

# Social and culture aspects as critical factors for the effectiveness of Protected Areas management in Laos:

A case study of multi village Mak Jong management group in Pathoumphone district

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# Outline of the presentation

- Background - Natural Asset – NPA
- Status of Conservation in Lao
- Links between Conservation (NPA) and Rural Livelihood
- Case Study of Multi village malva nut management group
- Priority of actions



Mak Jong tree

## Background – Natural Asset (NPA)

- Natural resources - a number of unique opportunities for conservation
- 24 National Protected Areas + 2 Corridors – 3,899,000 ha - covered almost 16% of total land”
  - Provincial PA (57 PPA) – 932,000 ha
  - District PA (144 DPA) – 504,000 ha
- Besides NPAs, Lao has national protection (6.1 Mill ha) and production forests (3.1 Mill ha)

### **Benefits of NPAs**

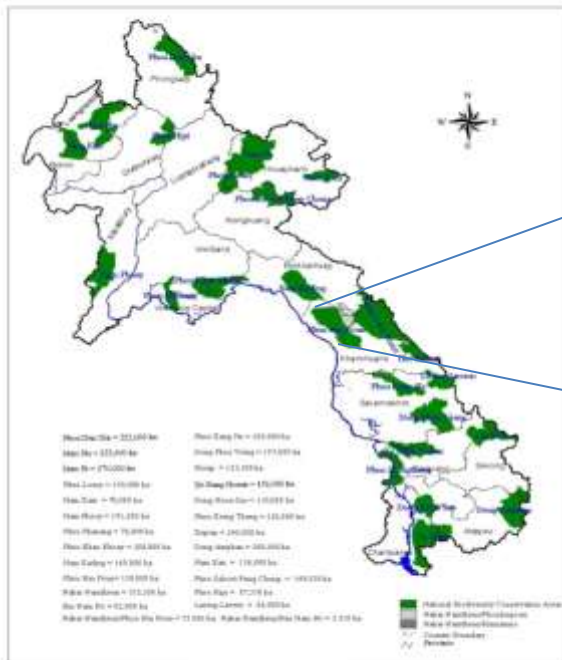
- Rural livelihoods (food, medicine, construction)
- National economies (tourism, NTFPs, hydropower & mining)
- Land and water systems and Biodiversity reservoirs

# Status of conservation in Lao PDR

- All 24 NPAs have common and similar functions
  - unclear institutional arrangement at NPA level, esp for NPAs with many provinces (coordination)
  - some NPAs have a management plan (few implemented)
  - lack or uneven law enforcement
  - relied on external funding sources (short period)
  - Village settlement in and nearby most of NPAs
  - unclear roles & responsibilities of local communities & institution

# Some example of NPAs - village settlements

NPA in no province/ districts	Areas	Total villages in Category 1 & 2	Total villages in Category 3 & 4	Total Population
Nam Phouy (1p/3d)	191,200	5 -18	15 - 17	24,556
Hin Nam No (1p/1d)	82,000	6 - 6	12 - 18	17,500
Nam Xam (1p/3d)	70,000	12 - 25		17,420
Xe Piane (2p/3d)	240,000	11-20	27-0	26,834
Nakai Nam Theun (2p/4d)	353,200	31-43	0 -0	30,930



1 province (5 districts) - 62,625 people-in and around) – total 109 villages

- 15 villages of categories 1
- 54 villages of categories 2
- 40 villages of categories 3 & 4

## Links between Conservation (NPA) and Rural Livelihood

- Acceptance of local settlements in & around NPAs, their rights to sustainable resource use
  - Integrated Conservation and Development (ICAD) or PICAD
  - Process oriented in LUP & LA, extension and conservation initiatives
  - PES & REDD in NPAs as opportunities for forest resources management under innovative financing – creating better governance of local communities
- Experiences and practices of local communities in natural resources management (forestry, wetland) for their income and livelihood
  - Conservation and Tourism (Ban Na, Hat Khai of PKK NPA, Ecotourism in Nam Ha, Xe Pian, DHS & Nam Kan)
  - Local groups formed for NRM initiatives (NTFPs, wildlife/fish species protection) through various projects (WB, UNDP, ADB, INGOs, SNV, TABI, EPF, ...& private sectors) by using their social network & traditional practices

