

GENDER ACTION PLAN

1. The project is categorized as *effective gender mainstreaming* (EGM). In accordance with EGM requirements, the present Gender Action Plan (GAP) has been prepared. A socioeconomic assessment, including gender assessment, was completed in six districts for the proposed Additional Financing of Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Project (the project).
2. GAP builds on the Asian Development Bank's (ADB's) past and ongoing experiences in the urban water supply and sanitation sector in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the ongoing Small Towns Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Project and the support provided by the Gender and Development Cooperation Fund.¹ GAP is formulated to provide measures addressing gender equity and women's empowerment in the project, including the development of the nonrevenue water (NRW) Task Force Asset Information Management Systems (AIMS), which includes women working in the finance, billing and customer service sections of each provincial *nam papa* (PNP, or provincial water utility) and those women being trained on geographic information system.
3. Identified gender issues include women's greater responsibility for (i) water collection and purchase for domestic use; and (ii) functions that rely on water—family hygiene, cleaning, cooking, and caring for children and the sick. Women are disadvantaged by limited access to safe and convenient toilet facilities at home and schools, limited educational attainment affecting their employment opportunities and ability to secure incomes, low participation rates in decision-making positions, and under-representation in the water and sanitation sector. With insufficient sanitation facilities, female survey respondents report burning menstrual pads where there is no garbage collection service. Women who live in houses without bathroom facilities bathe themselves and their children near public water taps with limited privacy and safety. Women prefer a combined toilet and shower (tap with bucket) facility for privacy and improving menstrual hygiene management.
4. The project's gender mainstreaming strategy supports gender equality in the delivery of project benefits and women's participation in the water and sanitation sector. Key measures include (i) female participation targets for village development committee membership; (ii) training within the NRW taskforces of each PNP; (iii) representation in the project coordination unit and project implementation units (PIUs); (iv) gender sensitive targets in PNP corporate action plans; (v) participation targets for training opportunities; (vi) separate female and male public latrines conducive to proper menstrual hygiene; and (vii) provision for equal access of all households to water supply and sanitation (e.g., free connections for all households and sanitation grants to the poor, including female-head households that qualify as poor). To ensure continuity of employment in the areas of financial management, billing and customer service and to mitigate possible displacement, female staff will be selected to undergo capacity development training focusing on the implementation of NRW Task Force and AIMS initiatives.
5. The executing and implementing agencies are responsible for GAP implementation, resourcing (staff, budget allocation), monitoring, and preparation of quarterly GAP Implementation Monitoring Reports, using ADB template. The PCU will appoint a qualified social development and gender officer to support and coordinate implementation, monitoring, and reporting of the project's GAP, stakeholder communication strategy, and participation plan. He/she will coordinate with each of the PIU-appointed social development/gender focal persons to support implementation at district level. The project implementation assistance consultant includes two social development/gender specialists (international, 13 person–months, and national, 44

¹ ADB. 2009. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors: Proposed Grant to the Lao People's Democratic Republic for Small Towns Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Project*. Manila.

person–months). The total budget for activities in the GAP is \$200,000 of which \$130,000² is for international and national consulting services; \$20,000 to support PCU/PIU training; and \$50,000 to support PNP training—all to be resourced from the overall project budget.

Gender Action Plan

DMF Outputs	GAP Actions/Targets	Responsible Agency
Output 1: Sector coordination and policy implementation improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All participating PNPs have at least two measurable targets in their corporate action plan dedicated to gender and development (e.g., policy, training, recruitment, or decision making for women), with one of these measurable targets focusing on the NRW task force At least five joint-subsector reviews held; At least three hygiene promotion events held about WASH and gender The sector's professional women's group participating in at least two job fairs annually Participating PNP's updating their corporate plans annually and including sex-disaggregated information 	MPWT, DWS, PCU, PNPs, PIUs, and PIC
Output 2: NRW management and water supply development improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selected PNP staff are members of the NRW task force, of which at least 70% are female (from finance, billing, customer service, and geographic information system) and 50% of the 8³ PNP⁴/NRW Task Forces have female heads⁵ PNP water tariff roadmaps integrate gender and affordability concerns informed by local LWU in roadmap planning exercises 30% of staff employed in O&M are women 	DWS, PCU PNP, PIUs, and PIC
Output 3: New water supply systems in small towns developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socio-economic and gender assessments are conducted as part of all subproject town feasibility studies, with evidence that women have been consulted and informed about water services and costs 	DWS, PCU PNP, PIUs, and PIC
Output 4: Community action in urban water supply and sanitation enhanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum 30% VDC members (30% where VDCs are more than 10 people and 20% where VDCs are less than 10 people) are female 100% of improved public toilet (separate male and female) conducive to proper menstrual hygiene Household toilets latrine grants \$140 to poor households, inclusive of a shower tap for bathing (for privacy and security, including bathing of small children) 	DWS, PCU, PIUs, DPWTs, UDAA, VDC, district authorities, and PIC
Output 5: Capacity for project implementation and O&M strengthened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 30% PCU and 30% (Sanamxay), 35% (Xamneua, Lamam, Dakcheung), and 40% (Sopbao), and 45% (Samakxay) PIU staff are female⁶ At least 30% of trainees from PCU, PIU, and participating PNPs⁷ in capacity development training are female 100% of female staff from participating PNPs receiving training in a job-related subject of their choice At least 30% of project training opportunities, professional exchanges, and peer study tours and study trips for qualified women 	DWS, PCU PNP, PIUs, and PIC

DWS = Department of Water Supply, DPWT = provincial department of public works and transport, LWU = Lao Women's Union, MPWT = Ministry of Public Works and Transport, NRW = nonrevenue water, O&M = operation and maintenance, PCU = project coordination unit; PIC = project implementation assistance consultant, PIU = project implementation unit, PNP = provincial *nam papa*; UDAA = urban development administration authority, VDC = village development committee.

² Estimated at 30% of the person month inputs inclusive of per diems and travel costs.

³ Total of 17 PNPs (excluding Vientiane PNP) with 8 PNPs supported under the Project.

⁴ There are 17 PNPs across the Lao PDR, one for each province. The above does not include Vientiane capital which currently is not under the Project.

⁵ Targets based on discussions and agreements in principal between EA, MOFA, ADB WOPs program, and NGO WaterWorks, awaiting government final approval.

⁶ Baseline: MPWT/PCU baseline: 30% female. While it is understood PIU staffing will draw on a range of government departments, DPWT staffing levels have been used as proxy baselines as follows: Sanamxai 29%, Xam-Nua 33%, Lamam 35%, Dakchung 30% Sopbao 36%, and Samakhixai 40%.

⁷ PCU and PIU staff priority training in operation and maintenance, finance and English. PNP staff priority training in GIS, asset management, finance, procurement, accounting, customer service, and water quality control.