



PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

# STRENGTHENING CLIMATE RESILIENCE IN THE MEKONG SUB-REGION

1 March 2022 to 30 November 2025

Implementing partner: Oxfam

Date of submission: 1 December 2025

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Cover: Sanasomboun, Lao People's Democratic Republic: Bounthan's husband passed away when her youngest child was 6 months, and she has been a single mother for the past 25 years. She has ongoing medical issues, and though her kids give her money, when she needs to purchase medicine, it costs half her income. Her village has experienced frequent and severe flooding in recent years and disaster preparedness is more important than ever. Photo: Patrick Moran/Oxfam. Oxfam acknowledges the support of the Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

## ACRONYMS

ASEAN	The Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AUD	Australian Dollars
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CERT	Commune Emergency Response Team
CNDPC	Committee for Natural Disaster Prevention and Control, Search and Rescue
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
CSDS	Centre for Social Development Studies
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
EWS	Early Warning System
FACT	Fisheries Actions Coalition Team
GCA	Green Community Alliance Association
GEDSI	Gender Equity, Disability, and Social Inclusion
GIS	Geographical Information System
HJA	Huam Jai Asasamak Association
IP2	Inclusion Project phase 2
LDPA	Lao Disabled People’s Association
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual
LWU	Lao Women’s Union
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MRC	Mekong River Commission
MRWGP	Mekong Regional Water Governance Program
NCDM	National Committee for Disaster Management
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRD	Northeastern Rural Development
OiC	Oxfam in Cambodia
OiL	Oxfam in Lao PDR
OiV	Oxfam in Vietnam
PA	Public Announcement
PCNDPC	Provincial Committee for Natural Disaster Prevention and Control
PCVA	Participatory Capacity and Vulnerability Assessment
PDR	People’s Democratic Republic
PMU	Project Management Unit
RUA	The Royal University of Agriculture
SCR	Strengthening Climate Resilience in the Mekong Sub-region
SEDPs	Socio-Economic Development Plans
THB	Thailand Baht
VNDMA	Vietnam Disaster Management Authority
VNDMS	Vietnam Disaster Monitoring System

# 1. SUMMARY INFORMATION

<b>Project title:</b>	Strengthening Climate Resilience in the Mekong Sub-region (SCR)
<b>Project code:</b>	A-06801
<b>Managing office/unit:</b>	Mekong Regional Project Management Unit (PMU)
<b>Implementing partner(s):</b>	See section 4
<b>Geographical location of Project implementation:</b>	Cambodia, Vietnam, Lao PDR and Thailand
<b>Project budget:</b>	AUD \$4,530,428
<b>Type of report:</b>	Project completion report
<b>Reporting period:</b>	1 March 2022 – 30 November 2025
<b>Date of submission:</b>	1 December 2025
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## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Oxfam, together with local partners, implemented the AUD \$4.55 million DFAT-supported Strengthening Climate Resilience in the Mekong Sub-region (SCR) project from March 2022 to November 2025 to reduce climate and disaster vulnerability in riverine communities across Thailand, Lao PDR, Vietnam and Cambodia. The project focused on three outcomes: 1) target riverine communities implementing inclusive Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) plans; 2) local authorities actively supporting communities in managing disaster and climate-related hazards; and 3) improved hydro-meteorological data being used by riverine communities, authorities, and DRM structures to inform decision-making and enhance resilience. Together, these outcomes contributed to safer, more adaptive communities capable of mitigating risks and responding effectively to climate and disaster challenges.

The project collaborated with civil society organisations, academic institutions, government departments and community groups. These partnerships were central to the project’s success at both community and government levels.

The SCR project was implemented in a dynamic and challenging environment. Early establishment was affected by residual COVID-19 disruptions, multiple climate events and increasing regulatory and political constraints, including a new decree in Viet Nam regulating foreign NGOs, heightened civil society monitoring in Cambodia, and electoral cycles across the region.

Government approvals and institutional processes in Viet Nam and Lao PDR delayed baseline assessments, GEDSI strategy development, and community implementation. In Viet Nam, planned partnerships with national disaster agencies did not proceed, further delaying start-up activities. Pre-approval requirements in Lao PDR and other administrative constraints continued to slow implementation, while regional restrictions on civic space and cross-border engagement constrained coordination and stakeholder participation.

Extreme weather events significantly disrupted delivery. Heatwaves in early 2024 delayed climate-smart livelihood activities, and Typhoon Yagi (August to October 2024) diverted partner capacity to emergency response, causing severe flooding in northern Thailand. In mid-2025, the closure of the Thailand–Cambodia border required relocation of the Project Closure Workshop to Lao PDR. A five-month no-cost extension (July to November 2025) was approved to complete outstanding deliverables and address cumulative delays.

Through partnerships, community-led design, capacity strengthening and regional coordination, SCR reached 12,341 people directly (including 5,657 women, 6,680 men, and 209 People with Disability) and 41,764 indirectly. Key successes included development of community-led DRM plans, proactive local authority engagement,

deployment of early warning systems tailored to user preferences, and integration of DRM/CCA into local planning processes. Interventions were context-specific, ranging from community-led water level monitoring and climate-smart agriculture in Cambodia, resilience research and experimentation in Thailand, strengthening of local bodies and SEDP integration in Viet Nam, to DRM structures and village-level plans in Lao PDR.

## Key results

**Outcome 1: Target riverine communities are implementing inclusive DRM and CCA plans.** The project supported communities to develop and implement DRM/CCA plans as highlighted by progress in identifying community driven climate resilience options; and improved disaster/climate risk analysis and actions. Evidence of project impact under this outcome include:

- 54 instances of communities developing and implementing inclusive DRM and CCA plans (exceeding the target of 8%). This included development of DRM/CCA plans for all target villages in Lao PDR, and Thailand; updating existing community contingency plans in Cambodia; and integration of community DRM/CCA plans into SEDPs in Vietnam.
- 89 households implemented activities to build climate resilience such as livelihood diversification, CSA and ecosystem restoration (exceeding the target by 56%).
- 145 community representatives (35 women, including 24 youth and 12 People with Disability) assumed leadership roles in DRM/CCA activities.

**Outcome 2: Local authorities supporting communities in managing disaster and climate-related hazards.**

The project led to local authorities supporting communities to manage disaster and climate related hazards, as highlighted through establishment and/or reactivation and nurturing of village, district and provincial disaster management committees. Evidence of project impact includes:

- 806 recorded instances of local authorities sharing climate information with communities, for example, the sharing of early warnings in Sibounhueang and Keomany village floods in Lao PDR (exceeding the target by 4%).
- 26 commune and district development plans incorporated DRM/CCA actions.
- 34 cases of authorities integrating perspectives of women, People with Disability and people from marginalised groups (exceeding the target by 42%).

**Outcome 3: Improved hydro-meteorological data is used by riverine communities and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) structures.** By the end of 2025 the project saw improved hydro-meteorological data being used by riverine communities, authorities and DRM structures, as highlighted by the deployment of early warning systems based on user preferences such as through mobile apps, community speakers and water-level monitoring poles and regional dialogues on water data sharing, which contributed to increased sharing of data between stakeholders. Evidence of project impact includes:

- 28 instances of authorities using improved hydro-meteorological data to inform plans and interventions supporting riverine communities were recorded (exceeding the target by 12%).
- 1,158 community members able to access and use data platforms as a result of targeted training received (exceeding the target by 29%).
- 230 households adapted livelihood strategies based on hydro-meteorological information (exceeding the target by 14%).

SCR advanced gender equity, disability and social inclusion across climate resilience and disaster risk management activities, guided by a DFAT-approved GEDSI Strategy and supported by dedicated resources. GEDSI considerations informed vulnerability assessments, DRM planning, climate-smart agriculture interventions and access to climate and early warning information, enabling more inclusive participation by women, youth and People with Disability. Practical enabling measures helped reduce participation barriers, contributing to increased engagement of women in DRM committees, targeted livelihood opportunities for women-headed households and more inclusive community-level preparedness and response practices.

The evaluation found that GEDSI outcomes were influenced by contextual and implementation factors that shaped the pace and consistency of change across countries. The timing of baseline studies and finalisation

of the GEDSI Strategy limited opportunities for full integration across the entire project lifecycle, and monitoring systems were not always designed to capture GEDSI outcomes in a systematic way. Progress in women's leadership and disability inclusion varied by context, reflecting social norms, caregiving responsibilities, accessibility constraints and the need to work through existing institutional structures. Despite these factors, qualitative evidence points to sustained gains in confidence, skills and institutional awareness. The evaluation highlights the value of earlier contextual analysis, strengthened monitoring and longer-term investment to further consolidate GEDSI outcomes in line with DFAT's commitments.

Sustainability was a core focus, achieved through local ownership, institutional strengthening and use of scalable, locally maintainable approaches. Community and government capacities were strengthened through participatory tools, integration of DRM/CCA into sub-national planning processes, and alignment with existing government structures. Early warning systems and locally embedded data-sharing mechanisms provide ongoing benefits beyond the project lifecycle.

While the three-year timeframe limited the potential for region-wide systemic change, SCR established a strong proof of concept for inclusive, community-led climate resilience in the Mekong Sub-region. The project demonstrated that locally grounded, partnership-based approaches can strengthen resilience even in constrained operating environments.

Lessons from SCR will inform the next phase (IP3), with a stronger focus on simplified MEAL systems, deeper contextual GEDSI analysis, economically viable livelihood pathways, adaptive management and strengthened regional learning. The ongoing challenge is to translate demonstrated community level success into broader systemic change that improves climate resilience across the Mekong Sub-region at scale.

### 3. CONTEXT ANALYSIS

The project was implemented during a period of significant environmental, political and socio-economic change in the Mekong sub-region. It began as countries were recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, which limited government attention on initiatives not directly tied to economic recovery, and continued under ongoing climate and governance challenges.

#### Project Timeline

The SRC project was implemented in a dynamic and challenging environment.

March–December 2022 (project inception + groundwork)

- COVID restrictions eased, but periodic spikes still affected travel and gatherings; project set-up and early consultations began.
- Viet Nam introduced a new decree affecting registration/management of foreign non-government organisations (August 2022), contributing to a tighter operating environment
- Cambodia saw increased monitoring of civil society ahead of the 2023 General Election.
- The region also experienced multiple climate hazards across all four countries (prolonged rains in Cambodia, flooding in northern Thailand, storms and landslides in Viet Nam, and tropical-storm-related flooding in Lao PDR), which disrupted communities and early activity scheduling.

