

Response to IRN's comments on environmental mitigation implementation plan  
Nam Song and Nam Leuk Hydropower Projects

Prepared by EdL with editorial changes and some additions by ADB

A. Nam Song

1. Funding Allocation Insufficient

The initial amount of \$200,000 was considered on the basis of the requirement estimated to mitigate the current status of affected villages that have been assessed in consultation with the villages. Much has changed since the projects were completed. A lot of assistance, especially water supply, has been given to many villages by different organizations.

According to the agreed contract with Dr. Montri he will further make monitoring and prepare an evaluation report of the works after completion. This will provide EdL and ADB with information on whether the mitigating measures have been implemented effectively, and whether more needs to be done.

2. Itchy Skin for Villagers Downstream of Nam Song

Dr. Montri and EdL counterpart have officially checked at the end of 2006 during formulation of this plan about the complaints on this matter with Districts administrators (Hinheup, Vang Vieng, Hom and Thapabath) and with all village headmen. Based on this investigation, there was no complaint of itchy skin at all. Reflecting this, the plan does not address this issue.

3. Ban Vang Xong

Relocation of Vang Xong village was done according to the district development plan, and was not because of the project. The district provided the villagers only with land for their house plot because their remaining farmland is still available at the old village and most of them return to their farms at the old village. Many households are currently working at the nearby Cement Plant.

4. Issues not covered in the report

Boats and fishing equipments cannot be assessed since no data on the names of affected owners was available in the October 2001 report.

Ban Somsanouk

- If people received cash compensation paid, EdL is of the view that they accepted the compensation rate.

- It is not clear which transmission line that IRN is talking about.

## B. Nam Leuk

### Water supply issues for villages along Nam Xan

In general Thamdin and Thaheua have all year round water supply now. The water supply system was established by Nam Leuk Hydropower Plant budget for more than \$58,000 and complete in 2006.

## C. General issues related to water supply recommendation

About the water supply issues, EdL would like to explain what steps were taken to agree on a water supply system for a village, for better understanding of IRN. The design of the water supply system in each impacted village is typically done in the following way, with assistance from the consultant.

Step 1: Village consultation: villagers know best their village area and water source. The village will normally provide us with a few options based on their experience (Please note that every village has experience about this water supply information as a lot Government officials, NGOs, and so on come to their village to talk about this and some of them have been provided already with assistance to establish water supply systems).

Step 2: When the agreement is reached for some kind of water supply, the team will identify the water source available by visiting the area to see if a feasible water supply system installation can be provided and make some initial calculations.

Step 3: When the team has seen all the possibilities, there will be again consultation with villagers about possible options. The team will discuss in more detail how the village can participate if the water supply system is provided to their village. For example: Would the villagers provide their labor during detailed survey and construction? All the villagers say yes to this. For the operation, can village establish the water supply maintenance team and collect some money from water users for the maintenance and pay water electric cost? The same - all villages say yes.

From our experience even when all villages say yes, we still need to provide them with much assistance. So the plan is designed to require EdL to (i) help them establish village water supply maintenance teams in the village including regulation on water use and collection of some amount of water use fee for maintenance purposes, (ii) provide training to this team on how to use and maintain the system, (iii) ensure that the contractor who provides the system will provide at least one year system warranty under its contract. Further, EdL may need to keep close eye in each village on how the maintenance is being run. For

this year, the budget for this purpose is with EdL's Environmental Office. Possibly, from next year, Nam Song and Nam Leuk may need to establish the budget their own for this environment and social works in their project area. This will be discussed further.

EdL's Environmental Office is now drafting water supply maintenance guidelines, roles and village organization arrangements for village water supply maintenance teams. These will be discussed in each village that will receive the project from EdL in Nam Song and Nam Leuk area.

#### D. General issues related to fish pond

The purpose of construction of each village's fish pond is to produce fish for a village by having village fishery management. It is impossible to give each household a fish pond. A small fish pond in a village becomes very important as a pilot to demonstrate with the participation of villagers and youth (that is why we do it at village school) to be developed by themselves in their own house plot available depending on their interests. This long-term livelihood development needs a step-by-step and participatory approach.

Similar to water supply, the Environmental Office of EdL is drafting guidelines on how to implement the SPFG and VFPG. Generally, EdL will provide fish seed, training and guidelines on how to maintain this fish pond system