



OVERVIEW

SUMALOM-Nam Ton is 7-year, 5.1-million Euro pilot project aimed at showcasing best practice in sustainable watershed management. The goal is that through its integrated approach to land and water management:

- » communities manage their natural resources more effectively and sustainably, and
- » farm households improve their farm and forestry production.

A collaboration between the Lao and German Governments through KfW Development Bank with technical assistance from GFA consulting Group, the Project's Executing Agency is the Department of Water Resources (DWR) in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE), and its Implementation agency is the Department of Agriculture Extension and Cooperatives (DAEC) in the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Project activities were implemented in the Nam Ton watershed area, 70 km north-west of Vientiane and extending across two districts: Hinherb in Vientiane Province and Sangthong in Vientiane Capital Prefecture.

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ACHIEVEMENTS

FARMING SYSTEMS

- 738 ha protection forest** planted by 441 families
- 142 land titles** allocated for plantations, rattan, upland & paddy fields
- 65 ha paddy field** for 102 families
- 5 irrigation schemes** serving 212 ha & 132 families
- 242 demonstration farmers** & extension groups
- Micro-finance network** with 152 beneficiaries

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

- 43 villages with PWLUP** (Participatory Water and Land Use Planning) developed, approved & followed up
- 3 Agriculture Extension centres** (Kum Ban centres) created with development of a management plan for future extension activities & sustainability
- Equipment for water quality & quantity** monitoring in place
- Management strengthened** in 2 Protected Areas
- Watershed Management Committee** created
- Village Environmental Committees** created
- Watershed profile** updated
- Water regulations** formulated

SUMALOM NAM TON

Sustainable Management of Watersheds in the **Lower Mekong Basin**



STRATEGY

INTEGRATION OF WATERSHED MANAGEMENT & SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

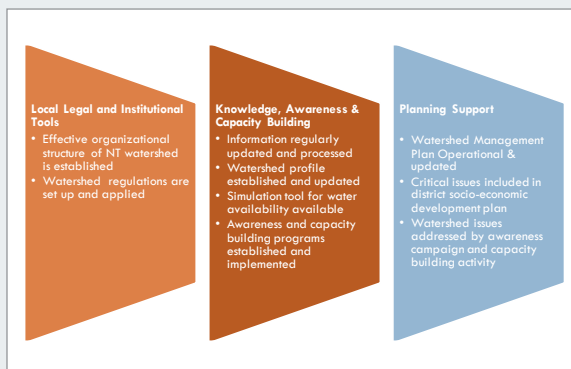
Design project interventions based on the characteristics of the watershed *and* on PWLUP.

Characteristics of the watershed: About 90% of the base flow originates from the upper north-western parts of the watershed. This is the focal intervention area for watershed management activities, including afforestation, irrigation, etc.

Identification of main problems to tackle through PWLUP: In each village, the villagers are invited through PLWUP to identify and rank the difficulties and problems regarding land and water, and to suggest solutions.

BUILDING AN ADEQUATE FRAMEWORK FOR PROPER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BASED ON IWRM PRINCIPLES

The planning process was based on a 5-year cycle corresponding to that of the National, Provincial and District planning already exercised in Lao PDR. The major assumption was that an operational "Nam Ton Watershed Committee" (NTWC) – an inter-district and multi-stakeholder platform – could be progressively built with the support of the project as an appropriate coordination framework to accompany the following 3 cycles.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 Shift from sector- to multi-sector run management.** Though coordination between different administrative levels (national, provincial/prefectural, district and village) and cooperation between various technical agencies require time and energy, people, water and other resources operate as one system, or at least are inter-linked. For better water resource management, nature, people and the economic context need to be considered holistically.
- 2 Use participatory water and land use planning (PWLUP).** As people make their living based on eco-systems – land, water, forest, integrate all aspects of natural resources in local planning, rather than treating other resources individually. And work concretely at village level: face real situations and find solutions through discussion, negotiation and technical recommendation.
- 3 Watershed management should be linked to forest plantation, protected areas and agricultural activities, and should consider alternative livelihoods.** The various activities supported by the project were chosen based both on an analysis of the watershed conditions and the socio-economic and environmental issues identified and ranked by the villagers.
- 4 Enhance the role of the communities, civil society, and private business together with the government services.** A system of information (GIS database) is insufficient: beyond data collection, the information should be analysed and then regularly and efficiently made available to both users and decision-makers. The watershed committee should gather *all* stakeholders – not only administration or government but also entrepreneurs, citizen representatives, etc. Volunteering should be encouraged by anyone with an interest in the watershed, particularly those who live and/or have businesses there.