2022–mid 2023 (approvals delayed in Lao PDR and Viet Nam)

- Delays in government approvals and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) delayed the start of core activities (including baseline work, GEDSI strategy development, and community implementation), most acutely in Lao PDR and Viet Nam.
- In Viet Nam, approval and institutional decision-making delays contributed to late mobilisation and budget underspend.

- In Lao PDR, delivery was repeatedly delayed as each activity required advance clearance through the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare as the Memorandum of Understanding partner, meaning plans often had to wait for formal approval before partners could proceed.

June 2023 (Viet Nam national approval, then disruption)

- Viet Nam’s national-level government approval was only secured in June 2023.
- The project’s originally planned national government partnership with the Viet Nam Disaster and Dyke Management Authority/Viet Nam National Disaster Management Authority was later cancelled after prolonged negotiations (for reasons outside the project’s control). This delayed the baseline assessment and GEDSI work, contributing to underspend and subsequent budget reallocation.

June–December 2023 (implementation under shrinking civic space and election-related pauses)

- Civic space restrictions and surveillance increased across the region, affecting the ability of partners to convene, engage authorities, and advance sensitive policy dialogue. Cambodia and Thailand paused field activities during election months for safety; in Cambodia, the July 2023 General Election period coincided with increased NGO monitoring and heightened risk management requirements.

July 2024–October 2024 (MTR period and intensifying constraints with major climate shocks)

- Operating constraints became more explicit and disruptive. In Viet Nam, national security and anti-corruption reforms tightened the operating environment and the Law on Civil Defence took effect (July 2024), increasing compliance narrowed the space for open engagement with government and other stakeholders.
- In Lao PDR, delivery was significantly slowed by requirements for pre-approval of activities through the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare as the MoU partner, and at least one instance of restricted cross-border participation occurred when authorisation was not granted for Lao women leaders to travel internationally (June 2024).
- Across the region, extreme weather created major delays: March–May 2024 heatwaves disrupted climate-smart livelihood activities in Viet Nam, Lao PDR and Cambodia; and Typhoon Yagi and associated flooding (August–October 2024) led to emergency response prioritisation and interruptions in Viet Nam and severe flooding impacts in northern Thailand (including Chiang Rai), with knock-on delays for project delivery. Lao PDR was less directly hit in target sites, but national response demands still slowed implementation.

December 2024 (cross-border and regional engagement delays linked to approvals)

- Regional collaboration continued to face administrative constraints; for example, Viet Nam partners were unable to participate in a regional water data dialogue due to lengthy central government approval processes (December 2024).

01 July–30 November 2025 (no-cost extension period)

- A five-month no-cost extension was implemented (01 July–30 November 2025) to complete remaining deliverables and manage the cumulative effects of earlier delays (government approvals, civic space constraints, disaster disruptions, and cross-border limitations).

Mid-2025–October 2025 (Thailand–Cambodia border closure and relocation of regional convening)

- Escalation of border conflict led to prolonged closure of the Thailand–Cambodia border, restricting cross-border travel and requiring changes to regional coordination. The Project Closure Workshop scheduled for 16–17 October 2025 was held in Lao PDR to allow participation by Thailand and Cambodia stakeholders despite the border disruption.

November 2025 (Rapid Endline Evaluation finalised).

## Relevance to community, national and Australian priorities

The SRC project responded directly to the priorities of riverine households whose livelihoods depend on agriculture, fisheries and natural resources and who face increasing exposure to floods, droughts and extreme weather. Community priorities consistently included improved early warning systems, practical climate

adaptation options, livelihood diversification and inclusive participation in local decision-making. Through Participatory Community Vulnerability Assessments, inclusive DRM planning and climate-smart agriculture interventions, the project strengthened household preparedness, improved access to climate and disaster information and enabled women, youth and People with Disability to participate in resilience-building and leadership roles.

At national and sub-national levels, the project aligned with climate, disaster risk and development strategies across all four implementing countries. In Cambodia, it supported priorities under the National Strategic Development Plan 2024–2028, particularly those relating to climate resilience, disaster risk management, environmental sustainability, agriculture, food security and integration of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) into development planning. In Viet Nam, the project supported the Socio-Economic Development Strategy 2021–2030, the National Strategy for Natural Disaster Prevention and Control to 2030 and the Law on Natural Disaster Prevention and Control, contributing to the integration of vulnerability analysis into commune-level Socio-Economic Development Plans and improved use of hydro-meteorological and early warning data. In Lao PDR, the project aligned with the 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2021–2025), the National Disaster Risk Management Strategy 2021–2030 and the National Climate Change Strategy, strengthening village-to-provincial DRM committees and inclusive local planning including women’s leadership. In Thailand, it complemented the National Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Plan 2021–2027 and long-term climate adaptation strategies by improving coordination between community and sub-national DRM actors.

At the regional and Australian policy level, the project supported Australia’s Mekong–Australia Partnership priorities on climate resilience, DRR and inclusive development. Its focus on GEDSI aligns with Australia’s International Gender Equality Strategy and International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy. By strengthening community and local government capacity, improving climate and early warning information systems and embedding inclusive approaches in formal planning processes, the project contributed to Australia’s broader objectives of promoting stability, resilience and sustainable development in the Mekong sub-region.

## Operating context and project adaptations

The Mekong river basin is highly vulnerable to climate hazards, with floods, droughts and typhoons exacerbated by climate change. During implementation, Typhoon Yagi (2024) disrupted field activities and community engagement, highlighting the fragility of livelihoods and the importance of DRM/CCA interventions. Agriculture, central to riverine livelihoods, is acutely sensitive to natural hazards. Project activities, including community-led water level monitoring, climate-smart agriculture in Cambodia and inclusive DRM/CCA planning in Lao PDR and Thailand, enabled practical adaptation strategies and participation of people from marginalised groups.

Gains in gender equality, particularly in leadership and political representation in Cambodia and Lao PDR, were notable, yet women continued to face disproportionate impacts from climate shocks and economic disruption. Many women in the Mekong region work in informal and climate-vulnerable sectors, earn less than men for similar work and carry a double burden of unpaid care. Women, ethnic minorities and People with Disability remain underrepresented in DRM structures and leadership, reinforcing the need for gender responsive climate programming.

Political, governance and economic developments also shaped implementation. Cambodia transitioned from Prime Minister Hun Sen to his son while recovering economically from COVID-19. Vietnam and Lao PDR merged ministries as part of governance reforms, delaying project start-up and coordination. Lao PDR’s currency devaluation increased economic pressures and migration, limiting community participation. Thailand experienced political uncertainty, including a youth-focused pro-democracy party winning most seats in 2023 before the formation of a military-backed government. Border tensions between Thailand and Cambodia affected cross-border collaboration.

Despite these challenges, the project maintained strong relevance. Its approaches of strengthening community and local government capacities, improving data collection and dissemination and strengthening coordination directly supported climate-resilient livelihoods. These approaches remained critical given shortened implementation in Viet Nam and Lao PDR due to approval delays. A no-cost extension ensured the project could deliver its intended outcomes and sustain contributions to community resilience across the Mekong region.

## 4. PROJECT REACH

### 4.1 People we work with

**Direct participants:** In total, 12,341 people participated directly in the project, including 6,680 women (46%) and 209 People with Disability (1.7%). Apart from Lao PDR, the project did not collect disaggregated data on Indigenous People, with Lao PDR reporting a total of 307 Indigenous People who directly benefited. The project consistently sought to gather disaggregated data on LGBTQIA+ participants; however, little to no data was collected, likely due to cultural sensitivities that limit self-identification.

Direct participants are those with whom the project was undertaken and who engaged in project interventions or directly received a project product or service. This includes participants in training, learning and dialogue events, community-level planning and analysis activities and pilot activities at household and community level.

**Table One: Direct participants**

Country	TOTAL				Youth	People with Disability
	Total	Men and Boys	Women and Girls	LGBTQIA+		
PMU	635	282	350	3	53	10
Cambodia	4,080	2,011	2,069	-	-	87
Lao	2,834	1,575	1,259	-	24	25
Vietnam	3,971	2,419	1,552	-	-	72
Thailand	821	393	427	1	53	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,341</b>	<b>6,680</b>	<b>5,657</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>209</b>

**Table Two: Direct participants (by year)**

Year	TOTAL				Youth	People with Disability
	Total	Men and Boys	Women and Girls	LGBTQIA+		
2022	828	352	476	-	-	48
2023	3,917	2,039	1,877	1	29	70
2024	3,970	2,117	1,853	-	30	50
2025	3,626	2,172	1,451	3	71	41
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,341</b>	<b>6,680</b>	<b>5,657</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>209</b>

**Indirect beneficiaries:** Indirect beneficiaries are people who may benefit from the project without direct participation. This includes the wider family members of direct participants, who gain from the knowledge and experience of the household member engaged in project-supported activities. Indirect family members are estimated at three per direct participant, based on the average size of rural households in the region, excluding families of some direct participants such as government and partner staff.

Indirect beneficiaries also include the broader population of targeted villages or communes, who benefit from strengthened disaster and climate risk management (DRM) capacity within community structures and local authorities. These figures are calculated using available population statistics for each location. Both levels of indirect participation are presented: indirect family members (Tables Three and Four) and indirect community members (Table Five). Figures for community members include both family members and community-level beneficiaries.

Over the project period, an estimated 27,341 people benefited indirectly, including 12,808 women (47%). The indirect community reach, as illustrated during the 2024 flood events in Thailand, reflects the wider population benefiting from improved DRM capacity of local structures and authorities.

