

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



ABP: Agro-biodiversity Project

Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Lao PDR's Agricultural
and Land Management Policies, Plans and Programmes

February 2015

1. INTRODUCTION

The loss of agro-biodiversity at global level is a key challenge and linked to significantly reduced use of the genetic variety of plant, animal and other species over the last decades. Lao PDR is known for its rich (agro) biodiversity, although declining due to logging and increasing commercialization of the broader agroforestry sector¹. In the upland areas, however, farmers are making good use of a wide range of species to support their livelihood, albeit the importance of biodiversity and its supporting ecosystems (ecosystem services²) is still not well documented. In other words the knowledge and awareness of the importance of agro-biodiversity in Lao PDR is limited.

The Agro-biodiversity Project (ABP 2011-16) operates both at central level with Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry as the key-implementing partner and at local level in Phonexay (PX) District in Luang Prabang Province and in Phoukhout (PK) District in Xieng Khouang Province. ABP has a strong focus on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity resources in agro-ecosystems for the attainment of food security and sustainable economic development and adaptation to climate change impacts.

Communicating project's results play an important role in the achievement of the project objective, namely to provide farmers with the necessary incentives, capacities and supporting framework for the conservation of agro-biodiversity. Several pilot interventions are being implemented with local communities and government agencies and contain pilot support to conservation and sustainable use of regionally important species and systems. Capacity development of the farming communities and government officers is also an important element and mainly done through on-the-job training.

Information and awareness on key concepts and successful interventions needs to be carefully targeted to the broader farming community as well as to the local, central and international stakeholders. Thus, important agro-biodiversity messages and results need to be timely communicated with appropriate materials and prepared in a systematic way.

¹ Broader agro-forestry sector includes fisheries and horticulture.

² Ecosystem services include nutrient recycling, primary production and soil formation, food supply, flood regulation, and water purification. Further, the services provide wild plants, animals, mushrooms, raw materials, minerals, and energy as well as cultural and recreational/ecotourism values. The services are interconnected and need holistic regulations including carbon sequestration, land use, disease control, etc.

2. OBJECTIVES

- To timely communicate important agro-biodiversity of Lao PDR and key interventions of ABP
- To make key agro-biodiversity information easy available for a wide range of stakeholders

3. METHODOLOGY

All communication and awareness materials will entail clear messages and considerations including careful consideration on best materials, be systematically prepared and produced in a step-by-step approach, be carefully monitored and approved to ensure quality. When UNDP and FAO Logo's are added on the material formal approvals are needed.

Overarching key messages: To ensure coherent messages, the overarching agro-biodiversity messages should be incorporated in the project's communication materials. Overarching messages include key elements of agro-biodiversity significance to Lao farmers, its current threats and the means of conservation and sustainable use. These are:

1	Agro-biodiversity is an important source of food and nutrition, supports the local ecosystem and generates income for farmers.
2	Agro- biodiversity is threatened because of changing agricultural practices, land use changes and over-exploitation.
3	Agro-biodiversity can be conserved and used sustainably through building capacities for communities to adopt agro-biodiversity friendly practices and technologies and through appropriate institutional support.

Specific messages: Specific messages will be tailored according to ABP's intervention area and should be tested to ensure effectiveness.

Consistent layout - Project identity: Policy and technical briefs, factsheets and selected publications should follow a consistent layout and design. Promotional videos should keep a

consistent format in order to nurture the project's identity and make it easily recognizable to target audiences.

Systematic steps - Printed materials: All printed materials should be prepared and produced following professional standards to ensure quality and optimal impact. In this way, a minimum of steps is required:

- a) Developing outlines and messages based on background research and technical inputs from partners.
- b) Ensuring quality layout, photos and illustrations.
- c) Identifying dissemination channels that best accommodate access and needs of target audiences.
- d) Pretesting (brochures, leaflets, etc.) to focus groups (e.g. extension workers, farmers and community leaders) to ensure appropriate and effective messages and content.

Video productions: All videos should follow professional standards and procedures including:

- a) Following production according to communication objectives
- b) Identification of key messages
- c) Development of outline and storyboard assisted by FAO and implementing partners

Approval of material: Before printing the technical content must be cleared by relevant partners including FAO and by UNDP. These formal approvals should have short deadlines, to avoid delays.

Dissemination of and launching materials: The most cost effective way of dissemination should be pursued using various means including printing and posting on various web platforms. Dissemination channels and the necessary arrangements to facilitate delivery should be identified before preparing the material. Where appropriate an launching events will be organized.

4. KEY TARGET AUDIENCE AND COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES AND MEANS

The target audience is divided into three main groups i.e. 1) Decision makers, government agencies, development partners and the public 2) Provincial and district level technical staff and 3) farmers and schools. The communication objective and means of the three groups are described below.

