poor		poor
Information Dissemination	Dist have provided sufficient information on SFM, and utilitarian forest delimitation. But villagers would like to have the dissemination repeated frequently because they forget details easily.			Villagers say they understand the project from district, province, and central level officials who came to explain the project. Villagers would like to have frequent visits from project personnel to continuously add to and refresh the information. Much of what was originally presented has been forgotten.		DAFO officials came to the village to explain the project. The Village chief went to train at the district. The information presented has mostly been forgotten except where some form of implementation of activities has occurred. Villagers would like to have additional information dissemination.
Training, capacity building	The community here feels the training content and methodology were good, but they would like to receive additional training, especially regarding the VDF as training was held some time ago and they have forgotten a lot. They request that the project make textbooks and other written materials available along with a cabinet to keep them in. Also they would like training in how to store and retrieve documents related to the project. They have forgotten, for example, how to calculate cubic meters.			Villagers feel training is very good but not sufficient. They would like more training as often as possible in order to implement the project. They are very satisfied with the way information is presented to them, but they have forgotten too much. To increase capacity they would like to have specialists come to the village, especially in the areas of agriculture and livestock.		Villagers say they do not know whether the training was useful. They have not used what was taught. Suggested additional training would be useful. Training was good but would rather have actual practice in the real thing often, where all villagers would engage rather than just the committee members. They recommend frequent actual practice doing the real thing rather than abstract training.
Involvement with	Community requests assistance with gear			Because they have already had the		What is most needed is getting the

PSFM	<p>for working in forest, eg shoes, protective clothing, carrying bag, thermos, hat, tape measure, compass, marking paint. All of the villagers understand the procedures and principles. The most important facilitation mechanism in the village committee which works well and equitably. All decisions have consensus of all committee members. The compensation for working on the SFM at 25,000 kip per day has been paid according to the plan and this is one of the attractive aspects of the project to the villagers. In 2003-4 villagers participated in the FOMOCOP project and were involved in all aspects of the logging, but there was no villager involvement in the selection of the logging company and the sawmill, nor in the decision as to which trees would be cut.</p>	<p>need further instruction in measurement methods, circumference, length, diameter, to calculate cubic meters, spacing between trees to be cut, etc. They claim, however, that overall, about 80% of the village understands the basic essentials of the project. Again they expressed a need for textbooks or manuals because they forget details. Villagers received only 15,000 kip per day for their work on the PSFM and they are not satisfied with this rate of compensation. (When they hire out their labor for transplanting rice in neighboring fields they receive 30,000 per day. So far in the village there has been no tree cutting under the project so they are not involved in decision making on issues related to such activities. They have been involved in making trails, marking trees and surveying the forest.</p>	<p>FOMOCOP project they are aware of the need for forest protection and have been successful in keeping outsiders from cutting trees in their forest. However they see the need for forestry specialists to visit frequently to deepen their understanding of PSFM. They estimate that only about 50% of the villagers understand the principles of PSFM. No written materials have been provided and information transmitted orally is in Lao. But villagers say the language is not a problem. The true community leader and facilitator is the representative of the Lao Front. He is also the ethnic and leader of the village. They feel the facilitation is sufficient. Appropriate payment was received for work in the forest inventory, marking trees to be cut, After cutting money was received. In addition anti-malarial drugs were provided as well. But in the zoning and marking of boundaries between villages the villagers are not satisfied because other people from other villages have come to cut logs in what they consider their own forest. The first motivation is money, followed by the ability to measure and account for their forest resources, livestock raising, and an understanding of credit. Under FOMOCOP the villagers have been involved in all phases of commercial logging from the cutting to the selling. But villages have no voice in the selection of the logging company and the sawmill because this is done only by the district. The main problem for community participation is that they are not available during certain seasons of the agricultural cycle.</p>	<p>villagers to assemble and listen to the explanations of PSFM. About 50% of the village committee understands PSFM, but only about 20% of the village as a whole. All information has been presented orally and no written materials provided. The language used is Lao which the villager say they understand well. Community facilitation and mobilization is done by DAFO, the village chief, the Lao Front rep and others on the village committee. But this was considered not sufficient. Villagers especially request that project work not take place in the planting season. They are satisfied with what has been done, but this was not much and most planned activities have not materialized, especially those associated with the VDF which they say has no money. There has been no motivation to become involved, for example no one wanted to be on the VDC, the village chief had to appoint. So far there has been no commercial logging under SUFORD, but villagers were involved in logging under FOMOCOP. Here some villagers were involved in marking trees and other aspects, but the main individuals involved were not available for interviews.</p>
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Local governance and community organization	Both VFO and the GVFO have played an effective role in mobilizing villages in the sub-districts (<i>khet</i>) participation in PSFM. The other village organizations have also assisted in carrying out the objectives of the PSFM. The VFC, the VC and the VDO and VDF all coordinate and cooperate in implementing the plans. The VDO and the VDF are responsible for writing the VDP.	Although the VFO, GVFO together with the VC and the VDF play a role in mobilization and implementation, the VDP and the proposal for use of the VDF are prepared by the district.	All of the village level organization work well together and coordinate with each other. The use of the \$3,000 has been an issue because it was provided as a loan to poor households who are mostly unable to pay it back.	The GVFO and the VFO have arranged meetings, but the main people have been the village committee and the Lao Front rep. All of the groups cooperate and consult with each other in making the VDP and submitting it to the village cluster development committee and then the district.
Community DF / grant and benefit sharing	The villagers meet twice each year to discuss the VDP and proposals for the VDF and to look at the progress that has been made in implementation. All 7 villages in the cluster of zone 7 of Dong Phou Xoy participate in the VDF. The decision is done jointly by the VDF, the VC, and the local administration, but all decisions must be approved by the villagers. Of the \$8,000, the first \$3,000 has been used for goat raising. The remaining \$5,000 has not yet been received. (They say the district told them the \$3,000 must be repaid first before the \$5,000 is released.) Families selected to participate were (1) poor, (2) had the desire to raise goats, and (3) had the necessary labor. Each of the selected families received approximately 2 million kip for this purpose. Under FOMOCOP the village received the 25% share of sales of logs, part was used to pay the participants labor costs, and 70 million remained. As a village decision, this was used for building a temple, electrification, digging an irrigation canal, and opening new paddy. There remains 15 million in their account, which has been added to the funds received under NT2. No logging has yet been carried out under SUFORD. Villagers understand well the relationship between development and sustainable forestry as being mutually	All villages in the cluster participate. There are seven villages, but only six are covered by SUFORD. Decision making is done by the VC and the local district officials, but final approval from the villagers is needed. The \$3,000 was used to buy cows for poor villagers on a revolving fund basis. 14 poor households were selected according to the same criteria as in Ban Keng Pè, that is, (1) poor, (2) had the desire to raise goats, and (3) had the necessary labor. Now there are currently 27 cows resulting from the SUFORD project. A veterinary volunteer was trained under the project as well. The villagers appear to understand the underlying principle of the relationship between development and PSFM of the project. Villagers expressed the notion that in some cases, road access to the village has had a negative impact in that outsiders come to exploit NTFPs for commercial purposes and this depletes resources rapidly since villagers usually only harvest NTFPs for their own consumption.	The villages organized themselves well for the VDP and VDF. They already have a plan to use the \$5,000 to build a new irrigation system because the one that was done under FOMOCOP has broken down. The VDF covers all sub FMAs in the cluster of villages within the Dong Sithouan forest. All of the committees and the villagers have a voice in the decision as to how the VDF is used. The first \$3,000 was used to assist the 12 poorest hhs to buy buffaloes for plowing. Each family received 1.8 million kip for this purpose. So far only 5.6 million has been repaid and village committee members are doubtful that the remaining 28 million will be repaid. No trees have been cut under SUFORD and most of the commercially valuable trees have already been cut under FOMOCOP. For that project villagers received \$13/m ³ which was divided 60% to the VDF and 40% to the individuals. Villages have a good understanding of the interdependent relationship between PSFM and VD. Villagers appreciate the benefit sharing system under SUFORD.	The plans and proposals are made at village meetings. The VDF covered only the immediate village. The VC and the VDC consult with each other to make the decisions. The first \$3,000 was used to buy cows for poor hhs, the remainder has not been received. The cow decision was apparently made unilaterally without consulting the poor hhs and without any training. The villagers are not used to raising cows in pens and one of the cows has died from starvation already. The village committee blames the poor household for being lazy. Under FOMOCOP the village accumulated 60 m kip but they do not understand how this was calculated. The money was used for a new school, four artesian wells, and a village office building. Villagers generally do not understand how funds flow or benefits are shared. Essentially villagers associate PSFM with forest protection and VD with poverty alleviation. Villagers do not understand anything about benefit sharing under SUFORD.

	supportive. The villagers are in full agreement with the objectives and benefits of SUFORD. It was suggested that the money should be kept in the village where it can be put to immediate use rather than in the bank where it can only be accessed with the co-signature of the district chief.				
Impacts on sustainability of forests	Use of NTFPs continues as always and the project has not restricted this usage. Illegal logging is almost gone in the SUFORD areas as villagers protect their own forests from outside intrusion. There is no illegal logging carried out by villagers themselves. In the case of Ban Keng Pè the production land lies outside of the production forest, and no new land has been opened up inside that area.	There are no impacts on NTFP use and villagers continue to use as before. No illegal logging was reported and no conversion of forest land for agricultural purposes has been undertaken.	Many NTFPs are almost depleted, such as: dammar resin, <i>yang bong</i> , rattan, sticklac, and <i>myaan</i> . The project is trying to protect these resources for future generations. There has been no illegal logging since SUFORD began.	There has been no change in the utilization of NTFPs. Illegal logging has decreased under SUFORD but some still continues clandestinely at night in the production forest. Production forest land has been converted to paddy and to gardens during the SUFORD period.	
Impacts on ethnic groups and livelihoods	Actually the ethnic groups in this forest were already protected by the govt's own policies prior to SUFORD. Logging in sacred forests, cemeteries, and other culturally important areas is strictly prohibited. For this village, the areas that would be affected by customary land use rights lies outside the boundaries of the production forest. There has been no impact on livelihoods.	There was no observable impact on traditional ethnic rights and practices nor on livelihoods.	There have been no impacts on the rights and traditional practices of the Katang under the project, they are carried out as before. In some cases, there have been self-imposed restrictions of overharvesting forest resources in keeping with the objectives of PSFM.	The IPP requirements have all been followed, including traditional land use and respecting sacred forests. Collection of NTFPs, hunting of small game, and carrying out ceremonies before cutting trees were all practiced. And, villagers feel there been no impact on traditional practices by the project, nor have there been any impacts on livelihoods.	
Impacts on land acquisition and resettlement	None of the project activities under SUFORD have involved involuntary resettlement and traditional ownership of land continues to be respected.	No resettlement has taken place here.	There is no resettlement in the project area.	There has been no involuntary relocation under the project.	

Section II - Socioeconomic Baseline for New Project Areas

The PFAs for the AF project are located in five provinces from Attapeu in the far south to Xaygnaboury in the north. One village in each of the five provinces was selected from the PFAs shown in Table 4 below. The poverty rankings of the villages in these five PFAs gives a good idea of the general condition of the villages.

Table 4 – Overall Poverty Estimates for villages in the PFS surveyed so far by project²

	PFA	District	No of Villages	Good	Medium	Subsist	Poor
Xaygnaboury	-						
	Phou Phadam	Phiang	19	241	610	188	431
		Xaygna	9	180	602		105
		Pak Lai	6	250	421	89	46
	Total		34	671	1633	277	582
Vientiane	Nong Pet	Met					
		Feuang	3	51		135	19
		Vang Vieng	13	50	30	419	216
		Kasy	3	28		120	83
	Total		19	129	30	674	318
Boulikhamxay	-						
	Phak Beuak	Borikhanh				196.0	499
		Pak Kading				220.0	80
		Vieng Thong				21.0	30
	Total					437.0	609.0
Xekong	-						
	Houay Pen	?	?	?	?	?	?
	Total						?
Attapeu	-						
	Nam Kong	Xaysettha				62	435
		Phouvong					1335
	Total						1770

Source: PMU SUFORD

² For a (more) complete list of villages and ethnicities see Appendix 1.

FIRST DRAFT

Table 5 – Land Use and Forest Types in the SEB PFAs

Province/PFA	Land Use and Forest Types														Totals	
	u%ñ@À@_½ìò' (MD) »/a	u%ñ@b@b@ (DE) »/a	u%ñ@j_½ìò' A@Àñ' (MS)	£%À£! (DD)	bamboo	unstocked	shifting cultivation	bushland	rice paddy	barren	grass land	savanna	other agric	urban		swamp
Xaynaboury																
PhouPhadam	46447.76			5,471.86		42,121.99	831.23		341.42		10.02					
Vientiane																
Nong Pet	57,238.50				3,835.70	6,742.50	387.10		491.20	30.20						
Borikhamxay																
Phak Beuak	1,587.00	16,988.00		252.00		21,906.00	1,921.00			101.00					1.00	
Xekong																
Houay Pen	9,877.68	33.17		19,254.93	812.97	32,939.81	1,083.88	190.01	54.15		5,283.64		2.19			
Attapeu																
Nam Kong	3,272.71	6,147.95		1,656.00	2,160.05	44,004.87	223.04		949.17		6,371.63	1,945.19				

Source: SUFORD PMU

Methodology and Villages Surveyed

The information was collected at the village level using semi-structured interview guidelines. Interviews were carried out with village committees and members of the community including women.