**Table Three: Indirect beneficiaries (family members)**

Country	TOTAL				Youth	People with Disability
	Total	Men and Boys	Women and Girls	LGBTQIA+		
PMU	1,905	855	1,050	9	159	30
Cambodia	12,240	6,033	6,207	-	-	261
Lao	5,190	3,302	1,888	-	96	57
Vietnam	5,546	3,164	2,382	-	-	-
Thailand	2,460	1,179	1,281	3	144	45
TOTAL	27,341	14,533	12,808	12	399	393

**Table Four: Indirect beneficiaries (family members by year)**

Year	TOTAL				Youth	People with Disability
	Total	Men and Boys	Women and Girls	LGBTQIA+		
2022	2,274	969	1,305	-	-	74
2023	10,266	5,355	4,908	3	96	200
2024	10,274	5,556	4,718	-	90	140
2025	4,527	2,641	1,877	9	213	53
TOTAL	27,341	14,521	12,808	12	399	393

**Table Five: Indirect beneficiaries (from communities)**

Country	Province	District	Commune/Village	Population	Women
Lao PDR	Luang prabang	Nan	Sibounhueng	520	320
Lao PDR	Luang prabang	Nan	Keomany	400	205
Lao PDR	Luang prabang	Pakou	Houaykang	170	101
Lao PDR	Luang prabang	Pahou	Houaymard	376	202
Lao PDR	Champasack	Sanasomboun	Champee	310	165
Lao PDR	Champasack	Sanasomboun	Kheele	530	218
Lao PDR	Champasack	Soukhouma	Lart	960	545
Lao PDR	Champasack	Soukhouma	Mouang	330	175
Vietnam	Soc Trang	Cu Lao Dung	An Thanh Dong	11,971	5,908
Vietnam	Soc Trang	Ke Sach	Phong Nam	6,369	3,143
Vietnam	Soc Trang	Long Phu	Song Phung	9,827	4,850
Thailand	Chiang Rai	Chiang Khong	Sri Don Chai/Pak Ing Tai	182	95
Thailand	Chiang Rai	Pa Daet	San Makha/Wang Sila	953	470
Thailand	Chiang Rai	Khun Tan	Pa Tan/Pa Kha	489	243
Thailand	Pha Yao	Phu Kam Yao	Mae Ing/San Ton Pueng	560	294
Cambodia	Stung Treng	Berey O'svay	Koh Snaeng	3,206	1,540
Cambodia	Kratie	Sambo	Boeung Char	2,358	1,192
Cambodia	Rattanakiri	Lumphet	Seda	1,081	528
Cambodia	Rattanakiri	Andoung Meas	Nhang	1,172	279
			TOTAL	41,764	20,773

## 4.2 Partners

Most project partners in Cambodia and at the regional level were Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). Academic institutions played a key role in Thailand and Lao PDR, contributing to ideation, research and technical expertise as well as implementation. In Lao PDR and Viet Nam, implementation was delivered directly by Oxfam teams or in coordination with government bodies or organisations aligned with the government e.g. mass organisations. A summary of partners and their contributions is provided below.

**Table Six: Project funded partners and their key areas of work.**

Name of partner	Type	Country	Key areas of work
Northeastern Rural Development (NRD)	CSO	Cambodia	Working with communities and local authorities in Kratie province
My Village Organisation	CSO	Cambodia	Working with communities and local authorities in Stung Treng province
The Fisheries Actions Coalition Team (FACT)	CSO	Cambodia	Sharing SCR learning and experience among the networks, connecting and coordinating with other networks
National Centre for Disaster Management (NCDM)	Government	Cambodia	Project activities in different geographical locations
The Royal University of Agriculture- Center for Agricultural and Environmental Studies (RUA)	Academic Institution	Cambodia	Training partners and community leaders on climate smart agriculture technology; coordination to implement climate smart agriculture models with selected households; monitor and follow-up to document learning.
The 3S Rivers Protection Network	CSO	Cambodia	Project activities in different geographical locations
IMPACT via KuDu Studios	Private Sector	Cambodia	Technical capacity building for the community on filming and impact story telling
Green Community Alliance Association (GCA)	CSO	Lao PDR	Implementation (leading the process of PCVA and supporting communities to develop DRM/CCA plans)
Lao Women’s Union (LWU) within Souphanouvong University	Academic Institution	Lao PDR	Promote empowerment and leadership of women and bring technical and scientific knowledge to the community to strengthen livelihood options
Lao Women’s Union (LWU) Champasak University	Academic Institution	Lao PDR	Promote the empowerment and leadership of women, as well as bring technical and scientific knowledge to the community to strengthen livelihood options, e.g., mushroom cultivation, cattle feed production and animal vaccination.
LDDA (Lao Disabled People’s Association).	CSO	Lao PDR	Training and advisory support on the inclusion of People with Disability to partners
Huam Jai Asasamak Association (HJA)	CSO	Lao PDR	Capacity building of farmers (organic cultivation, value chain, financial literacy), Shade House Model development.
Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	Government	Lao PDR	Approvals, project management coordination, lead on capacity development for the province, district and village
Centre for Learning and Information on Civil Society Knowledge (CLICK)	Social Enterprise	Lao PDR	Research focuses on vulnerability and the impact of disasters, and on how communities receive information. Action research and facilitation of livelihood planning at the community level
Cambodia Institute for Cooperation and Peace	CSO	Regional	Convened regional dialogue exploring opportunities to improve inclusiveness of the Mekong water data sharing platforms and advocate for accountable, transparent and actionable data sharing across the region
Kasetsart University Team	Academic Institution	Thailand	Technical support

Mae Fah Luang University Team	Academic Institution	Thailand	Led project activities in two villages within the Ing River Basin in two districts of Chiang Rai Province. Coordinating the inputs of other academic partners
Ubon Ratchathani University Team	Academic Institution	Thailand	Focus on fisheries technical support.
Chulalongkorn University, Center for Social Development Studies (CSDS)	Academic Institution	Thailand	Community mobilisation and collaboration for accountable and actionable data sharing
Maharakham University	Academic Institution	Thailand	Climate impact and community vulnerability study lead
Soc Trang Provincial Committee for Natural Disaster Prevention and Control (PCNDPC) Search and Rescue	Government	Vietnam	Primary provincial-level partner. Led implementation with the district and commune CNDPCs, Farmers' Association and Oxfam.
Soc Trang Women's Union	Government-aligned movement	Vietnam	Mobilisation and implementation
Soc Trang Farmer Union	Government aligned movement	Vietnam	Mobilisation and implementation

**Table Seven: Strategic non-funded partners**

Name of partner	Type	Country	Key areas of work
Stimson Centre	CSO	Region	Collaboration on regional data sharing through the Mekong Dam Monitor and other activities underway under the Mekong-US Partnership.
International Rivers Network	CSO	Region	Coordination and information sharing with partners and link to dialogue and engagement with key actors such as the MRC, National Mekong Committees, MRC Flood and Drought Centre, and development partners. Manage local partners in Thailand (funded under the Inclusion Project Phase 2 (IP2))
e-Water – support to the MRC Secretariat and Mekong Water Solutions	Private Sector	Region	Strategic alliance to advocate for inclusive water data sharing
Worldwide Fund for Nature	CSO	Region	Advocacy alliance for Mekong inclusive governance
People in Need	CSO	Regional	Transboundary early warning coordination

## Boutsady: Stronger women's engagement in disaster preparedness in Champee

Thirty-eight-year-old Boutsady stands as a pillar of strength and pride in Champee, Lao PDR. Since stepping into her role as Vice Head of the Village Women's Union in 2022, she has been mobilising women to support village development. Whether organising support during village festivals, welcoming guests, managing village finances and assets, or participating in village planning, Boutsady plays a vital role in community life.



Boutsady described how women's participation has changed over time. "In the past, fewer women participated in meetings or development activities," she explained. "Women were busy. They went to the farm, collected non-timber forest products, and many even worked outside the village, some in neighbouring countries." Despite these demands, Boutsady has seen a shift in women's participation and confidence in disaster management decision-making. "We have the right to be consulted and to propose ideas and concerns. The Women's Union works closely with village authorities, and our ideas are accepted," she said.

In Champee, women's contributions to village life are longstanding. Through the Women's Union, women have helped establish the village rice bank, and the income generated was reinvested into building public toilets, purchasing cooking materials, and other essentials for the village. Boutsady is clear that women have always contributed to development. "As women, we are strong. We contribute to development. We are free to do any work we want, and it's well accepted by men and the community," she said. She shared her own experience working on the farm, repairing her house, and even doing construction work. "I do those things because of my ability, not because my husband forces me," she said. "In Champee, leadership is based on ability, not gender. Many families have women as leaders, and men accept it because they recognise the strength and contributions of women."

For Boutsady, the change linked to SCR is not that women suddenly became active, but that women have become more engaged in disaster preparedness and more recognised in shaping how the village responds to floods. During the 2024 flood, women led the way in preparedness, deciding what to evacuate, packing belongings, and ensuring safety. "Women are more cautious and afraid of loss. They prepare better than men," she said.

She also recalled the 2019 flood, when women evacuated early but one older man refused to leave. When the water rose, he was stuck in his house, and the response team had to risk their lives to bring him to safety. Experiences like this underline why preparedness matters. In Champee, evacuation now prioritises children, older people, People with Disability, and pregnant women, with village authorities ensuring these groups are evacuated first. Boutsady's account suggests that SCR has helped create stronger community engagement in preparedness by building on women's existing roles and strengthening their participation in decisions and actions that protect the village during floods.

Reflecting on women's evolving roles, Boutsady acknowledged both progress and continuing challenges. Women are strong in leadership and economic development, but still face limited technical knowledge and market access, partly due to the village's geography. "Migration," she noted, "is a sign of the resilience of women seeking solutions and opportunities to support their families."

Looking to the future, Boutsady expressed optimism. She sees continued support from local government and organisations such as Oxfam as important to strengthening women's technical capacity and leadership. Her story shows that SCR has helped deepen women's engagement in disaster preparedness and response. By building on women's existing roles, SCR has supported a more active and organised approach to protecting families, prioritising at-risk groups and strengthening community resilience to floods and climate shocks.

## 5. PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

The overall goal of the project was to contribute to resilient riverine communities in the Mekong Sub-Region. To achieve this, the project focused on ensuring that riverine communities experience reduced vulnerability to the impacts of disasters and climate risks. This was pursued through three long-term outcomes: 1) target riverine communities implement inclusive DRM and CCA plans; 2) local authorities actively support communities to manage disaster and climate-related hazards; and 3) improved hydro-meteorological data is effectively used by riverine communities, authorities and DRM structures to inform preparedness, response and adaptation efforts. The following section reviews progress against these long-term outcomes, highlighting key outputs, challenges and illustrative stories.

When interpreting achievements, it is important to note:

**Project delays:** In Viet Nam and Lao PDR, activities were delayed due to government approval processes, with implementation starting nearly halfway through the project. A project designed for 3.5 years, therefore had to be delivered in roughly half that time.

**Differences in government structures:** Disaster management and governance structures vary in maturity across target countries. In Cambodia, engagement of local authorities and communities was extensive. In Lao PDR and Viet Nam, these connections had to be established almost from scratch, and the reorganisation of ministries created coordination challenges. In Thailand, these structures are mandated but not always functional due to the relative infrequency of natural hazards.

