Using a Community Participatory Approach to Assess Health through a Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Sustainability Project

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Future Implications

• Baseline results are being used to plan and create:
  ▪ Culturally appropriate health interventions
  ▪ Mobilize the community and local health agencies to build sustainable infrastructure to support proper sanitation
  ▪ Contributes to the MDG for water and sanitation of halving, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe water and basic sanitation

Funding

• Laos will be funded by ADRA Canada.
  ▪ It will be a 3 year WaSH/Nutrition Project

Thank you and khàwp jai lai lai to the following partners:

ADRA

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**Background**

- The Lao People’s Democratic Republic or Lao PDR (Laos) is a landlocked, mountainous country, covered by tropical forest.
- Laos is one of the poorest countries in South-East Asia.
- Poverty in Laos is directly connected to access to clean water and sanitation.

**Water, Sanitation, Hygiene (WaSH) for Health**

- A health promotion program created for rural populations which addresses:
  - Health and hygiene problems related to water and sanitation with the goal of improving the health of families.
  - Coupled with positive health behavior changes through regular health promotion, evaluation, community contribution and ownership.

**Methods**

A community-based participatory approach was used to guide a qualitative study of 8 villages.

**This included:**

- Key informant interviews with village chiefs (n = 8)
- Focus groups with villagers (n = 371)
- Creation of community maps
- Prioritization chart
- Problem tree
- Solution tree

The focus group questions concentrated on sources of income, health practices, water collection methods, latrine facilities, and village expectations.

**Results**

Three emerging themes:
- 1) Clean Water
- 2) Latrines
- 3) Fully Functional Health Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>n (Number of Villages)</th>
<th>N (Total Villages)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latrines/ Sanitation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Centers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of the top 4 identified priorities by the 8 villages.

**Limitations/Challenges**

- **Language Barrier**
  - Translation - English, Lao, Hmong, Khamu
  - Untranslatable Concepts
    - “Problem Tree”
    - “Solution Tree”

- **Geography**
  - Mountainous region

- **Climate**
  - Rainy season

- **Schedule/Time**
  - Women off to work in the morning
  - Father at home taking care of children
  - Utilization of daylight
  - Concept of time

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1 World Health Organization, 2001
2 ADRA Laos, n.d.