Table 6 –Villages surveyed

	Viengxay	Pak Poun	Pak Heuang	Na Di	Khounphone
PFA	Nam Kong	Houay Pen	Phak Beuak	Nong Pet	Phou Phadam
Province	ATTP	XEKG	BKXY	VTEP	XBRY
District	Phouvong	Lamam	Borikhanh	Vang Vieng	Phiang

Locations of Villages

Viengxay (Attapeu)

Figure 3 – Map of Nam Kong PFA

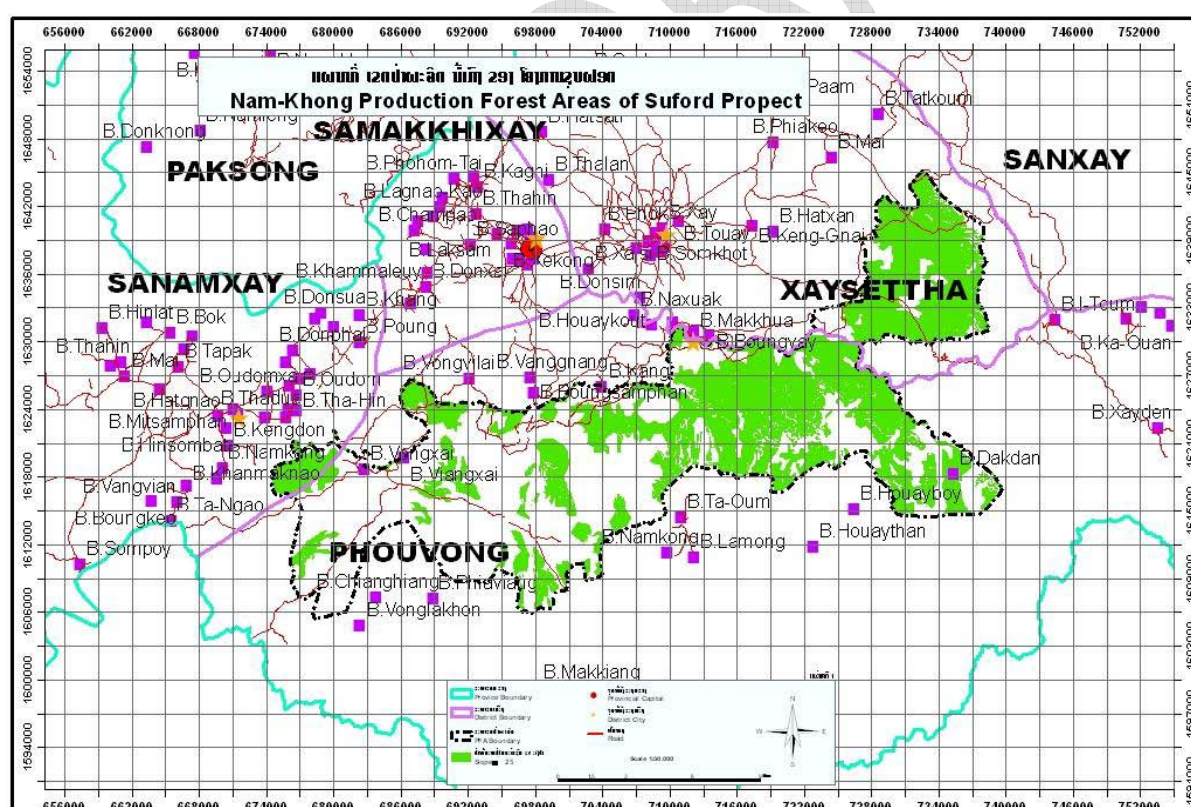


Figure 4 – Map of Houay Pen PFA

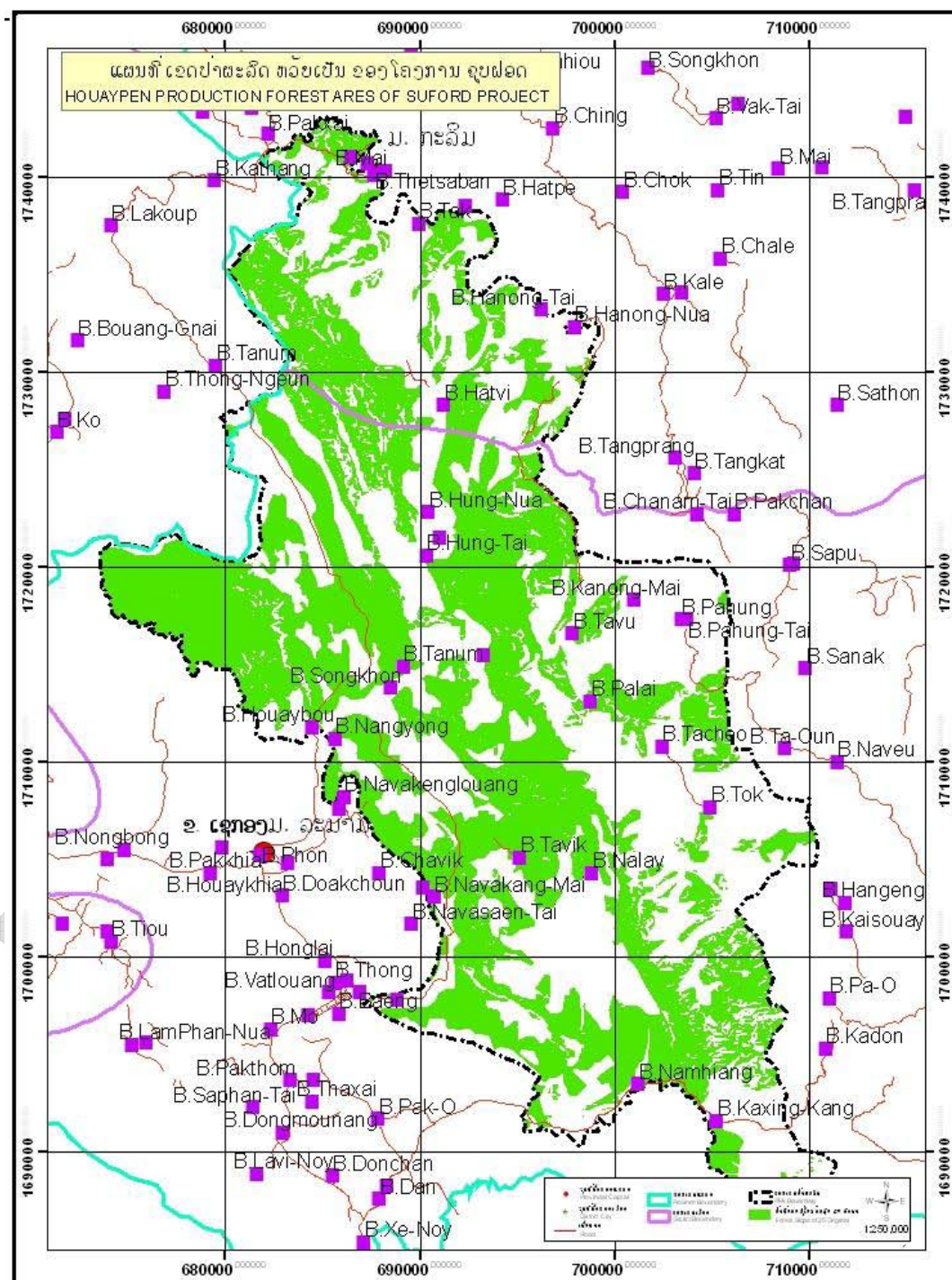


Figure 5 – Map Phak Beuak PFA

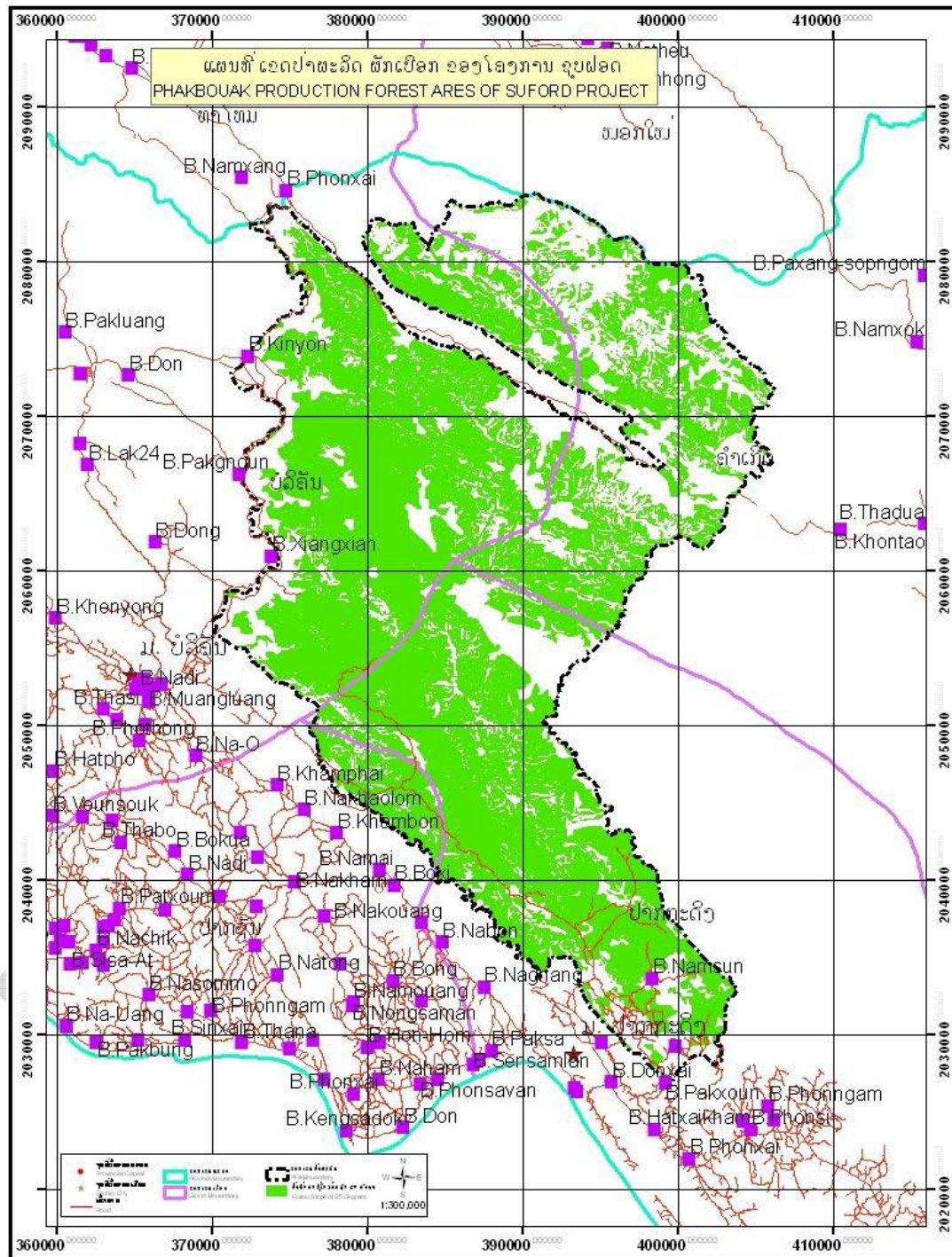


Figure 6 – Map of Nong Pet – Na Xeng PFA

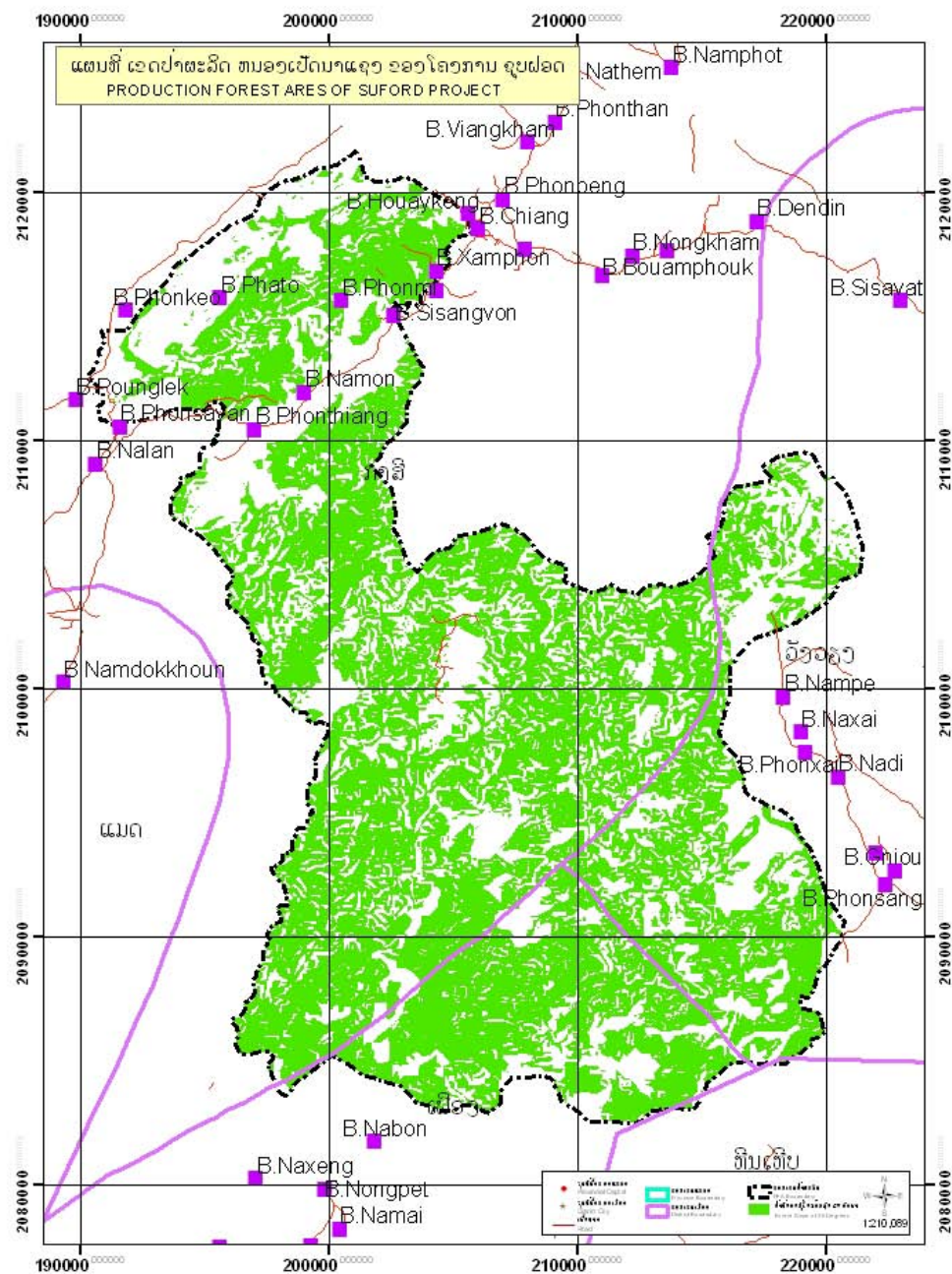
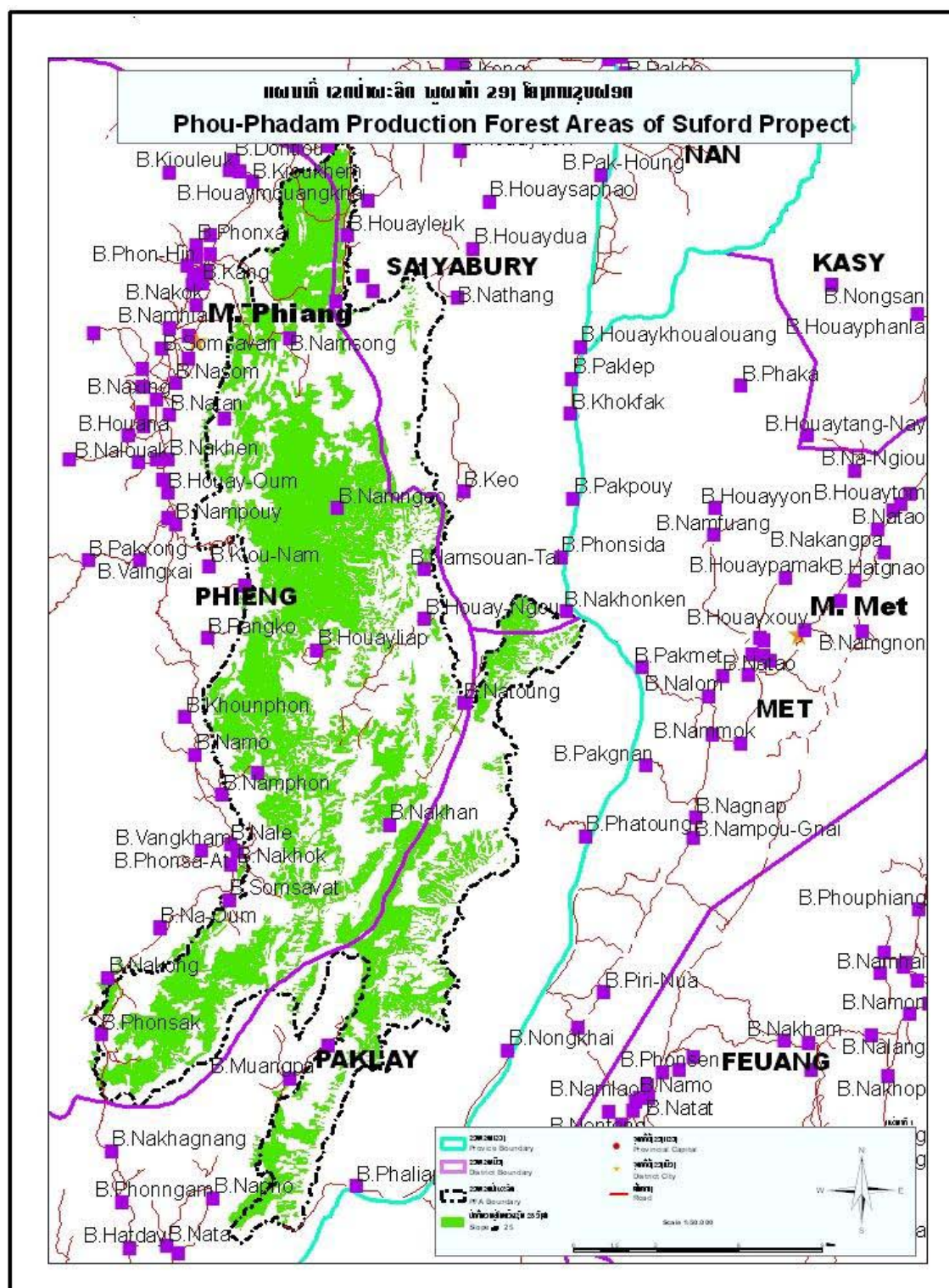


Figure 7 – Map of Phou Phadam PFA



Village Characteristics – Social Indicators

Villages that were included in the baseline survey represent three ethnolinguistic families, Lao-Tai (Moey), Mon-Khmer (Brao, Ngkriang, and Khmou), and Hmong-Mien (Hmong and Mien).

Table 7 – Ethnicity of villages

	Viengxay	Pak Poun	Pak Heuang	Na Di	Khounphone
Brao	x				
Ngkriang (Ngè')		x			
Khmou Am				x	
Tay Moey			x		
Hmong					X (39 hh)
Mien					X (20 hhs)

These ethnic groups have religious systems that are syncretic, mixing three of the world great religions with an underlying and essential animism that of course takes on different forms according to the group.

Table 8 – Religious Diversity

	Buddhism	Animism	Confucianism	Taoism
Brao		x		
Ngkriang (Ngè')		x		
Khmou Am		x		
Tay Moey	x	x		
Hmong		x	x	
Mien		x		x

Villages are mostly small in terms of numbers of households

Table 9 – Village Population

	Viengxay	Pak Poun	Pak Heuang	Na Di	Khounphone
No. HHs	175	30	66	51	60
Families	180	42	70	66	91
Population	776	215	327	280	599
Female	412	115	166	128	281
Deaths					
2006		2	2	2	
2007	1	0	2	2	0
2008		0	0	0	
Births					
2006		4	7	5	
2007	2	5	5	4	3

2008		3	2	2	
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Table 10 - Wealth Ranking of families

	Viengxay	Pak Poun	Pak Heuang	Na Di	Khounphone
Rich	0	0	0	0	20
Middle	10	2	66	44	53
Poor	20	5	4	7	18
Poorest	150	35	0	0	0

The general level of formal education in the Project area is low. Whilst the village populations exceptionally skilled as far as making a living from a difficult environment is concerned, the local skill base in terms of non-agricultural activity is non-existent. Even mastering the transition from swidden to paddy poses problems. Adults now past school age have little opportunity to pursue educational activities. On the other hand some districts have made significant progress in making primary education available to eligible children, but the numbers proceeding to secondary and higher education remain low.

Table 11 – Students enrolled in 2007-2008 School Year

	Viengxay	Pak Poun	Pak Heuang	Na Di	Khounphone
primary	35 / 18f	75 / 35f	78 / 40	120 / 70	40 / 25
Lower secondary	0	0	0	203 / 113	14 / 8
Upper secondary	0	0	0	0	0

Access to health facilities remains a problem for the villages surveyed. Most villages are not within comfortable distance for emergency medical treatment at a government facility. Likewise the government's program to place medical kits in villages has not proved sustainable in the villages visited. On the other hand, the Ministry of Health vaccination teams continue to visit all villages regularly.

Table 12 – Health facilities

	Viengxay	Pak Poun	Pak Heuang	Na Di	Khounphone
Clinic/Hosp	0	0	1	0	0
Medical kit	1	0	1	0	1

Village Characteristics – Economic Indicators

The main occupation of the villages in the survey area is rice production. This is being replaced somewhat by corn in Xaygnaboury, but even here swidden rice cultivation is a necessity because the contract to sell corn to Thailand was only signed this year. Paddy production is problematic in Viengxay as the Brao people were swidden cultivators and do not comprehend the techniques of wet rice production. In that village all the work of clearing and plowing is done by hand because it was said their buffaloes do not know how to plow. And, preparation of a functioning paddy takes about six years. Also in this village, it was implied that villagers were still cultivating swiddens in order to have enough rice for their own consumption though this was not voiced openly. Cash crops were mostly non-existent except in Xaygnaboury. In some areas such as in Xékong, corn had been tried but buyers had reneged on purchase agreements so the villagers stopped growing. Otherwise, non-rice production is limited to garden crops for home consumption.

Table 13 – Rice and Other Agricultural Land Use

	Viengxay	Pak Poun	Pak Heuang	Na Di	Khounphone
Paddy Rice					
hectares	237	6	55	21.5	
Yield/T	1.5	2.5	2.5	3.5	
Dry Rice					
hectares		25	10	15	54.9
Yield/T		0.6	2.0	0.2	0.6
Garden					
hectares	30	5	45	25	
Cash Crops					
corn			some	some	50 ha
pineapple					1.6 ha
sesame					2.6 ha.
Broussenia					0.5