**MEAL system challenges:** Implementation of the MEAL system, designed at inception was constrained by staff turnover, limited capacity among staff and partners, and the complexity of the system itself. This made data collection and analysis cumbersome and limited the consistent use of MEAL for decision making. Some incorrect categorisation or overestimation of outputs and outcomes is possible, as highlighted in the external rapid endline evaluation (see Section 9 for lessons learned). Despite these challenges, Oxfam considers the program made meaningful progress towards its objectives.

**Mid-term review and no-cost extension:** The mid-term review did not recommend revising indicator targets despite the condensed timeframe. During discussions on the no-cost extension, it was agreed to focus on implementation to achieve the original targets set in the project design.

The endline evaluation observed that project impacts were highly contextualised, varying not only across the four countries but also within different communities in each country. Despite these contextual differences, there was clear evidence of positive changes across all four project countries. However, the evaluation also noted that the project timeframe and the duration of the assessment were too short to fully expect or measure long-term impact.

### Outcome 1. Target riverine communities are implementing inclusive DRM/CCA plans.

Outcome 1 targeted riverine communities comprising small producers, farmers and fisherfolk. Activities increased awareness amongst communities of natural hazards and the connections with climate change. Participatory tools supported communities to assess how hazards interacted with their lives and how climate change was exacerbating the situation. Inclusive community participatory processes and research supported the design of relevant, context-specific activities and interventions. This included Participatory Capacity Vulnerability Analysis (PCVA) in Lao PDR and Viet Nam, Vulnerability Risk Assessments in Cambodia and research undertaken by university partners in Thailand. Community and local authorities developed Community-based DRM and Contingency Action Plans for eight villages in Lao PDR. Contingency plans were updated for all districts in Cambodia. DRM/CCA was integrated into Social Economic Development Plans in Viet Nam and commune investment planning in Cambodia. In Thailand community-based vulnerability analysis was conducted.





Examples of achievements include:

- In Thailand, partners facilitated disaster planning in all three target villages, improving understanding of risk and adaptation options through collective and individual action.
- In Lao PDR, Huam Jai Asasamak Association developed shade house models, built farmers' financial literacy and improved access to early warning systems.
- In Houay Kang, Lao PDR, Ms Cher shifted from shifting cultivation to mushroom cultivation to reduce climate exposure, reflecting growing adoption of resilient farming.
- In Houaymard, Lao PDR, DRM Committee Head guided his community to assess flash flooding risks and construct a drainage channel, demonstrating how collective action and simple infrastructure can reduce vulnerability to unpredictable rainfall.
- In Cu Lao Dung district, Viet Nam, Mr Tien replaced shrimp and fishponds lost to river flooding with 200 m<sup>2</sup> of *Sonneratia* mangroves, learning how mangroves protect dikes, prevent erosion and buffer storms.
- In Pa Kha village, Chiang Rai Province, Thailand, residents engaged with early warning systems and evacuation planning following flash flooding in 2024, highlighting gaps in disaster readiness. Three Commune Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) in Soc Trang, Viet Nam, were trained and equipped (90 CERT members, 44 women).
- Findings from PCVAs were integrated into commune SEDPs in An Thanh Dong, Phong Nam and Song Phung, with routine use of the PCTT and Nguồn Nước Cứu Long apps by commune officials for planning and alerts.





Despite resource constraints, limited access and delayed starts in Lao PDR and Viet Nam, communities actively applied participatory tools such PCVA and Vulnerability/Risk Assessments to identify hazards and develop practical solutions using traditional knowledge and local resources. In Lao PDR, for instance, local women collected straw and firewood to support mushroom cultivation, and community knowledge of flood-prone areas guided the placement of drainage channels. In Cambodia, water-level monitoring poles now assist over a thousand households in flood-prone areas. At the SCR Regional Closure Workshop, government officials from the National Committee for Disaster Management noted that these tools and techniques had been replicated in non-project areas, demonstrating broader influence and uptake beyond the immediate project sites.

The project prioritised inclusion, actively supporting the participation of people from marginalised groups, including women producers, People with Disability, and Indigenous People. GEDSI training and awareness initiatives reinforced this approach. In Wang Sila, Thailand, for example, the youth mapping team combined traditional terrain knowledge with technical training to identify at-risk households, ensuring evacuation planning addressed the needs of people from the most vulnerable groups. Across the region, 13 water-saving irrigation systems were installed specifically for low-income and women-headed households, and households with older people or people with a disability, with neighbouring farmers observing and adapting the models, sometimes employing more affordable pumps sourced from China. In Cambodia, CSA models, including hydroponics, drip irrigation and crop diversification, were developed and tested with a focus on supporting community members who were most vulnerable.

Data gathered over the project period shows significant progress in all four countries against this Outcome one.

Total project progress towards LT01	Cambodia	Lao PDR	Thailand	Viet Nam	Overall <sup>1</sup>
					
Indicator	Progress				
Long-Term Objective 1: By 2025, target riverine communities are implementing inclusive DRM/CCA plans					
LT01.1. Evidence of target communities are implementing activities from their DRM/CCA plans	33 (138%)	8 (62%)	4 (100%)	9 (100%)	54 (108%)
LT01.2. Increased number of climate resilient activities implemented by target households	40 (129%)	12 (300%)	4 (100%)	13 (87%)	89 (156%)
LT01.3. Evidence that community structures in target communities show the adoption of DRM/CCA in their mandates and/or operational plan	15 (94%)	8 (100%)	4 (100%)	9 (100%)	36 (97%)
LT01.4. Evidence that women, youth, People with Disability, and representatives of marginalised groups (trained/supported by SCR) have taken leadership roles in DRM/CCA related events, platforms at community/commune and district level (Modified IP2 indicator)	39 (87%)	64 (98%)	12 (150%)	30 (77%)	145 (92%)
LT01.5. % of target population (men and women) reporting changes in knowledge, attitude and practices towards women, People with Disability and ethnic minorities related to DRM/CCA	ND	ND	ND	63%	ND

0-39%	Minimal Progress	40-74%	Under-achieved	75-124%	Achieved	125+%	Over-achieved	ND	No data <sup>2</sup>
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2025 progress towards LT01	Cambodia	Lao PDR	Thailand	Viet Nam	Overall
					
Indicator	Progress				
Long-Term Objective 1: By 2025, target riverine communities are implementing inclusive DRM/CCA plans					
LT01.1. Evidence of target communities are implementing activities from their DRM/CCA plans	7	0	0	3	10
LT01.2. Increased number of climate resilient activities implemented by target households	0	12	0	10	22
LT01.3. Evidence that community structures in target communities show the adoption of DRM/CCA in their mandates and/or operational plan	3	0	1	0	4
LT01.4. Evidence that women, youth, People with Disability, and representatives of marginalised groups (trained/supported by SCR) have taken leadership roles in DRM/CCA related events, platforms at community/commune and district level (Modified IP2 indicator)	2	0	4	9	15
LT01.5. % of target population (men and women) reporting changes in knowledge, attitude and practices towards women, People with Disability and ethnic minorities related to DRM/CCA	NA	NA	NA	0.5%	0.5%

1 Consistent with data findings and data presentation in the Rapid Endline Evaluation (see page 20), the data presented in the Overall column incorporates PMU data where available. PMU data has not been reflected within country level columns based on how data was collected for this project and reported on as part of the MEAL framework. This is applicable to all tables within the Project Achievements section of this report and should be noted.

2 Note: Quantitative data for indicator LT01.5: was only collected in Viet Nam with the other countries collecting qualitative data (case studies). Qualitative data was collected by the project to provide supplementary evidence to report on this indicator. This has been detailed further on page 24 below.

In total, 54 cases of communities developing and implementing DRM and/or CCA plans were recorded across target communities (33 in Cambodia, 8 in Lao PDR, 4 in Thailand, 9 in Viet Nam). The 33 cases in Cambodia reflect the earlier start of project implementation. Overall, this represents 108% of the project target.

- In Houay Kang, Lao PDR, families diversified beyond cattle raising into mushroom production and small trade, reducing reliance on climate-sensitive practices such as livestock, which are vulnerable to drought, floods and disease.
- In Pa Kha, Thailand, DRM plans enabled rapid relocation of livestock to higher ground, reducing economic losses during severe floods in 2024 and 2025.
- In Soc Trang, Viet Nam, households using automatic water-saving irrigation combined with intercropping were able to adjust watering times, crop mixes and planting cycles in response to shifts in salinity and rainfall, protecting yields and income. These labour-saving strategies are particularly important for households with People with Disability and those headed by women.
- In total, 89 households implemented climate resilient activities developed through DRM/CCA plans (40 in Cambodia, 12 in Lao PDR, 4 in Thailand, 13 in Viet Nam). Diversified income streams, climate-smart technologies and ecosystem restoration reduced reliance on climate-sensitive practices, stabilised incomes and built household resilience. Examples include:
  - In Pa Kha, Thailand, households protected livestock during severe floods and invested in value chain improvements to stabilise income.
  - In Houay Kang, Lao PDR, women smallholders such as Ms Cher, Ms Voy and Mrs Khampet diversified from shifting cultivation into livestock and mushroom production, providing reliable income and food security while reducing dependence on rainfall.
  - In Song Phung, Viet Nam, a woman-headed household reduced daily watering time by more than half, enabling intercropping and improving crop quality.
  - In Houaymard, Lao PDR, Ms Dao introduced frog raising, creating additional income and protein for households, adopted by five other households.
  - In Houay Kang, training on cattle vaccination strengthened farmers' technical knowledge, reducing morbidity and mortality of an important household asset.
  - In Soc Trang, Viet Nam, climate-smart technologies supported at-risk households. Mr Dinh Quang Chuc, an older man with disability, used an automatic sprinkler system to manage a 5500 m<sup>2</sup> garden of jackfruit and plums, reducing labour and increasing productivity.

36 community structures (15 in Cambodia, 8 in Lao PDR, 4 in Thailand, 9 in Viet Nam) adopted DRM/CCA in their mandates or operational plans, achieving 97% of the project target. For example, 23.96 hectares of mangroves were restored in Soc Trang, protecting 29 km of riverbank and benefitting approximately 5,416 households (20,820 people).

