POST-DISASTER NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN LAO PDR

Helping flood recovery and resilience building

AT A GLANCE

Countries Lao People's Democratic Republic

Risks Cyclones, floods

Area of Engagement Enabling Resilient Recovery; Addressing climate risk and promoting resilience to climate change

After the cyclones and floods in 2018, Lao PDR enhanced its recovery capacity and helped mobilize financing for reconstruction and resilience by conducting a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment

Overall damage and losses by province (billion kips)

- < 100
- 100-150
- 150-200
- 200-250
- > 300
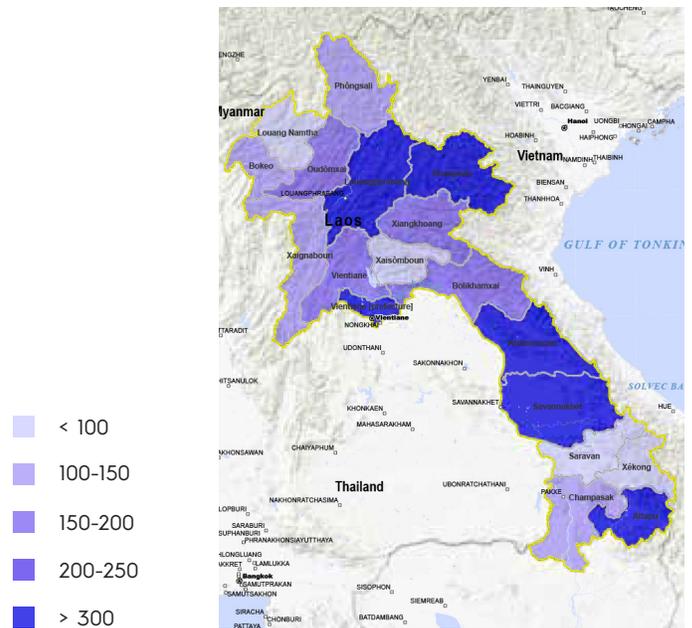
Source: UNITAR, Lao PDR, 22 October 2018

THE COSTLIEST FLOODS IN A DECADE

In 2018, heavy rains from two tropical cyclones, compounded by the collapse of a saddle dam, resulted in flash floods in the Lao PDR province of Attapeu. Overall, more than 600,000 people across the whole country were affected, and 64 people lost their lives.

Vulnerable communities were particularly affected. Nearly 1,700 houses were destroyed, along with numerous farms and assets. Heavy disruptions in social services and commercial activities have affected income sources and increased the debt levels of households.

Diseases, including dengue fever, increased in flood-affected areas and were exacerbated by the damages caused to health facilities. Malnutrition and stunting also increased, intensifying challenges in a country where 44% of children under 5 are stunted. As in many other disaster situations, the floods also increased women's workloads and the risks of gender-based violence in temporary shelters and camps.

IDENTIFYING A WAY FORWARD

To identify priority needs and develop a plan of action following the floods, the government of Lao PDR led a post-disaster needs assessment (PDNA). In collaboration with the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), the World Bank, the United Nations, the European Union, and civil society organizations, Lao PDR carried out a comprehensive assessment that included social sectors, productive sectors, infrastructure sectors, and cross-cutting issues (such as disaster risk management, governance, and climate change adaptation). GFDRR provided critical advisory and financial support to assist the government in carrying out the PDNA.

Within less than a month, the PDNA provided Lao PDR with data and analysis of the disaster impacts and priority needs.

GFDRR
Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery

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The PDNA revealed estimated total damages and losses of US$371.5 million, equivalent to 2.1% of the country's projected 2018 GDP, and 10.2% of its 2018 budget. It also broke down the economic and social impacts of the floods for 11 sectors, human development and cross-cutting issues, with highest impacts identified in the transport, agriculture, and waterways sectors. It followed these with short-, medium-, and long-term needs and recommendations to support recovery process.

Critically, the fast completion of the PDNA enabled its findings to inform the mid-term review of its National Socio-Economic Development Plan as well as its 2019 budget planning cycle. The government allocated approximately $58 million in the budget with specific actions based on the PDNA's recommendations.

LESSONS LEARNED

Strong collaboration and partnerships can help speed up assessments without sacrificing quality

The PDNA acted as a convening platform for the more than 18 government agencies, the World Bank and more than 20 development partners. Regular consultations and workshops involving partners and civil society organizations facilitated efficient collaboration and helped shorten turnaround time of assessments.

Highlighting the needs of the most vulnerable can inform more inclusive recovery interventions

The PDNA described some of the social and gender-specific impacts of the floods, such as challenges of female-headed households being represented in community consultations, as well as opportunities for improving gender equality and child protection in the recovery process. This analysis was extremely valuable and directly informed the design of sectoral recovery programs funded by government or development partners. It will be further considered in consultations on World Bank-financed recovery efforts.

$90 million

mobilized for disaster risk management

MOBILIZING FINANCE FOR RECONSTRUCTION The PDNA helped to mobilize US$50 million from the International Development Association Crisis Response Window, granted for the first time for Lao PDR. Provided as additional financing for two ongoing projects, the funds will support climate-resilient rehabilitation of roads and embankments – the two most hit public sectors as identified by the PDNA.

PRIORITIZING RESILIENCE AND RISK REDUCTION The PDNA process and focus on resilient recovery also informed the government's decision to request funds to improve its disaster risk management and financial protection through a policy loan with a catastrophe drawdown option amounting up to US$40 million which will be prepared with GFDRR's and World Bank's support.

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR DRM The PDNA enhanced the capacity of government officials for future disaster events through training on damage assessment methodology, field work, and verification processes. The World Bank will be working with the government to mainstream DRM into the 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan, and to improve tracking and monitoring of reconstruction to provide greatest value for the funds spend.

"Since the floods, the government of Lao PDR, alongside the United Nations and the World Bank, together with other development partners and civil society organizations, has been working to restore livelihoods and strengthen resilience. The PDNA was a critical step in this process to help assess the impacts and recovery needs to inform recovery planning, as well as to provide recommendations to build back better and prepare for future disasters."

-- H.E. Dr. Khampheng Saysompheng, Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, Chairman of National Disaster Prevention and Control Committee.