Two provinces, five districts and over 30,000 households in Laos PDR are learning new practices to reduce the gender gap and increase resilience to climate change. By mainstreaming important issues, such as gender equality, this project seeks to build a more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient world, and is making progress by taking a holistic approach to development.
Building resilience to climate change in the agriculture sector is a central issue in Lao PDR, where almost a third of GDP (29.9 percent) is generated through the agriculture sector, and approximately 80 percent of the population is engaged in agricultural activities. Women are key players: eighty one percent contribute to agricultural export, and women traditionally manage marketing of agricultural products and livestock production.

With financing from the Global Environment Facility’s (GEF) Least Developed Country Countries Fund (LDCF), the Government of Lao, with support from UNDP, launched the project “Improving the Resilience of the Agriculture Sector in Lao PDR to Climate Change Impacts,” (IRAS) to minimize food insecurity resulting from climate change in Lao PDR and to reduce the vulnerability of farmers to extreme flooding and drought events.

The project has successfully implemented institutional measures that placed women as key stakeholders and it demonstrated clear progress in closing the gender gap. The 26% of the project participants (1,364) were women who have directly benefitted from the completed activities. Women in 214 households also benefitted from water harvesting weirs, which eliminated the need for women to travel long hours to fetch water. A significant number of poor farmers, including women, in addition directly benefitted by the 20 percent increase in yields of local varieties - suitable for drought and/or flood conditions - experienced at all project sites. The project initiatives were complemented with gender audits during the implementation period, plus gender check-lists for all technical activities undertaken on the ground. In this way, the project systematically integrated gender into all project components.

For more information visit the UNDP-ALM Project Profile: www.undp-alm.org/projects/lDCF1-laopdr