A total of 145 women, youth, People with Disability and people from marginalised groups took on leadership roles in DRM/CCA events and platforms at community, commune and district levels (92% of target). Examples include:

- In Houaymard, Lao PDR, Ms Bounmy Thor chaired the DRM committee, leading assessments and coordinating with authorities at multiple levels.
- In Champasak province, Lao PDR, all target villages included women's union representatives in disaster management committees.
- In Phong Nam commune, Soc Trang, Viet Nam, Ms Tran Thi Lan led a climate-smart irrigation demonstration site and hosted neighbouring farmers, building trust and promoting adoption of climate-resilient farming.
- In Houay Kang, Lao PDR, women such as Ms Voy and Ms Cher led livelihood diversification through mushroom cultivation, becoming role models.
- In Pak Ing Tai, Thailand, women's groups contributed to DRM plan development, ensuring the needs of children, older people and People with Disability were considered.

- Champee village, Champasak province, Lao PDR, strengthened community resilience through early warning systems, disaster preparedness and climate adaptation measures following lessons from severe 2019 floods. Women and youth took active leadership roles.
- Women’s groups in Thailand were trained on fish processing to add value to products, supporting long-term resilience.

Participatory processes such as PCVA in Lao PDR and Viet Nam, Vulnerability and Risk Assessment in Cambodia and research in Thailand directly engaged community members to identify climate risks and hazards. This increased awareness of climate change and encouraged positive attitudes toward adaptation and DRM. While anecdotal evidence suggests greater inclusion of women, People with Disability and ethnic minorities, robust quantitative data on knowledge, attitudes and practices was not collected, so this indicator is not reported. Challenges to GEDSI strategy implementation, responding to this gap, is detailed further on page 38. Despite this challenge, the project made deliberate efforts to capture qualitative evidence to measure progress against this outcome. The Rapid Endline Evaluation found that gender mainstreaming sessions contributed to some attitudinal shifts among local leaders. For example, after trainings delivered through the Women’s Union, leaders were reported as “more open” to joining gender topics and encouraging more balanced participation, alongside women becoming more proactive in discussions and DRM planning (while noting this was “just the beginning”). At the same time, the evaluation documents ongoing institutional resistance to men’s participation in gender-related spaces; a Women’s Union representative described difficulty in securing male decision-makers’ attendance (requests for male directors resulting in female deputies being sent), reflecting persistent gender norms within institutions.

In terms of changes in gender/social relations, the Rapid Endline Evaluation reports that male focus group participants observed women “asking more questions and making contributions in the community” linked to SCR training and engagement, while cautioning that a more in-depth GEDSI assessment would be required to fully assess these dynamics.

In Lao PDR (Champee), qualitative evidence in the completion report describes a shift from limited participation (“fewer women participated”) to women having “more opportunities to participate in decision-making”, with Women’s Union leaders stating that their ideas are accepted by village authorities and that men accept women’s leadership based on ability. However, evidence also shows change was uneven across sites: in one Lao PDR site, women and men reported they already “walk together” and did not perceive major change, and overall, the evaluation notes that late delivery of some gender mainstreaming activities limited broader impact beyond immediate participants.

The key contributing outputs to this long-term outcome include:

- 1,714 people (Cambodia 295, Lao PDR 178, Viet Nam 1117, Thailand/Regional 124) trained in inclusive planning tools and processes (151% of target).
- 28 (3 in 2022, 5 in 2023, 16 in 2024, 4 in 2025) community organisations promoting DRM/CCA in their communities (117% of target).

## **Outcome 2. Local authorities are supporting communities to manage disaster and climate related hazards.**

Under Outcome 2, local government played a critical role in supporting communities to prepare for and respond to climate-related hazards. At the start of the project, field teams assessed the strength of DRM structures at commune and district levels and the degree of connection and cooperation between local authorities and communities. Where connections existed, the project strengthened them through training and joint activities. Where connections were weak or absent, the project created forums and opportunities for engagement. Vulnerability assessments were conducted jointly wherever possible and plans were aligned with existing government plans.





Commune and village disaster committees were supported to improve planning and coordination, including clarifying roles and responsibilities. For example, in Lao PDR, village, district and provincial disaster management committees were established or reactivated and are now functioning effectively, mobilising communities for preparedness and enabling quicker implementation of early warning systems. National government partners

reported these improvements during the Regional Project Closure Workshop. Committees that previously focused only on post-disaster reporting are now taking on preparedness and risk reduction activities.

Approaches differed across the four countries and were context-specific:





- Cambodia: The project strengthened and updated district and commune contingency plans following simulation exercises.
- Lao PDR: Province and District DRM strategies were supported, and community-based DRM and climate adaptation plans were developed in all target villages and districts.
- Thailand: The project supported communities to develop DRM plans and advocated for adoption by district, commune and provincial authorities around the Ing River. At the time of project completion, formal adoption had not yet occurred.
- Viet Nam: The project successfully influenced the government to incorporate DRM/CCA into district SEDPs. Commune disaster taskforces were strengthened to mobilise communities during flooding and manage riverbank erosion and saltwater intrusion during the dry season.

Data collected over the project period shows significant progress in all four countries against this outcome, supported by qualitative evidence from Most Significant Change stories documented in August 2025.

Total project progress towards LT02	Cambodia	Lao PDR	Thailand	Viet Nam	Overall
					
Indicator	Progress				
Long-Term Outcome 2: By 2025, local authorities are supporting communities to manage disaster and climate related hazards					
LTOI2.1: Evidence of local authorities making climate related information and data available to communities, for example hydro-meteorological data, crop diversification and climate smart technologies	320 (98%)	12 (150%)	NA	474 (108%)	806 (104%)
LTOI2.2: # of commune and district level development plans incorporating DRM/CCA actions	11 (79%)	4 (33%)	4 (100%)	6 (67%)	26 (67%)
LTOI2.3: Evidence of local authorities integrating the perspective of women, People with Disability and social groups into DRM/CCA policies and programs	14 (140%)	8 (133%)	4 (100%)	6 (150%)	34 (142%)
LTOI2.4: # of local authorities with increased resource allocations for DRM and/or CCA in target communities, in particular climate smart livelihood options	1 (100%)	4 (100%)	NA	6 (86%)	12 (100%)
LTOI2.5: Evidence of local authorities conducting inclusive training, consultation and planning activities with target communities	11 (138%)	2 (100%)	NA	21 (140%)	35 (140%)

0-39%	Minimal Progress	40-74%	Under-achieved	75-124%	Achieved	125+%	Over-achieved	ND	No data <sup>3</sup>
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<sup>3</sup> Note: In Thailand the project took a research approach. This meant that there was less emphasis on involvement of local authorities. Technical Assistance was provided through a consortium of university partners, and an advocacy approach was utilised to embed with local authorities. In Lao PDR, Cambodia and Viet Nam the involvement of local authorities was more pronounced from the start, particularly in Lao PDR and Viet Nam, where it is an operational requirement. For indicators under Outcome 2 the references to local authorities did not apply in Thailand to the same extent as in other countries as they worked more through academic partners who provided technical support but are not classified as local authorities.

2025 progress towards LT02	Cambodia	Lao PDR	Thailand	Viet Nam	Overall
					
Indicator	Progress				
Long-Term Outcome 2: By 2025, local authorities are supporting communities to manage disaster and climate related hazards					
LT0I2.1: Evidence of local authorities making climate related information and data available to communities, for example hydro-meteorological data, crop diversification and climate smart technologies	0	0	0	24	24
LT0I2.2: # of commune and district level development plans incorporating DRM/CCA actions	2	0	0	3	5
LT0I2.3: Evidence of local authorities integrating the perspective of women, People with Disability and social groups into DRM/CCA policies and programs	7	0	0	1	8
LT0I2.4: # of local authorities with increased resource allocations for DRM and/or CCA in target communities, in particular climate smart livelihood options	1	0	0	1	2
LT0I2.5: Evidence of local authorities conducting inclusive training, consultation and planning activities with target communities	3	0	0	6	9

Local authorities made climate-related information and data available to communities, including hydro-meteorological data, crop diversification guidance and climate-smart technologies in 806 cases (320 in Cambodia, 12 in Lao PDR and 474 in Viet Nam) during project implementation (104% of target). Collaboration among different stakeholders was critical to achieving this success. Examples include:

- In Lao PDR, the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology and the Department of Social Welfare provided technical training for village disaster management committees on accessing meteorological information, including the LacSA app<sup>4</sup>, early warning channels and observation of extreme weather events.
- Stories from Champee and Kheele villages in Champasak province highlight that local authorities are sharing early warning information and that communities have increased access to hydrological and meteorological data from multiple platforms to inform DRM/CCA plans.
- In Houay Kang, Lao PDR, Souphanouvong University provided technical guidance on mushroom cultivation, which women successfully adopted.
- Eight target villages in Lao PDR reported improved early warning information, enabling better preparedness to manage hazards.
- In Pa Kha, Thailand, coordination with the Office of National Water Resources supported systematic use of early warning technologies.
- In Soc Trang, Viet Nam, Oxfam worked with the Department of Agriculture and Environment, Division of Water Resources Management, and Farmers' and Women's Unions. Commune taskforces used government-endorsed apps rather than duplicating platforms and shared alerts via the communications platform Zalo.

In total 26 cases (11 in Cambodia, 4 in Lao PDR, 4 in Thailand and 6 in Viet Nam) were recorded where commune and district development plans incorporated DRM/CCA actions, representing 67% of the target. The shortfall of 33% (four cases) reflected contextual challenges in Lao PDR. The late project start limited time for the team to establish connections with local government planning processes, while local authority systems for engaging communities in planning and implementation were less established than in Thailand and Cambodia. As a result, new processes had to be introduced to change ways of working. SCR reactivated village committees and linked them with district and provincial authorities. Rather than directly integrating DRM/CCA into local plans, the project supported local governments to develop strategies at district and provincial levels that were aligned with village-level plans.

<sup>4</sup> LaCSA (Laos Climate Services for Agriculture) is a mobile app providing weather and climate information for farmers and agricultural extension in Lao PDR.

Despite these challenges, the Rapid Endline Evaluation highlighted that the project contributed to strengthening village disaster risk management structures in Lao PDR, improving both knowledge and response capacity. For example, a Village Disaster Committee was established in a village in Champasak province, where no such committee had previously existed.

A total of 34 cases (14 in Cambodia, 8 in Lao PDR, 4 in Thailand and 6 in Viet Nam) were recorded where local authorities integrated the perspectives of women, People with Disability, and people from marginalised groups into DRM/CCA policies and programs, exceeding the target of 24. The project also supported positive shifts in community attitudes towards inclusion. Youth, for example, have taken on leadership roles that were previously difficult in a culture that values age and experience.