Livestock are symbols of wealth and status for all upland ethnic groups, especially the large bovines, and most villagers reported that they link their economic development directly to the increasing of livestock holdings. This was also the constant preferred activity brought out during consultations and in the development plans of the existing project villages. There is a cultural preference here as well since livestock are traditionally not slaughtered except for ceremonial or ritual purposes, which can be thought of as security in the psychological sense. Some Sale of livestock was reported in most areas, though mostly small animals are

involved. Veterinary services are lacking and death of livestock has been cited throughout the country as one of the major causes of poverty (Chamberlain 2008).

Table 14 – Livestock Holdings

	Viengxay	Pak Poun	Pak Heuang	Na Di	Khounphone
Buffaloes	137	22	10	7	4
Cows	30	2	280	20	266
Pigs	100	60	62	180	198
Goats	0	25	20	0	49
Chickens	500	30	120	200	705
Ducks	30	2	60	200	500
Other	-	-	-	-	5 horses

Collection, consumption and sale of NTFPs is a major contribution to the livelihoods of the villages studied. The varieties of NTFPs is very diverse and the one listed here are only a sampling. The extent and interest of villagers in NTFPs should be taken as an indication of an area where villagers feel competent and where their IK can be put to good use in such activities as agro-forestry, or in related areas such as ecotourism and wildlife conservation. Increased sales of NTFPs are worrisome however and in non-traditional settings can be unsustainable.

It is very clear that the collection of forest products is an integral and very significant part of everyday life for almost everyone in the Project area. All households (usually the women of the households) collect such products on a daily basis. Wild vegetables, bamboo shoots, fruits, spices (cardamom) and banana flowers are all collected, amongst many other foods.

Table 15 – NTFP Collection and Prices

	Viengxay	Pak Poun	Pak Heuang	Na Di	Khounphone
Dammar resin	use/sell	-	-	-	Use/sell
Price/kg	3,000	-	-	-	1,000
Bong bark	use/sell	-	-	-	use
Price/kg	500	-	-	-	-
Mak Chong	use	-	-	-	use
Sticklac	use	-	-	-	-
Bamboo shoots	use	use	Use/sell	Use/sell	use
Price/kg	-	-	1,500	3,000	-
Rattan shoots	use	use	Use/sell	Use/sell	use
Price/kg	-	-	500	500	-
Nyaan	use	-	-	-	-
Meuak bark	-	-	Use/sell	-	-
Price/kg	-	-	10,000	-	-
Broussenetia	-	-	Use/sell	Use/sell	sell
Price/kg	-	-	2,000	2,000	5,000

Broom grass	-	-	-	Use/sell	sell
Price/kg	-	-	-	2,500	3,000
Palm hearts	-	use	Use/sell	Use/sell	use
	-	-	2,500	2,500	-
Rattan wood	-	use	Use/sell	Use/sell	-
Price/kg	-	-	3,000	3,000	-
No boun	-	use	Use/sell	Use/sell	-
Price/kg	-	-	10,000	10,000	-
No thoun	-	use	Use/sell	Use/sell	-
Price/kg	-	-	10,000	10,000	-
No saan	-	-	Use /sell	-	-
Price/kg	-	-	12,000	-	-
Cardamom	-	-	Use/sell	-	-
Price/kg	-	-	2,000	-	-
Fish	-	sell	Use/sell	Use/sell	-
Price/kg	-	18,000	18,000	18,000	-
Frogs	-	-	Use/sell	Use/sell	-
Price/kg	-	-	21,000	21,000	-
Wild pigs	-	sell	Use/sell	Use/sell	-
Price/kg	-	14,000	20,000	20,000	-

It goes without saying that reliance on forest resources for daily consumption is of great importance to livelihoods and to general nutrition. Good nutrition has been found to be directly related to access to forest sources of wild meat, fish and vegetables.

The forest provides things the village and its agriculture and markets cannot supply: 'free' foods, medicines, building and handicraft materials, foods that cannot be grown easily in the village, products that can be sold for cash. Far from being supplementary to village production, forest product collection is an integral part of it.

The following table is indicative of the balances that exist in various areas.

Table 16 - Wild versus Domestic Food Percentages

	Viengxay	Pak Poun	Pak Heuang	Na Di	Khounphone
Meat					
wild	30	90	30	50	10
domestic	70	10	70	50	90
Fish					
wild	100	100	100	70	100
domestic	0	0	0	30	0
Vegetables					
wild	90	80	85	70	90
domestic	10	20	15	30	10

While the subsistence wealth of a village household may be measured by its rice supply , its cash income success may be indicated by material possessions. These are often in the form productive investments such as trucks, bicycles or hand tractors. Possession of assets might be regarded as a more reliable indicator of wealth/income than reported income.

Table 17 – Numbers of Selected Household Assets

	Viengxay	Pak Poun	Pak Heuang	Na Di	Khounphone
Bicycle	30	4	20	30	40
Push cart	0	2	5	2	0
Motorbike	20	6	35	7	45
Hand tractor	0	0	25	7	2
Truck/car	0	0	1	0	1

Villagers were able to make estimates of the contribution of various livelihood components to overall cash income. It is interesting how in most villages, NTFP collection is higher than agriculture, but that livestock ranks highest overall.