Group 1: Decision makers, government agencies, development partners and the public

Communication objectives	Communication means
Ensure periodic information about project development, key achievements and awareness about key agro-biodiversity issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Project Briefs/Factsheets:</i> Background, key interventions and key achievements.• <i>Periodic progress reports</i>• <i>Traditional media:</i> Draft of success stories and press releases on key events and achievements.• <i>Video spots:</i> Project activities, key outcomes and beneficiaries' experiences.

Group 2: Provincial and District Technical staff

Communication objectives	Communication means
Provide extension workers and other technical officers others with information materials about key issues related to agro-biodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Technical reports and briefs.</i> • <i>Info materials:</i> Materials in various formats, conveying key concepts on Agro-biodiversity and relevant messages to target audiences. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Print materials (guides, flyers, brochures, posters) - Short videos and capacity building videos)

Group 3: Farmers and schools

Communication objectives	Communication means
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness of beneficiaries about key issues related to agro-biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, using multiple media and developing appealing messages based on the intervention's objectives and beneficiaries' interests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informational materials in various formats, conveying key concepts on Agro-biodiversity and relevant messages to target audiences. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Print materials (flyers, brochures, posters) - Testimonial videos

Detailed ABP Communication Implementation Plan

1. General communication and awareness on (agro) biodiversity					2015												2016							Responsible				
ABP Intervention	Outcomes	Communication products	Key Specific tasks	Dec 2015	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul		Aug	Sep		
1.1 Project information folder	1.1.1 Increased awareness of key project activities.	Project Folder - brochure in Lao and English	Prepare content, design and ensure translation																								FAO and ABP	
			Disseminate at special events																									ABP, FAO & UNDP
			Make available information in FAO, UNDP website, etc																									ABP, FAO & UNDP
		Updated version of project folder - brochure in Lao and English	Prepare updated version and make accessible online																									FAO and ABP
			Prepare Lao Translation & make available on websites, etc																									ABP, FAO & UNDP
1.2 Environmental related poster	1.1.2 General public better understanding and awareness of environmental issues related to ARD sector.	5,000 poster copies in Lao	Earmark and send packages to officers at national, provincial, district and village level																								ABP	
			Earmark and send to DP, CSO, and INGOs																									ABP
			Earmark and send to targeted villagers																									ABP
			Disseminate at special events																									ABP, FAO & UNDP
1.3 MAF Law handbook	1.3.1 Lao Stakeholders with better knowledge of the 7 laws if MAF.	1,000 copies	Earmark and send package to national provincial and district authorities																								ABP	
			Earmark and send package to DP, CSO, and INGOs																									ABP
			Earmark and sent to targeted villagers																									ABP
			Organize dissemination at special events																									ABP, FAO & UNDP
1.4 Ethno-botanical demo plots at Pha Tad Ke Botanic Garden, Luang Prabang	1.4.1 Children and general public increased knowledge and awareness of ethno-botany.	Flyer for Kids (Lao and Eng)	Prepare content, design and translation																								PTK/FAO	
			Disseminate at special events and visits & put on																									PTK
		Flyer for general public (LAO and ENG)	Prepare content, design and translation																									PTK
			Disseminate to visitors & put on websites																									PTK
		Launching event	Event organization. Open invitation to provincial representatives																									PTK
		Press Release	Draft, translate and circulate press release of launch event to the media																									ABP/FAO/PTK
2. Policy and strategy support communication and awareness activities																												
2.1 ABD Sub-sector working group	2.1.1 Technical information and policy recommendations from roundtable discussions available to group stakeholders.	Minutes	Assist in ensuring concise minutes																								ABP & TABI	
		Policy Brief in Lao and English	Assist in making policy briefs available in sWRG website																									MAF, FAO, ABP, TABI, UNDP
		Press Release	Draft, translate and circulate press release of key recommendations to the media																									FAO, SDC, TABI, ABP
2.2 National Agro-biodiversity Programme (NABP II)	2.2.1 Key contents of NABP II available to stakeholders.	Technical brief (Lao & Eng)	Technical Brief for web sites and others																								FAO, NAFRI, ABP	
		Factsheet/Brief in English and Lao	Prepare content, design and translation																									FAO, NAFRI, ABP
			Disseminate to visitors & websites																									FAO, NAFRI, ABP, UNDP
		Press Conference	Event organization and draft, translation and media circulation																									FAO, ABP
2.3 Provincial Strategy and Action Plan	2.3.1 Key content of PBSAP available to stakeholders.	Brief of PBSAP Document in English and Lao	Prepare content, design and translation																								FAO, ABP	
			Make brief available online																								FAO, ABP, MAF, MoNRE	

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