In Wang Sila, Thailand, the Youth Mapping Team worked with elders to document households at risk of flooding, combining traditional knowledge of the local terrain with newly acquired technical mapping skills. This collaboration improved the accuracy of evacuation and relief plans, created meaningful roles for young people in disaster risk management and strengthened intergenerational cooperation. Youth participation built skills, confidence and a sense of responsibility, positioning young people as key contributors to long-term community resilience.

In Pak Ing Tai village, at the confluence of the Ing and Mekong rivers, prior collaboration with MFU and the SCR project enabled the community to develop a comprehensive disaster preparedness plan, including early warning systems using smartphone apps, evacuation protocols and clearly assigned roles. In 2024, the village successfully evacuated three days before floodwaters arrived, prioritising People with Disability, older residents, children, and women. Similar experiences were documented in Champee and Kheelee villages in Champasak province, Lao PDR.

In Song Phung commune, Soc Trang, Viet Nam, young members of the Farmers' Union supported older villagers to operate project-supported irrigation systems. They provided demonstrations, helped troubleshoot technical issues and shared tips on integrating vegetable crops under fruit trees, strengthening agricultural skills and intergenerational connections.

Across Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam, 12 cases were recorded of local authorities increasing resource allocations for DRM and CCA in target communities, particularly for climate-smart livelihood options (100% of target). Additionally, 35 cases (11 in Cambodia, 2 in Lao PDR and 21 in Viet Nam) were recorded where local authorities conducted inclusive training, consultation and planning activities with communities (140% of target).



“Oxfam in Cambodia has been working alongside NCDM strengthening community-based early warning systems, building local capacity, and ensuring that vulnerable households are better prepared for floods, droughts, and other climate shocks.

Our collaboration with NCDM, local authorities and communities have demonstrated the power of partnership: from piloting innovative flood monitoring tools along the Mekong, to supporting inclusive governance that empowers women and marginalised groups to take leadership in resilience planning. These efforts have not only provided communities with real-time disaster preparedness information but have also improved sustainable livelihoods and climate-smart practices. We are proud to be recognised as a key contributor to building inclusive and resilient communities,” said Mrs Sophoan Phean, National Director of Oxfam in Cambodia, as she reflects on the collaboration with the government partners delivering SCR work in Cambodia.

At the SCR Regional Learning Workshop in October 2025, representative from Cambodia’s National Disaster Management Committee recognised the positive result of the SCR project modality: “This project is the first project that come for the local lead (leadership), local implementation; we (NCDM) have replicated (the project modality) at the other provinces. This modality is very good”.

Vice President of NCDM presented The Certificate of Recognition to Oxfam for actively contribute toward Disaster Risk Management in Cambodia in 2023. Photo: NCDM.

### Outcome 3. Improved hydro-meteorological data is used by riverine communities, authorities and DRM structures

Access to hydro-meteorological and climate risk data that is clear and accessible was a critical component of strengthening community and local government capacity to plan for hazards and adapt agricultural livelihoods to a changing climate. This data is often technical, making it difficult for communities or local authorities without specialised training to interpret. The project prioritised ensuring that this information was accessible, reliable and usable to support practical local decision-making.

Across the four countries, Oxfam and partners promoted the use of risk data through context-appropriate approaches. In Cambodia, water measurement poles and the Early Warning System 1294 (EWS1294) platform provided communities and local authorities with timely information to inform preparedness and response. In Viet Nam, Lao PDR and Thailand, mobile apps and community speaker systems were effective in reaching populations where literacy or digital access was limited. These approaches enabled communities to better understand and act on hazard information and supported authorities to integrate climate and disaster data into planning and early warning systems.





At national and regional levels, SCR complemented these local interventions with advocacy, convening meetings, conferences and developing policy briefs to encourage effective management and sharing of climate and disaster data. The Mid-Term Review highlighted several examples of policy influence, including contributions to Cambodia’s National Strategic Development Plan 2024 -2028 in collaboration with FACT, updating the National Contingency Plan for Floods 2024 in partnership with NCDM, engagement in Lao PDR that informed National DRR Action Plans and an inclusive early warning framework, and advocacy for integrating ecosystem-based DRM and GEDSI-focused CCA strategies into Viet Nam’s development frameworks.

Monitoring data indicate that all three long-term outcome indicators for this area were achieved or exceeded their targets. The combination of accessible data, practical tools and policy engagement has strengthened both community and local government capacity to plan for hazards, respond effectively and implement climate-adaptive livelihood strategies.

Total project progress towards LT03	Cambodia	Lao PDR	Thailand	Viet Nam	Overall
Indicator	Progress				
Long-Term Outcome 3: By 2025, improved hydro-meteorological data is used by riverine communities, authorities and DRM structure					
LTOI3.1: Evidence of authorities using 'improved' hydro-meteorological data to inform their plans and interventions supporting riverine communities	5 (100%)	8 (100%)	3 (100%)	12 (133%)	28 (112%)
LTOI3.2: Evidence of target communities taking actions to reduce the impact of climate related hazards based on hydro-meteorological information	17 (100%)	8 (100%)	3 (300%)	11 (100%)	41 (114%)
LTOI3.3: Evidence of target communities changing or adapting livelihood strategies based on hydro-meteorological information	28 (88%)	11 (73%)	NA	177 (117%)	230 (114%)

0-39%	Minimal Progress	40-74%	Under-achieved	75-124%	Achieved	125+%	Over-achieved	ND	No data <sup>5</sup>
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<sup>5</sup> Note: In Thailand the project took a research approach that focused more on analysis supported by university partners with less emphasis on access to hydro-meteorological data through local authorities. Quantitative data for this indicator was not collected in Thailand.

Total project progress towards LT03	Cambodia	Lao PDR	Thailand	Viet Nam	Overall
					
Indicator	Progress				
Long-Term Outcome 3: By 2025, improved hydro-meteorological data is used by riverine communities, authorities and DRM structures					
LT0I3.1: Evidence of authorities using 'improved' hydro-meteorological data to inform their plans and interventions supporting riverine communities	0	0	0	3	3
LT0I3.2: Evidence of target communities taking actions to reduce the impact of climate related hazards based on hydro-meteorological information	0	0	3	0	3
LT0I3.3: Evidence of target communities changing or adapting livelihood strategies based on hydro-meteorological information	7	0	N/A	7	14

In 51 instances (28 in Cambodia, 4 in Lao PDR, 12 in Thailand and 6 in Viet Nam), during the project, communities demonstrated new or improved and adapted livelihood strategies that promote resilience to disaster and climate change (85% of target). Stories of these adaptations are highlighted in the outcome description above.

During the project, local authorities used improved hydro-meteorological data in 28 instances to inform planning and interventions for riverine communities (112% of target). In Soc Trang, Viet Nam, commune officials in An Thanh Dong, Phong Nam and Song Phung applied skills from the Participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (PCVA) training to integrate detailed disaster and climate risk maps into their Socio-Economic Development Plans (SEDPs) for the first time. Officials reported greater confidence in prioritising budget allocations for protective measures such as salinity monitoring and safe evacuation routes, and in convening community consultations to validate plans. At the community level, 90 CERT members (44 women and 46 men) used new equipment and emergency protocols to conduct drills, coordinate with district authorities and relay early warning information through locally agreed channels. These changes marked a shift from ad hoc responses to structured, anticipatory planning embedded in local governance processes.

During the project, 41 instances (17 in Cambodia, 8 in Lao PDR, 3 in Thailand and 11 in Viet Nam) were recorded where target communities took actions to reduce the impact of climate-related hazards using hydro-meteorological information (114% of target). In Pa Kha village, Chiang Rai Province, Thailand, residents described how unpredictable floods had previously caused severe losses, including THB 300,000 worth of damage in a single year. Through the project, villagers learned to use a government-developed early warning app in coordination with the village Public Announcement system, which remains essential for reaching older residents and those who do not use mobile apps. Timely alerts from upstream communities in Phayao, combined with rapid dissemination of evacuation plans by the village DRM committee ensured livestock and agricultural assets were protected even during severe flooding.

In Houaymard village, Pak Ou District, Luang Prabang in Lao PDR, the DRM committee responded proactively to district-level heavy rain warnings. Upon receiving alerts, committee members coordinated immediate checks and community clean-outs of under-road drainage at two high-risk sites. Since implementing regular pre-season cleaning and responding promptly to warnings, the at-risk areas have not flooded. In the same village, the head of the DRM committee, applied disaster risk assessment training to guide preparedness planning and strengthen the committee's ability to respond to climate hazards. Complementary initiatives introduced new drainage systems to reduce flash flood risk based on findings from project-supported risk assessments.

Across three communes in Soc Trang, Viet Nam, farmers routinely used the Nguồn Nước Cửu Long and national 'PCTT' apps to monitor water levels, salinity, pH, and temperature, enabling them to adjust irrigation schedules and relocate assets ahead of floods. Commune Emergency Response Team members relayed alerts through self-managed Zalo messaging groups, which helped them reach households without smartphones or with limited digital literacy, while traditional loudspeaker announcements reached at-risk members such as older people and People with Disability.

230 instances (28 in Cambodia, 11 in Lao PDR and 177 in Viet Nam) of households adapting livelihood strategies based on hydro-meteorological data were recorded (114% of target). For example, in Pa Kha, Thailand, Mr Boonta Kantakew explained how training on a government-developed early warning app supported timely flood alerts and the implementation of evacuation plans, protecting people and livestock.

Outputs contributing to Outcome 3 include:

- 28 hydro-meteorological data sharing platforms developed (Cambodia 5, Lao PDR 8, Thailand 3, Viet Nam 12), modified or improved (112% of target).
- 15 dialogues between lower Mekong government representatives on hydro-meteorological data sharing (94% of target).
- 1,158 community members trained (Cambodia 481, Lao PDR 182, Thailand/Regional 17, Viet Nam 478) to use hydro-meteorological data platforms and apps (129% of target).

Key achievements under Outcome 3 highlight the project's contribution to enabling communities to be better prepared and better equipped to manage climate-related shocks and stresses. This included strengthening community relationships through partnerships with local actors, which sharpened the functionality and effectiveness DRM committees. The increased use of mobile apps and communication technologies improved public announcements, hazard monitoring and the dissemination of alerts, including to at-risk groups. These improvements contributed to faster, more reliable early warnings and more coordinated evacuation processes.