Table 18 - Sources of Cash Income - percentages

	Viengxay	Pak Poun	Pak Heuang	Na Di	Khounphone
NTFPs	15	25	30	25	0.6
Agriculture	0	5	5	5	96
Livestock	30	40	40	50	0
Handicraft / small business	0		5	0.5	1.0
Wage labor	50	15	20	19.5	0
Other	5	10	0	0	2.4

Conclusions

Section III – Consultations with New Project Villages

The ethnic Groups

A variety of ethnic groups were found in the villages surveys ...

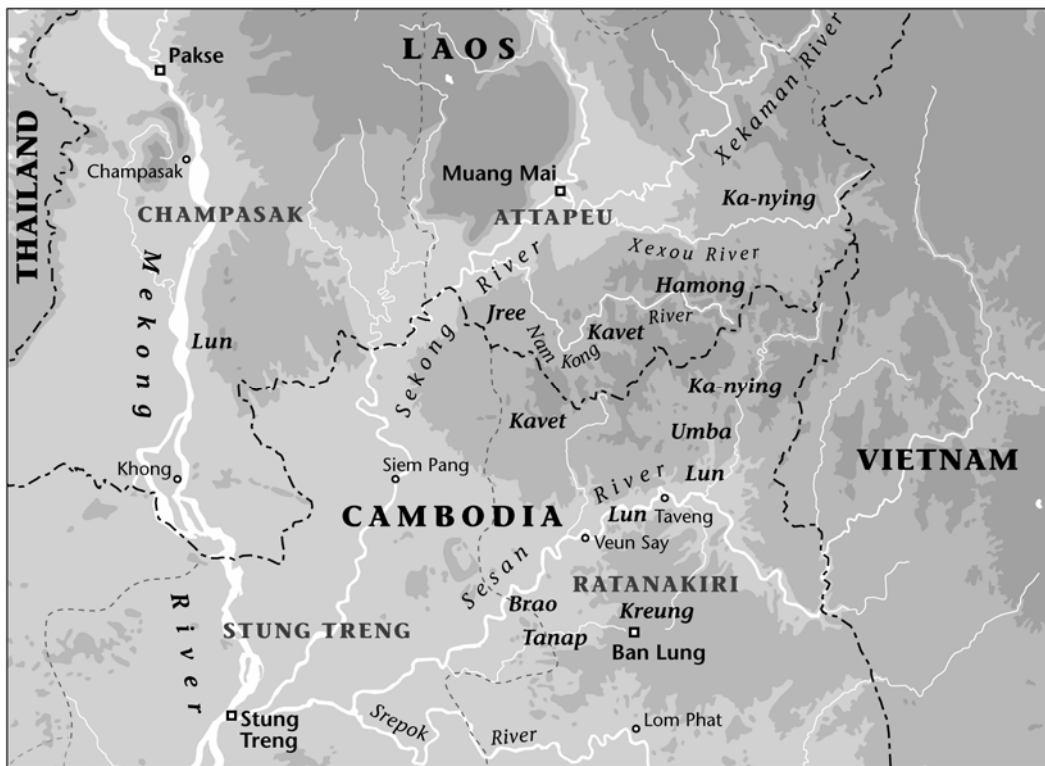
Brao (Viengxay, Vongxay)

The Brao are found on both sides of the border in Attapeu Province in Laos and in Rattanakiri Province in Cambodia. Many of the villages have in fact moved back and forth across the border at various times in their history. The term used by outsiders to refer to the Brao in Laos is Lavè. The majority of Brao resent being called Brao with the exception of the Jrii subgroup who prefer the term Lavè (Baird 2008). This was the subgroup who live in the two villages in the present study.

Brao subgroups include : Jrii, Kveet, Tngor, Tanap, Trngaw, Lun, Kanying, Mba (Umba), Pah, Hamong and Ntrak. Kreung is also included as well by some.

The Jrii who reside in the study villages were historically found in the southwestern-most part of Brao lands, in the lower and middle Nam Kong River basin, presently in Phou Vong district, Attapeu province, southern Laos. They are the people who had the most contact with the ethnic Lao during the pre-French period, and they are the ones who have internalized the idea that they are 'Lavè', not 'Brao'. The Jree are approximately adjacent to the Kavet, and historically lived to the southwest of them. Apparently some of the Jrii once lived south of the present-day border with Cambodia, but that Jarai slave raiders drove them northwest in the 19th century. Here, the Hagoo people are also included within the Jree sub-group. There are presently four Jrii-dominated villages in Phouvong district, another four in Sanamxay district, and one in Pathoumphone district. (Baird 2008)

Figure 8 – Map of Brao Subgroups (Baird (2008))



Kinship is bilateral, but one peculiarity for the Brao is a bilocality in residence pattern after marriage. That is, for the Jree, the couple resides with the bride's parents for seven to nine years and then moves to the groom's house for a similar amount of time. After this they are free to live where they please. (Baird 2008)

The Brao historically were socially organized in relatively egalitarian ways, with little if any structural hierarchy existing within village communities, and apparently with very little beyond the village level. The kinship and residence patterns of the Brao described in the previous section indicate the Brao's generally egalitarian philosophy, in which efforts are made to avoid hierarchy. In residence patterns, women have an equal opportunity to reside with their parents as men, and in many other aspects of Brao society equality is emphasized. For example, there are no people in society who are considered to structurally have any sort of inherent advantage over others. The Brao also lack clearly defined leaders, instead preferring to delegate authority and power amongst groups of elders, with different ones looking after varying matters. This lack of social hierarchy can also be seen in relation to overall governance structures, in which both women and men have, at least theoretically, equal rights. The penalty for a man committing adultery against his wife is equal to the penalty for a woman being adulterous against her husband. While men more frequently act as adjudicators under the traditional system, women also do this, and there is nothing structurally preventing them from having the same positions as men, provided that they are seen to have the skills required to do a good job. In fact, there do not appear to be any

aspects of Brao customary justice and conflict resolution that structurally discriminates between men and women, although in reality some men sometimes do try to use their power to decrease the relative status of women. (Baird 2008)

By egalitarian is meant the Brao are structurally organized in non-hierarchical ways. It does not mean that some individuals are not more powerful than others, or that certain individuals have gained a reputation throughout history for being strong leaders. However, this power often came as a result of the respect that leaders received for not organizing in hierarchical way. (Baird 2008)

There would appear to be the case with the Ta' Koong rank among the Jrii who was said to be the most influential person in the village.

Tarieng (Mixay, Dak Hiat))

Talieng like to live in groups of relatives called *chong*, and there are many specific groups of relatives such as: Hiang, Prao, Tangorl, Palong, Klig, Yea, Churuum, etc. Each *chong* is named after the name of elder person who administrate the traditional practice of community. The elder of *chong* has the role to keep and guard the community's gongs which were bought from the community sharing fund. Presently the gongs are shared within the community and neighboring communities when the gongs are needed for ritual ceremonies which buffalo or cow is killed. (Mann 2008)

When make agreement on marriage, the bride price is considered a strict obligation for the groom side. The groom's family has to give bride price to the bride's parents, in addition to the cost of arranging the wedding ceremony. The bride price is increased relatively to the larger number of streams which people cross from the bride to the groom's location. One stream is equal to one buffalo. If the man can not afford to pay the bride price and for the wedding, he is in debt, some men are in debt for 10-20 years. If the husband or his parents die before the marriage debt is not paid off then the relatives (children or grand children) have to take responsibility for paying off the debt. However if the husband's family is really poor, the debt can be cancelled based on the agreement made between the 2 families, but it is a rare practice. (Mann 2008)

The agreement on divorce obligation is made on the marriage day. The one who initiates the divorce should leave everything to the other. Either has to pay compensation of the bride price, plus one buffalo and the cost of all kinds spent on the wedding day (rice, alcohol, cows, pigs, buffaloes, dogs, chicken, etc.,). Everyone keeps his or her own

inheritance, even in the case of divorce. If they have constructed property after marriage, they will calculate the value and divide by two. (Mann 2008)

When dividing parents' heritage, sons get larger part of the inheritance than daughters. All of them will get equal part, but daughters don't receive any land or property as they move to the husband's house. The last son gets the house. The widow women can remarry but the new man has to pay the bride price and cost of wedding to the parents of her former husband. If husband was in marriage debt before he died, his parents will pay the debt to parents of the former daughter-in-law after receiving the bride price plus the wedding price from the new man. (Mann 2008)

Single woman is not allowed to live alone in a separate house. Unmarried daughter gets part of parents' inheritance and has to live with them until their death, after that her brother will let her living with his family. The inherited land of unmarried sister can be shared for use with brother's family but can not transfer ownership to the brother. She should keep land as her own asset to secure her future life. (Mann 2008)

Harak (Nang Yong, Dak Hiat)

Little is recorded about the social organization and culture of the Harak for an anthropological point of view. They seem to share certain things in common with the Brao such as the Ta' Kong Ria leaders although this position was no longer found in the villages visited. They seem to be more interested in commerce than other Bahnaric groups and have even exploited gold sources.

Ngkriang (Ngè') (Ban Pak Poun)

Ngkriang are found mostly in Xékong Province with the majority of villages located in Kaleum District where their language is the lingua franca. Ngkriang women are known for their weaving which is done sitting on the floor with back strap looms.

Ngkriang language belongs to the Eastern Katuic branch of Mon-Khmer together with Katu and Pacoh. Little is known specifically about their culture, though it is included as being similar to other Katu groups described in Daviau (2006).

The feast honoring the ancestors (*tak payoe' viin*) is carried out by households whenever their assets are sufficient, that is, there is no fixed dates or frequency required. In this sense it is the same as the *rapeup* feasts of the Brou which send the souls of the dead to join with the common ancestral spirit of the lineage.

The other major festival is the *Jra'* which takes place after harvesting when the rice is placed in the granaries and requires the sacrifice of a pig. A chicken and at least 30 liters of rice wine.

Khmou (Na Di)

The Khmou belong to the Khmuic branch of Northern Mon-Khmer and are distinct linguistically from either the Bahnaric or the Katuic branches.

Considerable ethnographic work has been done on the Khmou, including the recent work by Olivier Evrard, *Chroniques des Cendres* (2006) which is an ethnography of the Khmou in northern Laos. Other noted authors writing on the Khmou are Lindell, Proschan, Tayanin, Preisig and Souksavath.

Khmou clans (*santa'*) are named for totemic mammals, birds, reptiles, and a few plants (none of which are domestic). Though usually referred to as totems, they are not ancestors from which members of a clan are descended. Rather, the ancestor of each clan had a calamitous experience with each totem that led to his death. And each totem has a story attached to it relating the event. Members of a clan must never touch or eat the totemic plant or animal. To do so would have disastrous results, such as one's teeth falling out. Children are imbued with such fears from an early age. Clans are exogamous and marriage between individuals of the same clan within the same Khmou subgroup *tamoy* are generally forbidden. However the prohibition may not apply to marriages with members of other subgroups, for example between Khmou Nyouan and Khmou Hok, assuming they are from different villages.

Khmou kinship is characteristically a gens triplex system of prescribed marriage with the matrilineal cross cousin, usually a mother's brother's daughter (MBD) which is the common pattern in upland Southeast Asia. There are three *jeua* (lineages) each comprising one or more *santa'* (totemic clans): the quadruped lineage may include the civet, tiger, gaur, monkey, squirrel, and bear clans; the bird lineage may include the forktail, hornbill, mynah, kite, and kingfisher clans; the plant lineage includes the fern clan. Descent is patrilineal in some regions, bilateral in others. Lineage A takes wives from Lineage B and husbands from Lineage C; Lineage B takes wives from Lineage C and husbands from Lineage A; Lineage C takes wives from Lineage A and husbands from Lineage B. Thus a minimum of three clans from distinct categories are necessary for each village to maintain this marriage pattern.

Hmong (Khoun Phone)

Again, much has been written on the Hmong and these materials should be acquired by the project since they are present in Borikhamxay, Vientiane as well as Xaygnaboury PFAs. The main authorities are Lemoine, Tapp, Cooper, Yang Dao, and especially important is the work of Patricia Symonds, the only anthropologist to study Hmong women who pose problems for gender specialists.

The Hmong are divided into exogamous patrilineal clans which are cognate with the clan names of the Chinese and the Mien. They are the most recent arrivals in Laos, reaching Nong Het in Xieng Khoang in the year 1810. There are two main subgroups of Hmong in Laos the White Hmong and the Green Hmong.

Hmong culture is strongly influenced by Confucianism and by extensive and complex geomancy.

Iu Mien (Khoun Phone)

The Mien or Iu Mien are also known as the Yao (Iu = Yao) in much of the literature. The Mien are related linguistically to the Hmong but the relationship is distant and the languages are not mutually intelligible.

Mien men are skilled at silver smithing and the women excel at embroidery.

The Mien are Taoists, their form of Taoism traceable to that practiced along the lower Yangzi river in the 12th century. They have elaborate ceremonies and priestly ranks involving ordination.

Most of the ethnographic work on Mien has been carried out in China and in Thailand. Lemoine has written an excellent volume on Yao ceremonial paintings that were used in religious rituals but have now mostly disappeared having been sold to tourists and collectors.

Vongxay and Viengxay (Brao)

These villages have only been in their present locations since 2004. The people belong to the Jrii subgroup of Brao and lived originally closer to the Cambodian border. There are in fact still Jrii villages found in Rattanakiri (Baird 2008). Formerly this population appears to have lived in a series of smaller settlements given the large number of former village names.³ After the liberation in 1975, the government enforced a program to move upland people to the lowlands. They were moved first to Ban Ou Meuang in Sanamxay District, and then in 1987 to the current villages. But they became very poor here and returned to the mountains in 1989. Then in 2001 they were moved down again, to a location near the Nam Kong River, and in 2004 back to the villages where they live today. Many of the villagers had been soldiers during the war. They refer to themselves as, “the ones who survived.”