Large forests remaining & NPAs  
High level of dependence by local communities  
High rural poverty

Policy constraints  
Land-use planning  
Conservation priorities  
Institutional and coordination

Management constraints  
Staffing, Capacity & Funding

Experiences & Practices of communities in NRM for subsistence & income

NPAs and development:  
– Hydropower,  
– mining,  
– plantations,  
– logging

Local community integration:  
– Sustainable livelihoods  
– Involvement of local communities in NPA activities  
– Stabilizing shifting cultivation  
– Regulation of timber and NTFPs harvest and trade

Land use Planning and allocation

NPA and Forest Management

**Priority Actions :**  
Need clear objectives of each NPA zonation  
**Benefit Sharing mechanism - clear roles & mandates of communities participation**  
Combine NRM with poverty alleviation  
Build strong network at grass root level

# Case study - Pathoumphone District

- 287,038 ha, 8 village clusters, 75 villages and 51,683 persons
- Flat plain (Champassack) -large wetlands (unique peat land and important fish spawning)
- 2 National Protected Areas (parts of Dong Hoa Sao, & XePian), Production Forests, village forests and Phou Asa Cultural site

About Mak Jong (MJ) “Malva nut” (*Scapium macropodum* - *Sterculiaceae*) - a traditional medicine against sore throat

- its distribution in semi, lower evergreen forests, (SW) Bolaven
- Pathoumphone : 30, Khong: 7, Sanamxay:10 villages
- High demand from Thai and China
- income for villagers and local authorities, esp. for poor

Previous MJ situation:

- High demand for land use purposes,
- Competition in harvest MJ
- Harvesting NTFPs is open access, difficult to monitor
- Values of NTFPs (MJ) not seen as alternatives for poverty reduction





# Multi village Mak Jong Management Group

**Provincial Authority**

PoNRE, PAFO

Oversight role on Mak Group establishment (approval) – Some supervision

**District Authority (DA)**

Support to Policy and approval the planning process and agreement

Technical Support and monthly meeting with the DA

District Agriculture and Forestry Office (DAFO)

District Natural Resource and Environment Office

NPA team

Lao Women

**Village cluster's heads**

Direct supervision, set the agreement within and among villages, regular monthly meetings

Village head,  
Village elder (culture & religious – conflict resolution)  
Purchasing, Admin & Finance  
Village militia (sub-group patrol)  
Rep of health & education & women - *village trader group*