Tran Thi Ung (60 years old) lost her leg in an accident when she was young. This led to her not being able to marry and limited her ability to go to school. She said, "My biggest asset and main source of income is this nearly 5,000 square meters fruit garden - inherited from my parents".

Tran Thi has shown remarkable resilience in balancing multiple responsibilities. Since she was young, she has supported her sister, who has a mental health condition, as well as her sister's child. In recent years, she has also cared for her mother, who is now over 83 years old, all while continuing to provide for herself.

She said, "I am old now and watering the garden every week is very hard and time-consuming for me. It usually takes several days to water, and there is less water in the dry season. I also wished to have an automatic sprinkler system, but that is impossible because the cost is simply too high for me."

Photo: Hoang Thi Ngoc Ha, and Nguyen Van Gia.



Dinh Quang Chuc, a 51-year-old farmer who has been living with a leg impairment since childhood. Together with his wife, he has built a life around their 7,200 square meters fruit garden, which remains their main source of income.

Over more than 30 years of marriage, they have shared responsibilities: his wife often manages physically demanding tasks such as watering, fertilising, weeding, harvesting, and transporting fruit, while Dinh Quang takes primary responsibility for cooking, cleaning, and other household work. Their collaboration ensures that both the household and farm sustain their livelihood.

For both Ms. Ung and Mr. Chuc, as well as others in the SCR project, significant changes came when they received support to install automatic sprinkler irrigation systems.

### **It is not just a smart irrigation solution; it is a pair of technological legs!**

This innovative system brought immediate and tangible benefits. “It helps reduce a lot and increase a lot,” Mr. Chuc elaborated. “It cuts down on labour costs and reduces the need for fertiliser and pesticides because pest issues are minimised. Conversely, it improves tree health, leading to more fruit and tastier produce.” This has meant an environmentally sustainable solution.

Ms. Ung echoed this sentiment, “When I water, I don’t have to move as much. I just set a timer or press a button on my phone, and it’s done in 15-20 minutes. Before, it took several days, and moving with only one leg and crutches to cross ditches was incredibly difficult.”

The social impact, however, is perhaps the most heartwarming. Mr. Chuc shared, “One of the things that makes me very happy now is that my wife doesn’t have to work hard doing most of the work anymore. I can handle it all with just this phone. And my wife has time for her favourite job - cooking. I am very grateful because this modern irrigation system is like giving me a pair of technological legs”.

As for Ms. Ung, “this irrigation system helps People with Disability, older people and women like us to reduce the hard work, have time for ourselves. It has only been a few months since I installed this system, but I feel like my life has completely changed; I am healthier and much freer. Now I have more time to rest and take care of my elderly mother and sister. I am so happy!”

Photo: Hoang Thi Ngoc Ha, and Nguyen Van Gia.



## 6. CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

### 6.1 Gender Equity, Disability and Social Inclusion

A GEDSI Strategy was developed for SCR, informed by an in-depth desk review of the climate change and GEDSI context and by internal and external consultations, and was approved in early February 2024. This meant it guided implementation more strongly in the latter part of the program rather than from inception.

The GEDSI Strategy articulated three main areas of work that align with SCR's intended end of program outcome areas. The following reporting highlights progress achieved in these areas:

#### 1. Empowerment and women's leadership (Outcome 1: Target riverine communities implementing inclusive DRM/CCA plans)

SCR contributed to increased confidence, skills and leadership among women across multiple contexts. Evaluation evidence highlights women's increased participation in DRM planning, public speaking, preparedness roles and engagement in national and regional exchanges. In Lao PDR, women's representation on some Village Disaster Committees increased, and in Thailand women were observed coordinating preparedness and response activities during flood events, in Cambodia, during climate risk assessments, commune and village structures made efforts to involve diverse groups; one example notes a Person with Disability actively participating and advocating for practical evacuation support and appropriate facilities during flooding.

However, progress was uneven. In some contexts, entrenched gender norms, unpaid care responsibilities and perceptions of DRM as male-dominated work limited the translation of participation into sustained leadership. As noted in the Rapid Endline Evaluation, while SCR contributed to empowerment, deeper transformation will require longer-term investment.

#### 2. Local institutions (Outcome 2: Local authorities are supporting communities to manage disaster and climate related hazards).

SCR strengthened the capacity of local institutions to apply GEDSI-responsive DRM/CCA planning by building practical systems and skills that support the participation and needs of women and people from marginalised groups in local preparedness and planning. In Lao PDR, village disaster management committees and coordination between village, district and provincial DRM structures were reported as established and operational, and capacity development reached committee members from eight villages on preparedness protocols, early warning systems and community engagement, including 33% (47 of 142) women, evidence that women were included in institutional capacity-building for DRM/CCA implementation.

In Viet Nam, district and commune officials were trained in PCVA methods with explicit GEDSI emphasis, and PCVA results were reported as integrated into commune socio-economic development plans (SEDPs) for 2024–2025, including prioritised solutions and budget mechanisms, providing a concrete route for risks affecting women and at-risk groups to inform local investment decisions.

In Thailand, the project facilitated structured community-government dialogue and joint planning, with municipal officials participating in workshops with community leaders and at-risk groups to develop preparedness and recovery plans, strengthening more inclusive problem-solving; however, evidence of formal uptake into municipal procedures was not yet demonstrated.

#### 3. Improved equitable access and effective use of hydro-meteorological data (Outcome 3: Improved hydro-meteorological data is used by riverine communities, authorities, and DRM structures.)

SCR's clearest GEDSI contribution in hydro-meteorological data and early warning systems was strengthening equitable access to warnings by using delivery channels that reduce exclusion for groups less likely to receive or act on phone-based alerts, particularly women, People with Disability, older people, and households facing literacy or connectivity barriers.

In Cambodia, disaster management committees translated EWS1294 alerts and disseminated them through installed/mobile loudspeakers as well as Telegram groups during extreme events, helping ensure warnings were not limited to individual phone ownership or reading ability.

In Lao PDR, village speaker coverage (24 speaker sets installed and operational in late 2024) was explicitly described as improving reach to “marginalised groups” particularly people with limited access to mobile phone alerts. In Lao PDR women often use shared household phones or lack individual devices.

In Thailand, the GEDSI-relevant element was the combination of women’s inclusion in technical capacity-building (115 trained, including 56 women) with low-barrier dissemination channels. Trained leaders redistributed information via Line groups and village speaker announcements, and the MTR notes loudspeakers and community meetings were viewed as effective for people who may not use written boards due to limited literacy.

Across contexts, constraints remained where access depended on internet connectivity and technical literacy, and infrastructure vulnerability affected continuity, for example, July 2025 flooding reportedly damaged project-supported speakers in some Lao PDR target villages.

The following analysis responds directly to the SCR GEDSI Strategy focus areas and associated action points, outlining the extent to which each focus area was operationalised and the level of institutionalisation achieved by endline.

**Action Point 1: Integrate GEDSI in the project cycle and management: GEDSI considerations were integrated into SCR planning, implementation and risk management processes.** GEDSI data and analysis informed needs assessments, vulnerability analyses and risk assessments across project sites, shaping the design of DRM planning, CSA interventions and approaches to climate information access.

Project implementation process across countries supported women, men, youth and People with Disability to participate in PCVA processes, DRM planning, CSA training and community leadership roles. Practical enabling measures, such as skills training aligned to livelihood roles and provision of childcare during training, supported participation by caregivers and people from marginalised groups.

Examples of inclusive practice included peer learning among women mushroom growers in Lao PDR, women-led DRM committees in Cambodia, women’s union mobilisation for DRM in Lao PDR, irrigation systems targeted to women-headed households in Cambodia, small grants supporting women-led vegetable gardens in Lao PDR and intergenerational risk mapping involving youth, women and elders in Thailand. In Viet Nam, strong targeting of women and People with Disability within CSA and livelihood activities contributed to measurable adoption of climate-resilient practices.

While the Rapid Endline Evaluation was not designed as a standalone GEDSI assessment, it did assess the extent to which GEDSI considerations were embedded in implementation, including attention to differentiated risks and unintended consequences.

Dedicated resources were allocated to support GEDSI implementation, including staff time across the PMU and country offices and a specific GEDSI budget managed by the PMU. GEDSI-responsive engagement tools, including mobile applications, village-level digital groups and face-to-face engagement, supported outreach to marginalised and remote communities.

Although the GEDSI Strategy committed to maintaining a GEDSI Tracker to provide an overview of gender integration and partner capacity needs, this tracker was not established or maintained over the life of SCR. Instead, GEDSI monitoring relied on a mix of disaggregated participation data, qualitative change stories, and periodic reflection processes, rather than a single consolidated tool to consistently track GEDSI integration and progress across countries and partners.

This gap aligns with evaluation findings of limited reliable GEDSI results-framework data, late baseline studies, and weak logframe linkages, which constrained systematic tracking of GEDSI-related change. Contributing factors included MEAL capacity constraints and turnover, limited partner MEAL resourcing, and inconsistent data quality and verification across contexts.

The Rapid Endline Evaluation noted that delayed baseline studies and the late approval of the GEDSI Strategy limited the extent to which GEDSI commitments could be operationalised consistently across the full project lifecycle.

**Action Point 2: Build staff and partner capacity to integrate GEDSI considerations in their work: Across SCR, GEDSI capacity strengthening with partners was consistent and sustained from inception.** From the inception period, GEDSI expectations were built into partner orientation and launch processes, and GEDSI was integrated into the “Unpacking SCR” concept workshop in 2022 to build a shared understanding of inclusive practice and support GEDSI integration into work planning, MEAL and reporting. Targeted technical support was also provided early, including disability inclusion strengthening in Lao PDR through partnership with the Lao Disabled People’s Association, which trained CSO partners and provided ongoing advisory support to help partners plan and implement more disability-inclusive livelihoods and DRM/CCA activities. Over time, SCR reinforced this through learning and exchange initiatives (including the Cambodia GEDSI forum 2023) and through structured partner GEDSI capacity-building workshops in 2024 in Cambodia and Lao PDR, followed by the revision and socialisation of GEDSI action plans.

A key disadvantage was that the formal GEDSI Strategy itself was only finalised and approved in early February 2024, well into implementation this limited the extent to which GEDSI commitments could be embedded systematically and measured using shared tools from the outset.

**Action Point 3: Influence GEDSI in climate change and development agendas: SCR contributed to GEDSI-responsive policy and institutional processes at national and sub-national levels.** For example, in Cambodia, collaboration with the National Committee for Disaster Management supported the integration of GEDSI considerations into Disaster Risk Assessment processes and the National Contingency Plan for Floods (2024).