The villagers say that their villages have a respected leader called Ta’ Koong who is the person who solves villager problems and is considered the highest authority in the village. In the case of Vongxay he is the assistant village chief, but in fact ranks higher than the village chief. In the case of Viengxay he is the Lao Front representative (Neo Hom). The person of this rank sets a good example for others, is a counselor and advisor, solves problems for villagers, is the keeper of heirlooms, is wealthy, and can have many wives. He is chosen by the villagers and the position is not inherited.

The villages consider themselves to be poor. In Vongxay 18 families are sufficient in rice for four months, and the rest 82 families, have only enough rice for 1-2 months. They have been slowly preparing paddy fields over the past 4 years but say it will take another 2 years before these are fully operational. All work, even plowing, is done by hand.

These villages and two others, Chiang Hiang and Vong Lakhone have been affected by a Vietnamese rubber company that has moved into their land and is clearing all of the trees to plant rubber. The villagers are very upset and have complained officially but with no action taken.

They say that if this continues they will return to their former homes in the mountains.

³ For example: Ya’ Kou, Bray, Bok, Phiou Vieng, Katoun, Chiang Hiane, Den Det, Vong Lakhone, Hatriang, ...

During the consultations the villagers all said they would welcome the project, but are concerned, given past experiences with the government, that they will not be adequately consulted.

They are especially interested in development activities and would like to have persons with technical expertise in various agricultural areas assist them in planning. In addition villages said they would utilize village funds for irrigation, livestock raising, purchase of medicines, and construction of a school and a health clinic.



Figure 9 – Clearing PFA for a Rubber Plantation



Figure 10 – Brao house in Viengxay

Dak Hiat (Harak and Tarieng)

This a mixed Tarieng and Harak village relocated in 2003. Some of the families have remained behind to protect their land and fields and no doubt continue farming there as well. As a supplement to income, they also return frequently to the old home to pan for gold in locations known only to them. The village is quite modern although villages say they still practice their old traditions. They describe their situation as im taa tè bo im thong 'satisfying to the eyes but not to the stomach.'

The Harak and the Tarieng get along well today although this has not always been the case. The relate that they were hereditary enemies and used to war with each other. The Harak seem to be the dominant group and the village chief is of this ethnicity. The Harak are also adept at business and trading.

Formerly, like the Brao, the Harak also here and in Nang Yong had a traditional leader called the Ta' Kong Ria. But currently there is no one to take the position. The last person Ta' Kong Ria died about 30 years ago and his wife and children still survive. When discussing problems villagers still blame them on the lack of a Ta' Kong Ria. No one nowadays had the right qualifications.



Figure 11 – Dak Hiat villager preparing rice wine in Heirloom jar

Mixay (Tariang, Harak)

Ban Mixay was established in 1980 by Harak villagers who moved from Ban Dak Kanyong in Lamam District looking for paddy land. Later they were joined in 1985 by a group of Tarieng from Ban Dak Lone, Sanxay District, also looking for paddy land. The main livelihood activity is paddy rice cultivation. Five families have excess rice each year, 206 families are sufficient, and 17 families have rice only 1-4 months out of the year. The latter are considered poor. As a village they consider themselves to be average.

Land allocation was carried out in 2007 but this has not affected the village because they are mainly paddy cultivators.

When asked about problems, villagers said self-critically they did not cooperate with each other well and that they were not ambitious.

They are interested in the SUFORD project and offered that they would like to be consulted and to participate in all of the project activities in a transparent way. They would welcome technical assistance and are especially interested in livestock.

Figure 12 – Coffin in Mixay which all people must prepare prior to marriage



Nang Yong (Harak)

Nang Yong is an old mono-ethnic Harak village in Lamam District of Xékong Province. They were originally located on the other side of the Xekong River but in 1991 moved to the other side to have easier access to the road and to the hospital.

The village has no paddy land and all the farming is in upland fields. In most respects it is a very traditional village, but rather poor.

The village has had a very bad experience with a logging company that hired villagers to make logging trails and identify valuable trees. After cutting, measuring, and removing more than 700 trees, the DAFO officer told the villagers that there was only 100 cubic meters. A contract that had been made to pay the villagers for their labor and a fee of 40,000 kip per cubic meter was “borrowed” by the district official and never returned. This was over a year ago and no money was ever received.

Thus villagers are wary of projects (the bad experience was also referred to as a ‘project’) and want to be assured that they will have true rights to their own forest lands and that the project is sincere.

Figure 13 – Traditional Harak ceremonial building in the center of the village



FIRST DRAFT

Pak Poun (Ngkriang)

The village is a relatively new village that was established in 1994 by villagers from Kaleum district who were being relocated because of a dam. An elder of the village found the new location after visiting his son who lived near Nang Yong.

The village subsists mainly through swidden agriculture, and a small amount of paddy. Land Allocation has not been carried out, but a boundary was drawn to separate the village from Nang Yong. This has caused problems because Nang Yong villagers continue to cut wood in forest land that lies inside the Pak Poun boundary. Nang Yong believes they have this right because they consider that it used to belong to them. The dispute has never been resolved.

A number of development projects have been carried out in the village. One was a micro finance credit scheme done by GSO [sic]. It failed after the project ended leaving 9 million kip that was never repaid to the village by the project.

A logging project promised the village 14 million in royalties for trees cut in their forest, but only 4 million was received from the company. The village blames the district, but the villagers suspect the village chief and the village committee have not been honest and this has created a condition of distrust.

The village is interested in SUFORD in principle. They would like to be sure that they will be consulted and included in all decision making. They say they would like outside expertise to help technically, and that each household should be able to chose its own activity. The especially want electrification, to improve education in the village and to be able to raise more livestock.

Figure 14 – The village of Pak Poun



Phonxay (Tai Poua) / Na Di (Khmou Am)

The village of Na Di is a Khmou village that was established in 1976 by Khmou from Phou Khoun in Louang Prabang. In 1981 a groups of Tai Poua' originally from Meuang Poua in Houa Phan who had been in the area around Vang Vieng since the 19th century moved next to Na Di and named their village Ban Phonxay. Now the two villages have been consolidated and the village chief is Tai Poua, a fact which angers the Khmou who feel they should have priority as the first settlers.

The village is quite well-off and productive. With only 7 families having a slight rice deficit of 1-3 months. The rest are all sufficient.

Land Forest Allocation took place in 2001 triggering a dispute with Phonxay because the boundaries were drawn in such a way that the Khmou could not drain their paddies except by passing through the sacred forest of the Poua. The dispute was finally resolved by the district.

In 2005 a logging company named Keo Oudom came to take 350 m³ of logs promising to pay the village 5,000 kip per m³ and the villagers who cut wood the same. They also promised to make a track that the Khmou could use to access their gardens 11 kilometers by hand tractor. In the end the road was never made passable and the trees were removed with nothing being paid to the villagers.

They welcome the SUFORD project as it will help them protect the forest and earn income from PSFM. As with all of the villages visited, they would like to be assured that they will be properly consulted and that they will participate at all stages of the project. Their development needs they would hope to get from the project would be an irrigation system and additional livestock.

Khoun Phone (Mien, Hmong)

The Mien village of Houay Oem was relocated to Nam Poun in 1980 and then to the present location three years later. In 2002 and 2003 the government resettled 20 families of Hmong from their former village of Houay Hane into the Mien village. The village is not wealthy and there are 33 opium addicts, 10 of whom are women. A project to detoxify the addicts has not been successful.

There is a big income gap, in the Mien community, as some families have become rich from the sale of corn to Thailand. Corn is the main crop grown and the money for the sales is used to purchase rice. They also also have some swiddens for rice as well.

Between 2004 and 2007 a logging company operated here and the villagers worked for them identifying the valuable trees. The villagers do not know how much wood was extracted but they suspect the former village chief took the 5 % of the profits for the sales for himself as the money was never received. The issue remains unresolved.

This community is very interested in the SUFORD project but say they need to clear the residual problems created by the former village chief before they can begin. They do not clearly understand the benefit sharing aspects of the project as it was presented to them.

They would like to have more detailed information about the project and to have further consultation. It was also suggested that each family should be able to make their own choice of activity as each family thinks differently. They would also welcome any technical advice that the project can offer on livelihoods.

Figure 15 – Corn fields at Ban Khoun Phone



FIRST DRAFT

FIRST DRAFT

Section IV – Consultation Framework for Communities (to be incorporated into the Village Development Operational Manual)

Introduction: Ethnic Groups in the Lao PDR

Before looking specifically at the Consultation Framework, certain information in the EGDG needs to be updated.

To begin with, the ethnic groups of the Lao PDR have become more formally arranged by the Lao Front for National Construction into a list totaling 49 encompassing 160 subgroups or *seng*. It was approved by the Politburo for official use prior to being sent for ratification by the national assembly. It was then used as the basis for the ethnic group section of the 2005 Census. When it was submitted to the National Assembly in 2006 it did not pass because there was too little time allotted for debate. Currently the issue is under debate once again in the National Assembly but has had problems due to the use of the term Makong and Tri but not other groups usually classed together as Brou. Interestingly These are ethnic groups that are included in the SUFORD project. Apparently, two representatives from Savannakhet have objected strenuously and the motion is now stalled.

At any rate, the list of ethnic groups remains unchanged since the EGDG, but has become more formally accepted. The list together with the ethnic breakdown is included in the Appendices along with the list that comes closest to the academically accepted classification of ethnolinguists.

The statistical breakdown from the 2005 census is provided in the table below followed by the map of the distribution of the four ethnolinguistic families prepared by the Swiss Socioeconomic Atlas project.

FIRST DRAFT

Table 19 – Population of Ethnic Groups in the Lao PDR

Population by Ethnicity and by Age 0-16									
Code	Ethnic Group	Number in Total Population				Number in Population Aged 0 - 16			
		Male	Female	Total	%	Male	Female	Total	%
Tai-Kadai / Lao-Tai									
1	Lao	1,528,269	1,538,736	3,067,005	54.6	630,411	612,395	1,242,806	49.8
2	Tai	108,257	106,997	215,254	3.8	49,957	47,958	97,915	3.9
3	Phou Thay	91,634	95,757	187,391	3.3	42,502	41,994	84,496	3.4
4	Lue	61,100	61,954	123,054	2.2	23,096	22,609	45,705	1.8
5	Nyouan	14,493	14,949	29,442	0.5	5,487	5,437	10,924	0.4
6	Nhang	3,101	3,059	6,160	0.1	1,308	1,308	2,616	0.1
7	Sek	1,799	1,934	3,733	0.1	857	900	1,757	0.1
8	Tai Neua	7,382	7,417	14,799	0.3	3,078	2,972	6,050	0.2
	Total	1,816,035	1,830,803	3,646,838	64.9	756,696	735,573	1,492,269	59.8
Austroasiatic / Mon-Khmer									
9	Khmu	306,875	307,018	613,893	10.9	150,813	147,779	298,592	12.0
10	Pray	10,843	11,079	21,922	0.4	5,537	5,422	10,959	0.4
11	Ksing Moun	4,354	4,211	8,565	0.2	2,245	2,023	4,268	0.2
12	Phong	13,171	13,143	26,314	0.5	6,465	6,490	12,955	0.5
13	Thène	248	266	514	0.0	131	115	246	0.0
14	Oe Dou	329	320	649	0.0	180	151	331	0.0
15	Bit	1,014	950	1,964	0.0	492	427	919	0.0
16	Lamet	9,460	10,367	19,827	0.4	4,644	4,815	9,459	0.4
17	Sam Tao	1,761	1,772	3,533	0.1	838	806	1,644	0.1
18	Katang	58,366	59,910	118,276	2.1	30,674	30,200	60,874	2.4
19	Makong	57,823	60,019	117,842	2.1	29,697	29,655	59,352	2.4
20	Tri	13,130	13,550	26,680	0.5	6,344	6,282	12,626	0.5
21	Jrou	23,009	24,166	47,175	0.8	11,904	12,067	23,971	1.0
22	Tariang	14,356	14,778	29,134	0.5	7,250	7,071	14,321	0.6
23	Ta-Oy	16,156	16,021	32,177	0.6	8,132	7,836	15,968	0.6
24	Yè	5,274	5,296	10,570	0.2	2,607	2,571	5,178	0.2
25	Brao	11,134	11,638	22,772	0.4	5,413	5,400	10,813	0.4
26	Katu	11,179	11,580	22,759	0.4	5,720	5,830	11,550	0.5
27	Harak	10,449	10,831	21,280	0.4	5,439	5,222	10,661	0.4
28	Oy	11,083	11,375	22,458	0.4	5,757	5,472	11,229	0.4
29	Ngkriang	6,375	6,504	12,879	0.2	3,198	3,174	6,372	0.3
30	Cheng	3,699	3,860	7,559	0.1	1,872	1,771	3,643	0.1
31	Sadang	467	471	938	0.0	213	212	425	0.0
32	Souay	20,792	22,042	42,834	0.8	10,553	10,563	21,116	0.8
33	Nha Heun	3,430	3,355	6,785	0.1	1,846	1,707	3,553	0.1
34	Lavy	608	585	1,193	0.0	300	264	564	0.0
35	Pacoh	8,242	8,508	16,750	0.3	4,218	4,263	8,481	0.3
36	Khmer	2,882	2,943	5,825	0.1	1,485	1,454	2,939	0.1
37	Toum	2,252	2,206	4,458	0.1	1,158	1,055	2,213	0.1
38	Ngouan	339	383	722	0.0	160	165	325	0.0
39	Moy	277	257	534	0.0	110	115	225	0.0
40	Kri	249	246	495	0.0	136	105	241	0.0
	Total	629,626	639,650	1,269,276	22.6	315,531	310,482	626,013	25.1
Sino-Tibetan / Tibeto-Burman /Lolo-Burnese									
41	Akha	45,563	45,135	90,698	1.6	22,650	21,557	44,207	1.8
42	Phou Noy	18,554	18,893	37,447	0.7	7,973	7,872	15,845	0.6
43	Lahu	7,619	7,619	15,238	0.3	3,674	3,489	7,163	0.3
44	Sila	1,517	1,422	2,939	0.1	789	688	1,477	0.1
45	Hanyi	427	421	848	0.0	204	203	407	0.0
46	Lolo	836	855	1,691	0.0	416	436	852	0.0
47	Ho	5,317	5,120	10,437	0.2	2,466	2,371	4,837	0.2
	Total	79,833	79,465	159,298	2.8	38,172	36,616	74,788	3.0

