

LAOS

THE BIRTH OF AN ECO-VALLEY IN KHAMMOUANE PROVINCE

A LAO MODEL OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISTIC COMMUNITY

To improve living conditions of villagers' communities in Konglor and Natane Valley thanks to autonomous management of a cost-effective and sustainable eco-touristic site in Khammouane province.

PRESENTATION

The project aims at ensuring the autonomy and sustainability of AEKN (Association Eco-touristic of Konglor-Natane), in charge of the management of Konglor-Natane's cave, as well as reinforcing the professional skills of the villagers' groups of Natane valley, and creating villagers' groups on Nakai Plateau.

A focus will be made on encouraging and strengthening exchanges, trainings, local initiatives between communities and also with the local authorities.

The final goal is to increase together the touristic development of the natural sites in a fair and sustainable way, while addressing the numerous challenges and consequences of the increase in tourist flows, in terms of community management, biodiversity preservation, and territorial organization.

At the end, this program will create a sustainable model for villager's communities to manage a natural site sustainably and make the territory to be an example of innovation in social, economic and environmental field.

NGO

Tétraktys is an NGO based in the French Alps and specialized in local development. For the past 25 years, Tétraktys has been dedicated to sharing its expertise in rural development with communities all over the world.

Tétraktys relies on a network of associated experts in various fields such as tourism, environment, cultural anthropology, education, training.

Tétraktys started to work in Laos and Khammouane province in 2009, and has developed a 3 years program co-funded by AFD (French Development Agency) in partnership with AEKN, from 2016 to 2019. The main goal is to support Khammouane Province in realizing pilot actions in sustainable touristic development and community management.

DURATION AND DATES

3 years : 01/01/2020 – 31/12/2022

PROJECT TOTAL AMOUNT

545 000 €

TYPE OF FUNDING

Grants

PARTNER

The Ecotouristic Association of Konglor-Natane (AEKN), created in 2014, is the 1st Ecotouristic Association in Laos managing a natural touristic site.

The main goal of the AEKN is to implement a conservation, development and management plan of Konglor-Natane cave and its surroundings, with the objective to promote the social, economic and cultural development of the communities, and to encourage the biodiversity and environment conservation.

During this project, the AEKN will be encouraged to transfer the skills they have learned to the Natane villages communities, as well as Plateau's villages communities. The AEKN will ensure promotion of the model set up and create a local dynamic about how to manage locally a touristic site in a sustainable way.



MAIN ACTIVITIES

- Develop a tool box to ensure good management of Konglor and Natane natural site (management tool, accountancy tool, human resources tool, communication and promotion tool, follow up of cave activities...) and to reinforce the management competences of the AEKN.
- Assist AEKN to transfer their skills and knowledge by doing training modules for others villagers' groups created in Natane valley and Nakai Plateau, as needed.
- Set up an investment funds to support the raise of local eco-touristic initiatives with priorities to finance women and young people of Konglor, Natane, and Nakai Plateau.
- Improve access to Konglor-Natane cave to answer to the needs of a larger public, and create new touristic equipments, sites, circuits that are respectful of cultural and environmental specificities, in Konglor, Natane and Nakai Plateau.
- Assist local actors for promotion and commercialization of an eco-touristic circuit including one departure from Konglor or Nakai Plateau and going though Natane valley.
- Develop an electric ship fleet to reduce noise and pollution, and improve the touristic experience
- Set up a study in Konglor village to improve remediation, and implementing more assessments and actions regarding the waste management in Konglor and Natane (recycling, valorizations...)
- Organize participative actions to inform about environment and heritage with inhabitants, students and tourists.
- Assist local touristic actors to define a charter for best practices.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- The local population is made aware and organized to ensure eco-touristic development by self-management in their territory.
- The touristic sites of Konglor and Natane are improved and an eco-touristic development plan is set up for Nakai Plateau to build a tourist circuit that is sustainable and has positive impacts.
- The eco-touristic activities led by the local population does not damage the environment and the local culture, but increase their protection.

BENEFICIARIES

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES :

- The AEKN and its 6 tourist groups (400 members)
- The inter-village groups of the Natane Valley (4 members representing the villages) and the 3 tourist groups (25 members)
- New village groups on the Nakai plateau coming from the 16 resettled villages.
- 8 young people or women receiving a grant from the support fund to set up 8 tourism and development projects in the villages.

INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES :

- Village of Konglor: 1,150 inhabitants, including 758 women (230 households)
- Natane Valley: 8,189 inhabitants, including 4,228 women (1,737 households) - including the village of Natane: 647 inhabitants, including 331 women (140 households)
- Nakai Plateau: 11,641 inhabitants, including 6,053 women (2,662 households)
- Local entrepreneurs: guesthouse managers, ecolodges, homestays, local guides, boatmen, farmers, ...
- 30 local government officials: Khom Kham District and Nakai District, Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism Information from Khammouane to Thakhek