Village head & team

Village head & team

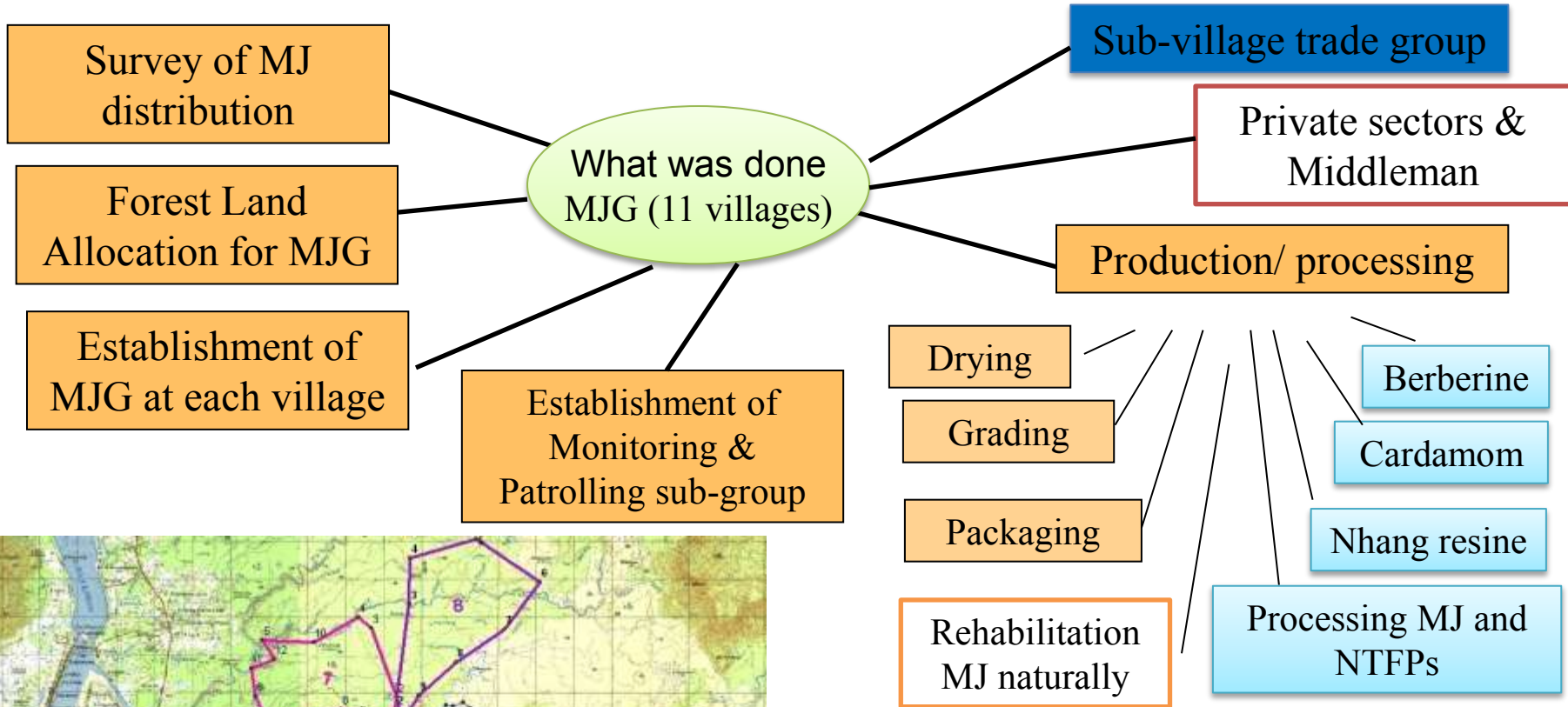
Village head & team

Village head & team

Divide roles and responsibilities in groups within the village, monitoring and solving the issues