Population by Ethnicity and by Age 0-16									
Code	Ethnic Group	Number in Total Population				Number in Population Aged 0 - 16			
		Male	Female	Total	%	Male	Female	Total	%
Hmong-Mien									
48	Hmong	227,689	224,257	451,946	8.0	128,449	124,166	252,615	10.1
49	Iu-Mien	13,875	13,574	27,449	0.5	6,839	6,538	13,377	0.5
	Total	241,564	237,831	479,395	8.5	135,288	130,704	265,992	10.7
Other / No answer									
50	Other	6,418	6,114	12,532	0.2	2,843	2,798	5,641	0.2
51	No answer	27,075	27,568	54,643	1.0	16,350	15,705	32,055	1.3
National Total		2,800,551	2,821,431	5,621,982	100.0	1,264,880	1,231,878	2,496,758	100.0

Source: The total population figures are taken from 2005 census, main report, Table 1.6, page 15. Figures for age cohorts 0-16 are tabulations based on the 2005 census data done by Richard Noonan

ພົນລະເມືອງຊົນເຜົ່າ
Ethnicity

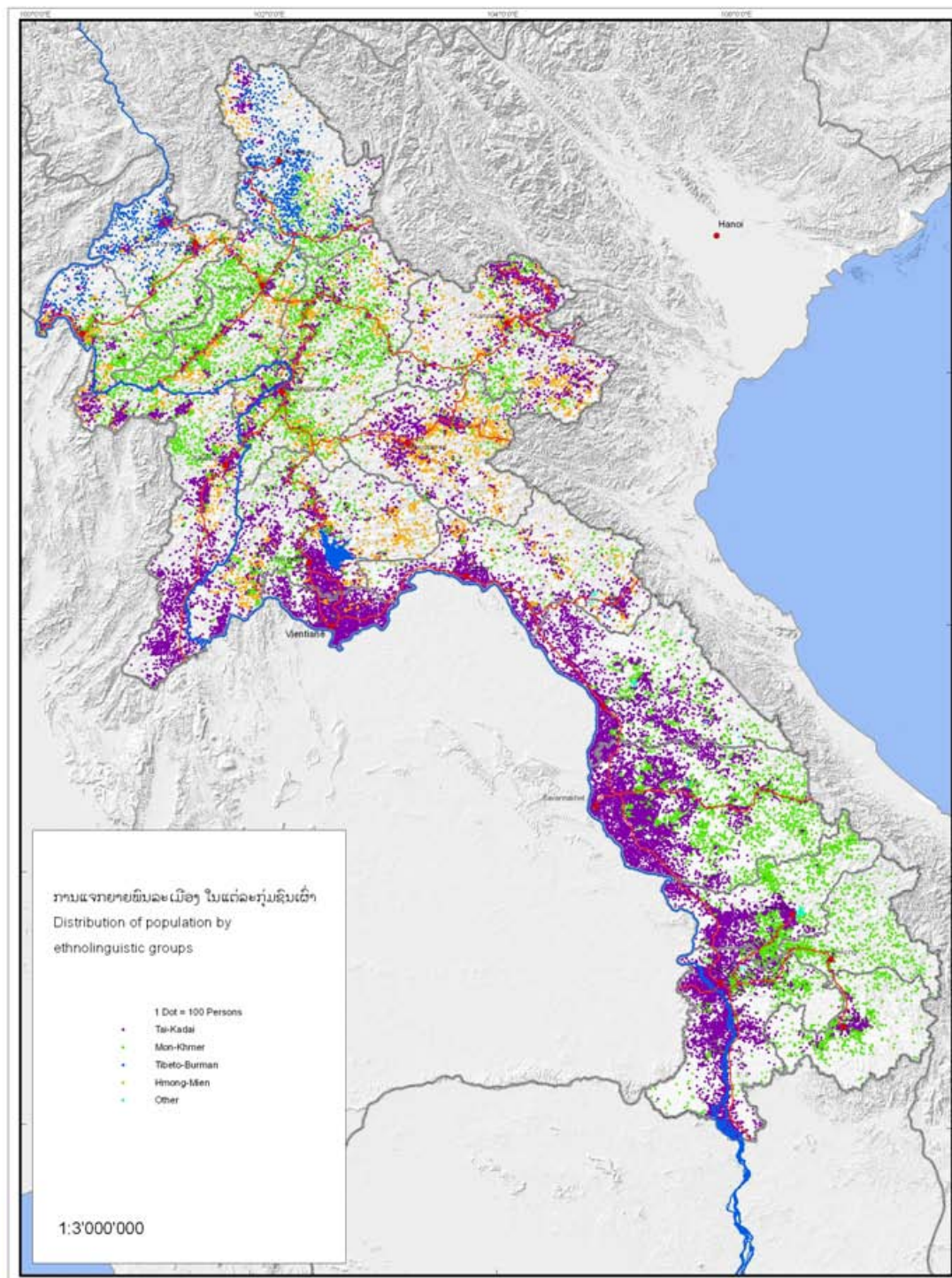


Figure 16 – Map Showing Distribution of the Four Ethnolinguistic Families of the Lao PDR

Consultation Framework

Purpose

Covering a large portion of the country, from the far south to the north, the SUFORD project includes villages from a diverse array of ethnic groups and livelihood styles. Each ethnic group is distinctive in ways that are sometimes readily apparent and at other times not open to direct observation. And one of the most important aspects of that distinctiveness is the way in which each group conceptualizes notions such as territories and forests. Such systems are comprised of sets of presuppositions, assumptions, and associations, or beliefs about the world, resulting in local ecological knowledge that has survival value for the group as a whole.

The viability of the SUFORD project depends upon the ability of the project to comprehend and learn from the people residing in the PFAs as well as the ability to communicate new ideas and concepts to villagers in ways that are meaningful and that will allow them to improve their livelihoods and well-being.

This is not an easy task because the project and the various ethnic groups will have different definitions for concepts like well-being, welfare, quality of life, wealth, poverty, and so on, that is, depending on whether one is measuring from the inside or the outside.

The purpose of the consultation framework is therefore to establish a means by which insiders and outsiders can communicate and learn from each other so that in the end, villagers' lives are improved and forests are sustainably managed in the eyes of both the project and the villager.

The framework includes three main parts:

1. Aspects of the World Bank's Indigenous Peoples Policy (IPP) OD 4.20 that apply specifically to SUFORD project as it now stands
 - a. Definitions
 - b. Implications
2. The meaning of "consultation" in this context
 - a. Free
 - b. Prior
 - c. Informed
3. Guidelines for carrying out consultations under SUFORD
 - a. Language
 - b. Training of DAFO Staff

- c. Prerequisite Research and literature reviews
- d. Methodologies
- e. Record keeping
- f. Cross-cutting issues
 - i. Ethnicity
 - ii. Gender
 - iii. Poverty

1. The World Bank Indigenous Peoples Policy and the Ethnic Group Development Plan

The World Bank's policy on Indigenous Peoples provides policy guidance to ensure that indigenous groups benefit from development projects, and that adverse impacts are either avoided, or if unavoidable, are mitigated. The policy further requires special action in situations where Bank investments affect indigenous peoples, whose social and economic status restrict their capacity to assert their interests and rights in land and other productive resources.

Because of the varied and changing contexts in which indigenous peoples are found, no single definition can capture their diversity. In particular geographical areas, indigenous peoples can be identified by the presence in varying degrees of the following characteristics:

- a close attachment to their ancestral territories and the natural resources in these areas;
- self-identification and identification by others as members of a distinct cultural group;
- an indigenous language, often different from the national language;
- presence of customary social and political institutions; and,
- primarily subsistence-oriented production.

Using these characteristics it was determined in 2002 that the World Bank's policy applies to ethnic groups belonging to the Mon-Khmer and Hmong-Mien ethno-linguistic families present in the project areas, including the Makong (Brou), Pacoh, Katang, Tri, Souay, Ta Oy, and Brao (Lavé). For the new project areas, more ethnic groups will be added including, but not necessarily limited to Harak (Alak), Tarieng, Ngkriang (Ngè'), Khmou, Hmong and Mien. This broadens the scope considerably and will mean that more intensive efforts will have to be made in implementing a culturally and linguistically sensitive consultative participatory process.

The policy was determined by the World Bank at that time not to apply to Lao-Tai ethnic groups.⁴ Traditional practices and customary rights of Lao-Tai ethnic groups (for example Phou Thay and ethnic Lao) have been incorporated into project implementation, although they are not eligible to receive additional support as described in the Ethnic Group Development Plan (EGDP) formulated during the preparation phase of the project in accordance with the policy.

The EGDP is still a viable document in most cases and should not be replaced at this time but rather used as a source book.

With respect to consultation the EGDP reads as follows:

61. A strong information dissemination program will be established for the Project to provide project information as well as to promote transparency in available resources and costs of various project activities. The information will be disseminated first orally in the languages of the villages by ethnic minority staff. The media used will be a combination of modern and traditional sources depending on the access to such sources and the literacy level of the communities. Written extension materials to be developed by the project will be multi-purpose, i.e., to provide materials that cover the technical issues, but can also be used as additional reading material in the functional literacy and numeracy courses. In addition to text and speech, alternative medium such as pictures, visual aids, radio, video and other appropriate methods will be used, such as AV materials in local languages. The efforts will be carried out during a time and space convenient to the villagers.

This is a direct response to the IPP OD 4.20 which states clearly that:

8. The Bank's policy is that the strategy for addressing the issues pertaining to indigenous peoples must be based on the ***informed participation*** of the indigenous people themselves. Thus, identifying local preferences through direct consultation, incorporation of indigenous knowledge into project approaches, and appropriate early use of experienced specialists are core activities for any project that affects indigenous peoples and their rights to natural and economic resources. [author's emphasis]

Finally, the Bank's more recent OP 4.10 on Indigenous Peoples further defines what is meant by consultation:⁵

10. *Consultation and Participation.* Where the project affects Indigenous Peoples, the borrower engages in free, prior, and informed consultation with them. To ensure such consultation, the borrower:

- (a) establishes an appropriate gender and intergenerationally inclusive framework that provides opportunities for consultation at each stage of project preparation and implementation among the borrower, the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities,

⁴ This decision is debatable in that many of the Tai ethnic groups readily qualify following the criteria cited here. The decision appears to have been made on the basis of relative advantages the Lao-Tai groups have in sharing related linguistic traits that make acquisition of the national language easier hence enabling easier access to government services. The term 'ethnic minority' in Bank documents on Laos is frequently used to mean non-Lao-Tai, though from an ethnolinguistic point of view this is misleading.

⁵ When SUFORD was being prepared in 2002, OD 4.20 was in place as the guideline on Indigenous peoples. As of July 1, 2005 this OD was replaced by OP 4.10 and BP 4.10 to be applied jointly.

the Indigenous Peoples Organizations (IPOs) if any, and other local civil society organizations (CSOs) identified by the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities;

(b) uses consultation methods appropriate to the social and cultural values of the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities and their local conditions and, in designing these methods, gives special attention to the concerns of Indigenous women, youth, and children and their access to development opportunities and benefits; and

(c) provides the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities with all relevant information about the project (including an assessment of potential adverse effects of the project on the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities) in a culturally appropriate manner at each stage of project preparation and implementation.

It is noted also that, "... consultation methods (including using indigenous languages, allowing time for consensus building, and selecting appropriate venues) facilitate the articulation by Indigenous Peoples of their views and preferences."

Taken together all of these provisions in the World Bank policies represent a solid starting point for the Consultation Framework.

2. The meaning of "consultation"

The World Bank's BP 4.10 refines the meaning of consultation for Indigenous Peoples as follows:

- (a) "free, prior, and informed consultation" is consultation that occurs freely and voluntarily, without any external manipulation, interference, or coercion, for which the parties consulted have prior access to information on the intent and scope of the proposed project in a culturally appropriate manner, form, and language;
- (b) consultation approaches recognize existing Indigenous Peoples Organizations (IPOs), including councils of elders, headmen, and tribal leaders, and pay special attention to women, youth, and the elderly;
- (c) the consultation process starts early, since decision making among Indigenous Peoples may be an iterative process, and there is a need for adequate lead time to fully understand and incorporate concerns and recommendations of Indigenous Peoples into the project design; and
- (d) a record of the consultation process is maintained as part of the project files.

This is perhaps the most culturally sensitive definition and is the one adopted for use here in the VD Operational Manual.

The term "informed," in order to meet these requirements, means that before non-Lao-Tai ethnic groups can be *informed* about the project and to understand the context of what is being said when recommendations and concerns are expressed by villagers, the onus is on

the project to conduct ethnographic research into each ethnic group. That is, not only must the ethnic groups understand the project, but in order to present the project in a “culturally appropriate manner,” the project must be *informed* about the ethnic group. The groundwork for this approach has been provided in the first phase of the project, but it was not linked to the dissemination process nor to the training of district personnel involved in the project.

At the present time, Laos lacks human resources in anthropology capable of ethnographic analysis so it is necessary that the project continue to employ a full-time anthropologist to carry out analyses and to assist the project in incorporating this information into the participatory processes. This person should work closely with the Lao Front for National Construction and generally assist in capacity building for all project personnel.

Time is likewise an important consideration as noted in (c) above. It is often not enough to simply say various ethnic groups use time differently, but such seemingly esoteric matters as tekonomy, achronicity, the detemporalization of time, cyclicism and ancestor worship intrude on the consultation process as a requisite fabric for understanding. Seasonality, time to consider new ideas and to make plans, imply that consultation is an on-going process and not a onetime exercise. It also implies that time (for example, time spent or time saved) should not be considered the most important aspect of activities. The project needs to budget enough time and resources to be able to interact comfortably with villagers throughout the life of the project. This will enhance the learning process by both project and villager.