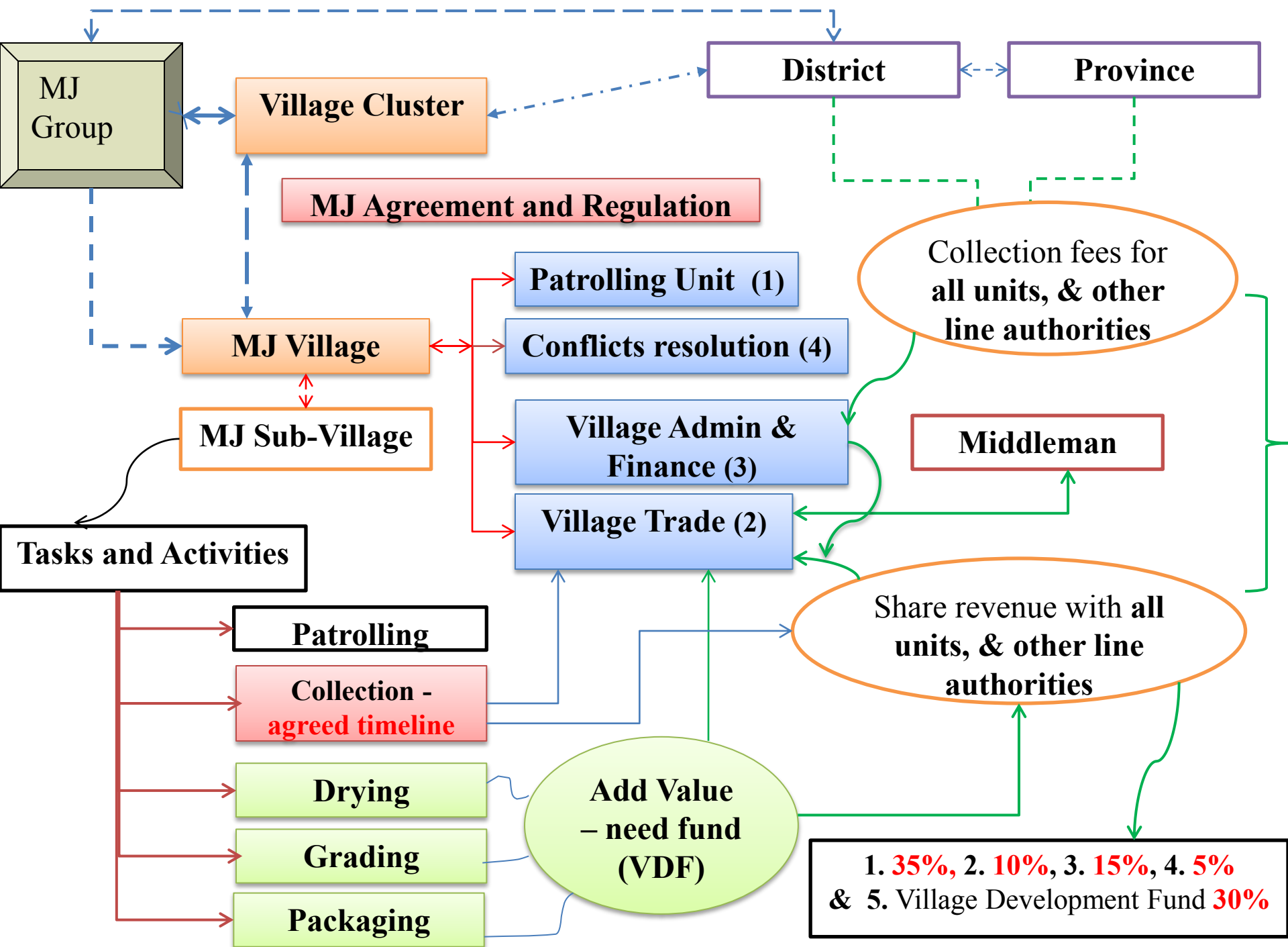
# MJG interventions 2008 – 2009 and **now**

## MJ Agreement and Regulation



11 villages in Pathoumphone (1,143hhs -6370)  
– 89% of the total hhs – are MJG members  
(total areas: **10,377 ha**)

- 6 villages in Sanote village cluster (VC), **2,789 ha**
- 4 villages in Nam Om VC, **7,458 ha**
- 1 village in Pathoumphone VC, **130 ha**



# Some MJG activities



MJG Meeting on agreement and regulation



MJG warming team before forest allocation survey

**Unsecure system:**  
High market demand  
Pre-mature collection  
Direct access of traders  
Unfair price and scale use  
No income for local authority

**Customary Laws:**  
Open access for harvest  
Traditional practices  
No management & monitoring

**Impacts:**  
Over-harvesting of NTFPs  
MJs trees cut  
Encroachment  
Land conversion

NTFPs & Mak  
Jong Issues

- Start 3 villages and expand to 11 villages
- Forest Allocation and agreements
- MJG Regulation
- Monitoring & Patrolling
- Inform harvesting period, price & revenue

- Impacts: (by using Social and Culture network)**
- Improve coordination and local ownership (strict monitoring) & conflict management
  - Active participation in all initiatives
  - Increased capacity for MJG and awareness for all villagers
  - Increase income

- Current Issue:**
- Long-term viability of MJG
  - Unclear roles for dealing with illegal issues
  - Capacity in administration & Finance
  - Access to fund for add-values & next steps
  - Sharing lessons learnt with other non-MJ villages

# Some MJG activities



MJG collection fruits in the forest



A signed board of Ban Lao Nha forest

# Conclusions on sustainable multi village MJG & NTFP

- Contributes to national goals for increasing forest cover and alleviating poverty
- Provides alternatives for shifting cultivation and over-extraction of forest products
- Means for participatory protected areas and forest management
- Contributes to food security, nutrition and community and rural development

More work is required on social power and equity issues

- **Some questions:**
  - How to get long-term viability of MJG or a proper association?
  - How to increase priority at national level (up-scaling) ?
  - How to increase sustainability in the face of market development?
  - How to increase capacity of local institutions (inclusion in decision-making process)?