The issue of priorness is important here as well, as in point (a), where villagers need to have prior access to project information and time to consider and understand in order to discuss it intelligently with DAFO officials and to ask questions.

Finally, the decision makers in a village are usually not those with official positions, with the single exception of the Neo Hom Ban, the representative of the Lao Front for National Construction who is usually de facto the most important ethnic leader of the village. This person and other important individuals in the village such as clan leaders, shamans, and other religious practitioners need to be represented together with teachers, medical practitioners, members of the village administrative committee, young people, women, and the elderly.

3. Guidelines for carrying out consultations under SUFORD

The framework provides an approach to participation, consultation, dissemination, training and project implementation that is based upon the principles discussed above and that will provide information to the project as well as inform villagers from non-Lao-Tai villages on all

aspects of the project. This includes Village Development as well as Participatory Sustainable Forestry Management.

The Framework assumes that technical anthropological expertise is available and that this expertise will be available throughout the duration of the project. A good beginning has been made with the ethnographic study of Katuic groups (Daviau 2006) which can serve as a source book for those groups. But this form of activity needs to be continued and the results need to be linked directly to implementation especially for dissemination, consultation, and training for both villagers and for local DAFO personnel assigned to the project.

It is crucial that the consultation process be perceived as a continuous on-going interaction that allows project personnel in PSFM and VD to meet and discuss frequently and to jointly participate in all aspects of the project. Villagers do not compartmentalize activities such as forestry, agriculture, religion, or development. Rather these are viewed as integrated wholes. And since this link is already there the project should take advantage of the situation to foster closer working relationships between the two aspects of the project.

Step 1. Prerequisite Research and literature reviews (anthropologist and LFNC personnel)

For each of the ethnic minority groups in the project extant ethnographic information needs to be accessed and internalized by the project, together with original research results, in the form of guidelines, training manuals, and other materials that can be simplified and translated into Lao language. This information will include: (1) social organization; (2) religious beliefs and practices ; (3) Indigenous Knowledge (IK) related to forests, ethnobiology, classification; (4) leadership and decision-making.

Aside from the Katuic groups studied by Daviau, new groups that will need to be addressed include (1) the Bahnaric groups in Attapeu and Xékong, including Brao, Tarieng, and Harak ; (2) the Vietic Phong in Borikahmxay; (3) Khmou in Borikhamxay and Vientiane; (4) Hmong in Borikhamxay, Vientiane and Xaygnaboury; and (5) Lu Mien in Xaygnaboury. This is a much more diverse population than in Phase I of the project and will require full time technical expertise to address.

Step 2. Language (all field staff)

Language issues have not been well addressed in Phase I and need to be emphasized more in Phase 2. This includes the preparation of oral and AV materials in local languages as well as ensuring that all dissemination and training materials for VD and PSFM are available in Lao language. The most efficient way to ensure participation and communication is to train villagers to carry out consultations themselves. In this way, although training of villagers takes place in Lao language, consultations and information dissemination takes place in the

local language. Care needs to be taken to train both male and female villagers and to select individuals that have some innate potential for the task. These persons can be referred to as Village Facilitators (VF).

Step 3. Training of DAFO Staff (anthropologist and LFNC)

Training for DAFO staff will include (1) ethnic sensitivity and awareness (a manual for this has already been prepared but it needs to be upgraded and the Lao translation needs to be checked by an anthropologist); (2) specific simplified ethnographic knowledge of the ethnic groups in the particular district; (3) methods of training Village Facilitators to carry out participatory consultations in the village; (4) reporting and record keeping.

Step 4. Methodologies (DAFO staff and VFs)

- (a) Methodologies used in the consultation process need to be informed by knowledge of village social organization that is acquired in Step 1. In this respect the consultation process might be described as a system for finding a system that is sensitive to the cultural setting.
- (b) Consultation is also a feedback loop. Information that emerges from the process in continually fed back into the process always evolving and adapting to a changing situation as villagers become more competent and confident in their abilities and capacity.
- (c) Culturally important individuals should play an advisory role where possible to assist VFs in carrying out consultations in ways that are culturally appropriate.
- (d) It may be the case that women are more comfortable learning and discussing among themselves rather than with husbands and other men present. This needs to be accommodated through separate processes or in small breakout groups if necessary.
- (e) the size and composition of the groups involved in consultations should be determined by the villagers taking into consideration type of consultation or training that is being carried out.
- (f) likewise, the methods of presentation should be determined by local tradition and in setting where villagers feel comfortable. Construction of meeting halls is desirable, but the

design should be one that villagers prefer. For example an open *sala*-type structure where people sit in a circle might be preferable to a school-type arrangement where people sit in rows with the “teacher” at the front. Discursive methods are often preferable to lecturing.

(g) AV materials need to be used with care and always pilot tested for meaning before being adopted.

Step 5. Record keeping (DAFO staff and VFs)

It is desirable to always keep a record of consultations, especially in terms of recording villager recommendations and preferences and agreements that can be used to improve the project overall. Although this task should fall to DAFO staff who attend as resource persons, if they do not understand the local language then he or she needs to sit with the VF and/or other competent attendees immediately following the meetings to write down the results. These should then be typed up and copies maintained in the local project office (that is, at DAFO and in the village). These records should be available for monitoring and evaluation purposes and if necessary for use in a grievance process.

4. Cross-cutting issues

Gender

Southeast Asia as a cultural area is distinct from neighboring regions of South Asia (India) or East Asia (China) for its relative gender complementarity. Bilateral kin systems prevail among Lao-Tai and Mon-Khmer groups, determined by residence patterns after marriage and inheritance. The forms in which bilateralism is manifested differs from group to group, some being overtly bilateral as with ethnic Lao, and others such as Brou or Phou Thay claiming patrilineal descent but with highly flexible residence and inheritance seen in such institutions as bride service and *khoey sou* where residence is negotiated along with the bride price. Gender roles are likewise flexible, even roles considered as solely female such as fetching water and firewood or pounding rice are being usurped by men in hand tractors who haul water and firewood or take rice for milling. Classical male dancers may be ‘feminine’ while women who run business may appear ‘masculine’ without upsetting the social equilibrium. Much of early Southeast Asia was in fact ruled by queens (Burma, Vietnam) and sultanas (Indonesia).

Such fluidity of boundaries between gender, class, and politics is also present in the essential animism that underlies the many religions of the world that were imported into Southeast Asia, whether Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam or Christianity. Animism is a bilateral, individualistic, and egocentric form of religion. It encourages the democratization of power between the masses and the elite, as well as between men and women, and provides a sense of personal autonomy in daily life.

Gender complementarity, however, may be vulnerable or threatened and even transformed into gender stratification when new meanings of gender are acquired from cities or from outside influences, including development projects. When major upheavals are undergone, such as in cases of relocation of villages, or when access to natural resources is denied, women lose control of agricultural land and may cease to participate in rituals for ancestors, and their power to preserve culture may be lost as a result. This dialectic between bilateralism and ecological change (for whatever reason) leads to gender asymmetry that is detrimental to women.

Traditionally, Mon-Khmer groups studied were rotational swidden cultivators. In such systems the work of the swidden land is carried out essentially by women who thus are the providers of sustenance through their care for the rice, vegetables and wild forest edibles such as various arthropods, amphibians, piths, stalks, shoots, mushrooms, and so on. The provision of food is then a source of women's status and power. Pounding of rice and food preparation is another source. In addition women are the primary suppliers of water and firewood. Metaphorically, water represents rain and fertility, and fire is the hearth, center of warmth and the family. Fire is also the means by which raw food becomes cooked and hence the emblem of civilization. Likewise, the preparation of food for the spirits of the rice, the fields, the water and the forest and the tutelary spirits of the land is done by women regardless of whether or not they actually perform the ceremonial functions (as these roles differ among the various ethnic groups). The swidden is the source of biodiversity (which gives life to the forest) and the heart of the ecosystem, the woman is the heart of the swidden and hence, on one hand she is the progenitor of the ecosystem, and on the other the source of human life (childbearing) and sustenance for the family by virtue of the swidden.

When swidden systems are eliminated or damaged so too these inseparable corporeal and spiritual sources of female power may pass into oblivion together with biodiversity and the ecosystem. In the project areas this has been an on-going process and thus many of the analyses on gender that have been carried out note that women work harder than men. To some extent this is a biased statement since men's work may be characterized as heavy, dangerous, done alone or at night, often requiring short bursts of energy for short amounts of time. Women's work is usually continuous requiring low energy levels over longer periods of time, done during the day and in groups. But this having been said, with the loss of

female roles and power, women still work hard, but without the spiritual rewards that formerly accompanied this labor.

The gender situation with the Hmong-Mien groups is very different. The Hmong are recent arrivals in Laos, coming for the first time in 1810 ultimately from Hunan and Guizhou in China. They are thus one of the most Confucianized groups and marked by a rigid system of patrilineal clans. The power of Hmong women does not come from the fields, and is not ecologically determined as with the Mon-Khmers ethnic groups. Rather women's power derives from her ability to reproduce the male lineage and as such the woman is the means through which spirits of the lineage continue the cycle of life. This power is both valued and feared, and from a gender perspective it is ambiguous. And there is a paradox that although women are considered the complementary opposites of men, males are perceived as smarter and stronger than females. That is, women's roles are both complementary and lesser, but it is a paradox that is not perceived as such by Hmong women.

There is a certain underlying equality, however, in that men and women work equally hard. And in death men's and women's souls are equal. In rebirth males become females and females become males. Women may also become shaman or religious leaders.

Since women work hard already, it is recommended that under the project that the focus be on enhancing or improving activities that women are already doing rather than introducing new activities that will increase their burdens.

Poverty

Poverty is a difficult concept and one that needs to be considered from the inside as well as from the outside.

On the inside, it has been found that languages in Laos do not have words that directly translate into the English word 'poor' with its economic meaning. In Laos terms that translate as 'poor' all mean 'unfortunate', or 'personal suffering', that is, something that happens to individuals such as being widowed or orphaned. It is only recently that villagers have begun applying these terms to villages or households in an economic sense and then mainly in a development context. Thus until recently, people do not generally consider themselves to be endemically poor in the economic sense.

From the outside there is a problem of definition as well. At least eleven different bases for definitions of poverty currently in use: (1) Need; (2) Standard of Living; (3) Limited

Resources; (4) Lack of Basic Security; (5) Lack of entitlement; (6) Multiple deprivation; (7) Exclusion; (8) Inequality; (9) Class; (10) Dependency; or (11) Unacceptable hardship. These are further grouped broadly into Material, Economic, and Social categories. Thus, it is clear that poverty definition still lacks consensus.

Statistical measurement of poverty uses only outside indicators, that is, what someone else considers poverty to be, as opposed to an inside definition of villagers themselves. The government's own approach to measuring poverty has focused on rice consumption, and on social indicators such as access to education and health, and material indicators such as clothing and house type. These have run into cultural problems because definitions of such as 'adequate housing' use lowland houses or dress as the model. Livestock holding are not taken into account, despite the fact that livestock are the main symbols of wealth and status among upland ethnic groups.

For purposes of the project, the internally based system of relative wealth ranking will be the most useful as it avoids all of the pitfalls and complexities of outside measurement, and relies on community standards of determination.

Section V – Conclusions and Recommendations

Participation and Training

1. Having surveyed villages from a wide variety of ethnic groups in the prospective new PFA areas, the first conclusion is that current levels of social expertise are not sufficient to undertake the additional multi-ethnic challenges that will confront the second phase of the project. This holds true both for PSFM and for VD components of the project. Even in existing project areas the more remote Katuic villages are not capable of carrying out the necessary tasks. This is true for a variety of reasons, but primary among them is the lack of requisite anthropological understanding that would facilitate all of the project processes at the village level.

The EGDP anticipated these difficulties, and attempted to provide a means to mitigate the problems. The ethnographic studies were carried out and recommendations were made. Several things though, did not occur.

1. Acquisition of relevant studies on the ethnic groups
2. The information from such studies and from the project's own study of Katuic groups was not linked to the other project processes such as dissemination, consultation, materials preparation and guidelines, and so on
3. The LFNC inputs did not have sufficient knowledge and expertise to deal with the complex communication and cultural issues
4. Dissemination was not carried out in local languages and the preparation of audio and visual materials in the languages spoken but the ethnic groups was not carried out although these were called for in the EGDP

It is fair to say though, in retrospect, that even had these been carried out or attempted, without the assistance of a full-time professional social scientist the likelihood of success would have been doubtful.

The fact that the VD part of the project has functioned better in villages of Lao-Tai ethnicity and where educational levels are higher supports this conclusion.

Recommendation: With the need to upgrade the operations in existing villages as well as incorporate the new villages into the project, the full-time services of an experienced Lao-speaking anthropologist should be procured and this person should work along with, and build capacity of, LFNC staff assigned to the project, and preferably as well a designated member of the project staff from MAF-NAFES. Together they would carry out new ethnographic field research especially in the Bahnaric speaking areas and liaise with the project staff to ensure that relevant information is incorporated into all SUFORD operations and

planning at the village level. The consultation framework in the next section of this report is in fact premised on this recommendation.

Complexity is an Obstacle

2. It was clear from the site visits in existing project villages that even for more savvy villages, the complex constellation of paperwork required for relatively mundane transactions such as buying a cow, not to mention calculating interest on loans, villagers, including those who have received training are baffled. This leads to a situation where only a privileged few have the necessary skills and can begin to dominate the project. Furthermore, other villagers experience this lack of access to funds and as a lack of ownership. In some cases even district level officials lack understanding because there may be changes in personnel responsible for the project at that level. Worst of all, the displacement of time and energy spent on excessive paperwork detracts from the real purpose of village development.

Recommendation: There is only one remedy here and that is simplification. Manuals, guidelines, and other project documents should be simplified, and the steps necessary to access funds and make procurements should be simplified as well.

3. There is an additional problem that in the existing project villages there was no written documentation available to villagers that could be reviewed or studied. Most had forgotten what had been presented orally in disseminations and training. Whether this is due to a lack of available documentation or to villagers' own lack of a system for storage and retrieval, the problem needs to be rectified.

Recommendation: The project needs to ensure that written descriptions of the project and the various issues like financial management or measurement of logs be provided to villagers and that a system of storage and retrieval be established in each village.

4. At another level, the interaction between PSFM and VD needs to be more complementary. Villagers do not compartmentalize these and for purposes of common understanding in the village they need to be strongly linked.

Recommendation: Ideally PSFM and VD should be included in the same operations manual and documentation presented at the village level should reflect this and be available to everyone.

5. Women are generally not involved in forestry-related decisions, but are usually not well represented on the village committees either as this is left to the men. One woman identified as a part of the village committee was not even aware that she was a member.

Recommendation: (See also gender section in Consultation Framework.) Gender should not be treated as separate from ethnicity as an issue. The ethnographic studies should encompass gender as a basic area of inquiry but within the context of each ethnic group. Universalist approaches should be regarded with great caution.

6. The poor households with the desire and the labor force were in fact identified well and a real attempt was made to assist this target group. In all cases the money was provided as a loan or as a revolving fund and not as a grant to the households. At least in one village (Song Khone), only a small amount was actually recovered and the village committee members admitted they had little hope that the remaining poor households would ever afford to repay the money.

Recommendation: Consideration needs to be given to treating the VF more as a grant than a loan or revolving when the poorest segments of the community are involved. However, there is also a chance that this would create a problem for many Mon-Khmer villages where village level egalitarianism between households is the rule. Again, more study is needed on *this issue and the specific social contexts that obtain.*

New AF Villages

17. Ethnicity of villages located in the newly created PFAs to be under SUFORD-AF differ substantially from those encountered in Phase 1 of the project. In the south, in Attapeu and Xékong a large portion belong to the Bahnaric branch of Mon-Khmer, while in the north Khmou (Khmuic), Phong (Vietic), Hmong and Lu Mien are included. For the Lao-Tai groups, Moey, Nyo, and a number of others will also be present. This added diversity will present additional challenges to project implementation.

Recommendation: Enhanced study of the ethnic groups is required and should be incorporated as suggested in the first recommendation and in the Consultation Framework.

18. Encroachment by outside private sector concession interests on village and PFA lands represents an obstacle to implementation in the PFAs of Attapeu, Xékong and Borikhamxay. Concessions have been granted without consultation of villagers. Due to such disturbances, there is considerable distrust of the government and of ethnic Lao officials. This was found to be true in all villages and during the consultations it was the villagers primary concern that they are thoroughly consulted and participate in all stages and aspects of the project.

Without exception, all of the villages consulted in the new PFAs have had bad experiences with unscrupulous logging companies. And this is one of the main reasons that they are

interested in the SUFORD project where they anticipate they will be fairly treated in terms of payment for labor and trees, and at the same time be able to protect their forests.

Recommendation: This needs to be urgently addressed because of the potential impact on project expansion. Empowering villages with official backing will be a necessary factor as will intensifying the political will of the local government agencies to correct the problems.

21. While relocation and village consolidation have been a problem in the past, no new resettlement was found to be taking place in the PFA villages. Livelihood problems resulting from former relocations do exist and these will have to be addressed by the project in the normal course of planning and development.

Recommendation: there is no indication that the Bank's policy on Involuntary Resettlement is triggered. It should be triggered only if involuntary resettlement is carried out in any of the proposed project villages.

22. Although not stated explicitly, many villages in Xékong and Attapeu appear to survive mainly by quietly returning to their former homes in the mountains where the cultivate swiddens as before.

Recommendation: Consideration should be given to incorporating the improvement of upland agriculture *in situ* as a potential feature of the project expansion. If this were to be considered, then planning should be based on improving the knowledge-bas on existing farming systems before changes are made to traditional livelihoods.

23. The level of district capacity and ethnic sensitivity is low and lacking in appreciation for indigenous knowledge.

Recommendation: More attention needs to given to training of district officials in this area. An increased role for the Lao Front (LFNC) is needed and additional training for the Lao Front staff at provincial and district levels.

References

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Appendix I – Villages and Ethnic Groups Identified in the New PFAs

No	Provinces	District	PFA Name	Villages	Ethnic
1	Attapeu	Phouvong	Nam Kong	Viengxay Vongxay Vonglakhone Chienghieng	Brao Brao Brao Brao
		Sanxay	Nam Pa	Dakhiet Muanmai Muankao Daklieglong Daksang Dakkied Daksuod Hin Dam	Harak
				Mixay Daklon Daker Kien Daknyaer Daknyad Dakbang Dakseng Dakkuk Dakbru Maithavone Dokdong Daksamor Dakyok Dakdor Daksied Dakdao dakduk	Triang and Harak
2	Xékong	Lamam	Huay Pen	Nangnyong Tok Chanam Bavy Tavu Pahueg Hueg Pon Parknyong Songkone Taoun Tanak Rangeg Kadon Kasangkang Paor Namhieng Tuydan Vangsang Parkthone Tonetai Toneneu	Harak

				Mo Phearmai Santai Sannue Navakang Sabue Nongbog Huiykiev Tev torksaming	
				Parkpoun Tapauk Tanuemnam tanuemkok	Ngkriang
3	Borikhamxay	Borikhanh	Phou Xang	Parkheung Phonethong Phonesavad Haona Dong Kannyong Phadai Nalong	Moey Moey Moey and Khmou Moey and Hmong Moey Hmong Moey and Hmong
4	Vientiane	Vang Vieng	Nong Pet Na Seng	Nampai Nasay Phonesay Naluangkuang phonekham NaMuang Nasom Phathong Na ngern Nathong	Lao Lao and Khmou Lao and Khmou Lao Lao and Khmou Lao Hmong Lao Hmong Lao
5	Xaygnaboury	Phieng	Phouphadam	Phadam Houyhan Namliap Khuonphone Namphone Mor Phonesard	Hmong Hmong Hmong and Lao Hmong and Mian Hmong and Lao Lao Lao

Appendix II – The LFNC Ethnic Classification Scheme

I: The Lao-Tai Language Family (8 Groups)⁶			
No.	General Name	Subgroup	Other local names
1	Lao ⁷		Lao
		Phouan	Phouan
		Kaleung	Kaleung
		Bo	Bo
		Yooy	Yooy
		Nyo	Nyo
			Thay Pheung
			Isane ⁸
			Thay Xam
			Thay Yeuang
			Thay Lane
			Thay Cha
			Thay Mat
			Thay O
			Thay Lang
2	Phou Thay		Phou Thay
			Thay Ang Kham
			Thay Kata'
			Thay Kapong
			Thay Sam Kau
			Thay Vang
3	Tai	Tai Dam	Tai Dam (Black Tai)
		Tai Deng	Tai Deng (Red Tai)
		Tai Khao	Tai Khao (White Tai)
		Tai Moey	Tai Mène
			Tai Theng
			Tai Et
			Tai Xom
4	Lue		Lue ⁹
		Kheun	Kheun ¹⁰
5	Nyouan		Nyouan
		Kalom	Kalom
		Ngiau	Ngiau ¹¹
6	Yang		Yang ¹²

⁶ In technical literature this family is known as Tai-Kadai.

⁷ On strictly linguistic grounds, only Yooy and Kaleung belong with Lao. The other subgroups belong in the Phou Thay category.

⁸ Refers to the Lao of Northeastern Thailand who migrated to Laos.

⁹ Conventional spelling found in the literature.

¹⁰ Originally from Keng Tung in Burma.

¹¹ The Lao word for Shan.

¹² The conventional spelling is Nhang, the outsider term for the group that calls itself Yay.

7	Sek		Sek
			Koy
8	Tay Neua		Tay Neua ¹³
II: The Mon-Khmer Language Family (32 Groups)¹⁴			
9	Khmou		Khmou, Kammu
		Khmou Ou	Khmou Ou
		Khmou Lue	Khmou Lue
		Khmou Nyuan	Khmou Nyuan
		Khmou Khong	Khmou Khong
		Khmou Rok	Khmou Rok
		Khmou Khwène	Khmou Khwène ¹⁵
		Khmou Mè	Khmou Mè
		Khmou Kasak	Khmou Kasak
		Khmou Cheuang	Khmou Cheuang
			Mok Pray
			Mok Prang
			Mok Tang Chak
			Mok Kok
			Mok Tou
10	Pray	Thin	Thin, Lawa, Lao May ¹⁶
11	Ksing Moul		Phouak, Lao May
12	Phong		Phong, Kaniang
		Phong Piat	
		Phong Lane	
		Phong Fène	Phong Fène
		Phong Chapouang	Phong Chapouang
13	Thène		Thène, Thay Thène
14	Oe Du		Oe Du, Thay Hat
15	Bit		Bit
16	Lamet		Lamet
17	Sam Tao		Sam Tao
		Doi	Doi
18	Katang		Brou Katang
		Pha Keo	Pha Keo
19	Makong		Brou Makong
		Trouy	Trouy
		Phoua	Phoua
		Maroy	Maroy
		Trong	Trong
20	Tri		Brou Tri
21	Jrou		Laven, Sou'
		Jrou Kong	Jrou Kong
		Jrou Dak	Jrou Dak

¹³ Recent immigrants from the Sze Mao area of Yunnan, not to be confused with the 'Neua' of Sam Neua.

¹⁴ Mon-Khmer is the major branch of the larger Austroasiatic Family.

¹⁵ Or 'Kwène'.

¹⁶ More commonly referred to as 'Phay' in Laos. T'in and Lawa are names used in Thailand.

22	Triang		Triang
23	Ta Oy		Ta Oy
		Tong	Tong
		Yinr	In
24	Yè'		Yè'
25	Brao		Lavè, Louy Vé
		Kavèt	Kavèt
		Halang	Halang
26	Katu		Katu ¹⁷
		Triu	Triu
		Dak Kang	Dak Kang (Panh Deng)
27	Halak		Alak
28	Oy	Sapouan	Sapouan
		Sok	Sok
		Inthi	Inthi
			Mèkrong
			Mèreuyao
29	Kriang		Ngè'
		Chatong	Chatong
		Ko'	Ko'
30	Cheng		Cheng
31	Sadang		Sedang ¹⁸
		Kayong	Kayong
		Sadang Douan	Sadang Douan
32	Souay		Souay
33	Nya Heun		Tang Kè', Heunh
34	Lavi		Lavi
35	Pacoh		Pacoh ¹⁹
		Kado	Kado
		Kanay	Kanay
36	Khmer		Khom, Khmer ²⁰
37	Toum		Toum
		Liha	Liha
		Thay Cham	Thay Cham
			Thay Poun
		Thay Pong	Thay Pong
			Moy
38	Ngouan		Ngouan
39	Meuang		Moy
40	Kri ²¹		Salang, Arem
			Tong Leuang

¹⁷ Conventional spelling.

¹⁸ Conventional spelling.

¹⁹ Conventional spelling.

²⁰ Conventional spelling.

²¹ This is a problematic classification. The Vietic (or Viet-Meuang) subgroups of Nakai and adjacent areas consist of a number of languages, of which 'Kri' is one. Salang is a local term for this group, and Arem is the Brou term for the same group. 'Tong Leuang' (Lit. 'Yellow Leaf') is the Lao expression for hunter-gatherers that refers to the shelters constructed for short-term residence during cyclical foraging in the forest, the idea being that when the leaves turn yellow it is time to move on. (cf Chamberlain 1997)

		Maleng	Maleng
		Mlabri ²²	Labri, Tong Leuang
III. Sino – Tibetan			
41	Akha		Ko, Iko
		Akha Chi Cho	Chi Cho
		Akha Pouly	Pouly
		Akha Pana	Pana
		Akha Fé	Ko Fé
		Akha Nou Kouy	Nou Kouy
		Akha Louma	Louma
		Akha Oe Pa	Oe Pa
		Akha Chi Pya	Chi Pya
		Akha Mou Chi	Mou Chi
		Akha Ya Oe	Ya Oe
		Akha Kong Sat	Kong Sat
42	Singsily ²³		Phou Nou, Pisou
		Phou Yot	Phou Yot
		Tapat	Tapat
		Ban Tang	Ban Tang
		Cha Ho	Cha Ho
		Lao Xeng	Lao Xeng
		Phay (Phong Saly)	Phay (Phong Saly)
		Lao Pane	Lao Pane
		Phong Kou	Phong Kou
		Phong Set	Phong Set
43	Lahu		Mou Xoe
		Lahu Dam	Mou Xoe Dam (Black Lahu)
		Lahu Khao	Mou Xoe Khao (White Lahu)
		Kouy ²⁴	Kouy Soung
			Kouy Louang
44	Sila		Sida
45	Hanyi		Hanyi
46	Lolo		Lolo
47	Ho		Ho ²⁵
IV: The Hmong - Mien Language Family (2 groups) ²⁶			
48	Hmong		
		Hmong Khao	Hmong Daw (White Hmong)
		Mong Lai	Mong Leng, Mong Youa (Green Mong)
		Hmong Dam	Hmong Dam (Black Hmong)
	Iu Mien		Yao
		Lantène	Lao Houay, Lènetène ²⁷
		Yao Phon May Deng	Yao Phon May Deng

²² The Mlabri (also hunter-gatherers and hence the confusion) do not belong to the Kri group and are misclassified here, rather they are related to Khmou and Pray and are found in Xaygnaboury.

²³ Also found written as 'Sengsaly'. There has been recent decision to restore the old name, 'Phou Noy'

²⁴ Call themselves Lahu Shi 'Yellow Lahu'.

²⁵ Yunnanese Chinese.

²⁶ The recent name for this family is Hmong-Mien (Iu Mien is the name of a particular group of Yao). The former name for this family found in the literature until about 1985 is Miao-Yao.

²⁷ Usually refer to themselves as 'Kim Moun' or 'Mane'

		Yao Khao	Yao Khao
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