In Viet Nam, SCR advocated for the integration of ecosystem-based DRM and GEDSI-responsive CCA approaches within development frameworks. While evidence of policy impact remains emergent, the evaluation found strengthened institutional capacity at the commune level, including improved risk mapping, planning for at-risk populations and use of climate and early warning data. In Lao PDR, Training of Trainers on women’s leadership increased confidence and organisational capacity among women, enabling climate leadership and collective action beyond SCR activities. Technical training on GEDSI integration in DRM was also provided to local government actors, contributing to longer-term institutionalisation of inclusive planning practices.

As noted in the rapid endline evaluation, SCR benefited from the strong GEDSI foundations established under IP2, leveraging existing partnerships, institutions and capacities across overlapping geographies. This highlights the project’s ability to leverage and influence GEDSI in climate change and development agendas.

**Action Point 4: Strengthen coordination, learning exchanges on GEDSI in climate change: SCR strengthened coordination and learning exchanges on GEDSI in climate change through national and regional forums that enabled rural women to engage beyond their local contexts.** In Thailand, Cambodia and Lao PDR, women participated in cross-country workshops, regional meetings and learning exchanges that exposed them to alternative models of women’s leadership, entrepreneurship and community decision-making. For example, women from project communities reported that participation in regional workshops in Thailand allowed them to observe women-led enterprises and financial management models in Chiang Rai, which they subsequently shared with other women in their own communities. Evaluation evidence indicates that these exchanges contributed to increased confidence, greater willingness to speak in public forums and expanded participation of women in local committees and decision-making bodies following their return.

At the same time, the evaluation identified constraints that limited the reach and inclusivity of learning exchanges. Partners reported that social norms, caregiving responsibilities and family expectations restricted women’s ability to travel independently, particularly for international events, sometimes requiring family accompaniment and creating logistical and cost barriers. In addition, strict quotas for participation in regional exchanges were reported by partners and local leaders to require careful management to avoid perceptions of tokenism or social tension within communities. While SCR and partners took deliberate steps to address these challenges, the evaluation concludes that future programming would benefit from more flexible exchange modalities, such as decentralised, in-country learning platforms and community-based peer exchanges to sustain coordination and learning while reducing unintended exclusion.

## Challenges to GEDSI strategy implementation

The evaluation noted variance in perspectives regarding the GEDSI approaches and GEDSI-related achievements of SCR. Ongoing challenges cited across different contexts included accessibility for People with Disability, particularly in remote areas, and persistent barriers for women, Indigenous minorities, and People with Disability to exercise decision-making and leadership roles.

The external Rapid Endline Evaluation identified that from a gender perspective the change stories and reports highlight an increase in women's confidence and capacity to lead within communities and families. SCR addressed the engagement and leadership of women, People with Disability, and ethnic minorities more directly, where change was more visible and impactful. Although signs of change were visible, documenting behaviour change and its enabling environment were difficult for this project to do rigorously.

**Project delays:** Delays in project implementation affected the development of SCR's GEDSI Strategy, limiting opportunities for comprehensive analysis and learning about GEDSI outcomes.

**Sustainability:** Assessing the sustainability of SCR's GEDSI gains was challenging due to the varied contexts across communities, nuanced interventions, and limited GEDSI-specific data in the project results framework. Nonetheless, qualitative evidence from fieldwork and project documentation suggests likely sustained gains, including: 1) knowledge and capacities built among women and youth regarding engagement in CCA and DRM; 2) economic and social gains for women and People with Disability benefiting from CSA interventions; and 3) improved understanding and planning among local officials for integrating people experiencing vulnerability and marginalisation in disaster preparedness and response.

**Site-specific GEDSI needs:** Analysing the GEDSI context and priorities at the outset of the project was limited. As a result, strategies were not always fully tailored to the specific needs and dynamics of each target community.

**Limited GEDSI monitoring:** The SCR results framework did not include dedicated GEDSI indicators, which restricted the systematic capture and measurement of GEDSI outcomes and progress.

The project's GEDSI Advisor role ended prior to the no-cost extension period (July–November 2025). The absence of dedicated GEDSI technical support in the final five months reduced the level of specialist input available during close-out activities and final reporting. This gap was addressed through additional GEDSI support provided by staff from Inclusion Program 2.

## Appropriateness and effectiveness

The GEDSI Strategy remained appropriate to SCR's objectives because its three focus areas directly align with the program's intended outcomes: inclusive DRM/CCA planning and leadership, stronger local institutions and equitable access to climate and disaster information. Evidence from reporting and evaluation indicates the approach was most effective in strengthening inclusive participation and practical engagement of women and people from marginalised groups in activities and local planning processes. It was less consistently effective in generating demonstrable, outcome-level GEDSI change that could be tracked over time, because monitoring and learning were constrained by delayed baseline studies, limited reliable GEDSI results-framework data and weak linkages to the logframe. Effectiveness also varied by context and partner capacity, with government actors showing differing levels of GEDSI understanding and sensitivity, affecting the depth and consistency of uptake.

## Institutionalisation into management, monitoring, and partner systems

Institutionalisation was stronger in implementation practices than in formal partner/government systems. GEDSI was reflected in how activities were planned and delivered (including attention to differentiated risks and participation barriers) and program reporting indicates data were disaggregated (including by gender, age and disability) in several activity streams. However, the ability to evidence GEDSI change systematically across the program was constrained as noted above while inclusive practices were applied in some local planning and coordination processes, GEDSI was not yet systematically embedded into formal DRM/CCA plans, policies and budget allocations.

## Key GEDSI features that contributed to positive and negative results

Features that contributed to more positive GEDSI results included: 1) deliberate inclusion of women and people from marginalised groups in participatory assessment and planning processes; 2) practical measures that reduced participation barriers; 3) use of trusted local structures and networks, including women's unions and community organisations to support outreach; and 4) combining DRM/CCA planning with livelihood/CSA activities that created tangible incentives for participation.

Features that constrained results included: 1) strategy approval part-way through implementation and delayed baselines; 2) limited reliable GEDSI results-framework data and weak results-framework alignment, reducing the ability to evidence change over time; 3) variable GEDSI capability and sensitivity among government counterparts; 4) local budget constraints affecting follow-through and formal integration into plans and allocations; 5) social norms and unpaid care burdens limiting the translation of participation into sustained leadership.

## What was not achieved

Two gaps remained most evident by endline: 1) systematic, outcome-level GEDSI measurement through the results framework; and 2) consistent embedding of GEDSI into local government DRM/CCA plans, policies and budgets. These gaps reflect a combination of timing (strategy approval part-way through implementation), monitoring constraints (baseline delays and limited reliable GEDSI results-framework data), and the enabling environment (variable counterpart capability, local budget limits, and persistent social norms affecting women's leadership and participation).

## Disability Inclusion

Project data indicates that 1.7% of all individuals reached by SCR were People with Disability broadly consistent with official government statistics in target communities. Qualitative evidence indicates that meaningful engagement of People with Disability increased community awareness of inclusive DRM and supported improved consideration of disability needs in evacuation planning, livelihood support and leadership roles. For example, People with Disability were intentionally targeted for CSA and irrigation interventions in Cambodia and Viet Nam.

The Rapid Endline Evaluation and input from Oxfam's GEDSI staff has highlighted the importance of early, site-specific GEDSI analysis, including disability inclusion, at the outset of programming. The evaluation recommended that future initiatives undertake a more detailed analysis of GEDSI contexts and priorities at the community level, recognising that GEDSI approaches, including disability inclusion strategies, need to be tailored to the specific social, cultural and institutional dynamics of each location.

This recommendation reflects the significant diversity across SCR project sites in relation to disability awareness, accessibility, stigma, service availability and patterns of participation, as well as the intersection of disability with gender, age, ethnicity and indigenous background. In several contexts, low self-identification of disability, physical access constraints in remote areas and varying community understandings of disability limited the depth of engagement possible within the project timeframe.

While SCR made deliberate efforts to include People with Disability, the evaluation suggests that earlier and more granular analysis could have strengthened targeting, informed more appropriate accessibility measures and supported more meaningful participation of People with Disability in decision-making and leadership roles. This learning is particularly relevant for future phases of the program operating across highly diverse social contexts, where standardised GEDSI approaches may not adequately address local realities.

SCR supported the participation of People with Disability through inclusive community processes (PCVA, DRM planning, CSA training and leadership roles) and practical measures to reduce common participation barriers. Annual reporting notes that People with Disability took on active roles in community planning, implementing CSA and receiving early warning information. The project combined skills training with supportive measures, including childcare during some sessions, to enable fuller participation.

Communication and learning were adapted through a mix of face-to-face and digital channels, including the 1294 Early Warning System/App and platforms such as Telegram, with project approaches framed around broad-based participation rather than a single delivery modality.

The endline evaluation notes that language access was actively managed, consent forms were provided in English, Lao and Khmer (and translated into Thai for Thai-speaking fieldwork) and in Lao PDR, interpretation support was provided by Oxfam staff/partners where needed. Individual assistive listening/translation devices were provided at large multi-language events (for example headsets with volume control). These provided an additional accessibility benefit by allowing participants with hearing impairment to adjust the sound to a comfortable level and follow group discussions more independently.

While venue selection considered accessibility needs, the GEDSI Learning Workshop Report in Cambodia in 2023 highlighted accessibility of meeting spaces as an ongoing issue and pointed to the need for “accessible audits” and more disability-friendly venues. This was addressed in later venue procurement processes.

## 6.2 Safeguarding

SCR aligned closely with the IP2 on shared safeguarding strategies and resources.

Oxfam implemented strong recruitment and partner screening procedures to ensure all personnel meet safeguarding standards. All project staff, partners, and stakeholders completed mandatory safeguarding training, signed Oxfam’s Codes of Conduct, and attended annual refresher sessions. SCR maintained a Child Safeguarding Plan, a project-level risk assessment, and a Safeguarding Implementation Plan, with progress reported to senior management every six months. Each Oxfam office appointed a trained safeguarding focal point responsible for receiving and managing complaints in line with Oxfam policies on confidentiality.

Comprehensive safeguarding assessments and measures were implemented for all partners and stakeholders, guided by the Safeguarding Implementation Plan, which covered Child Safeguarding and Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (PSEAH). Partners were supported to manage safeguarding risks within their operations, and an annual safeguarding risk assessment was conducted at the project level and integrated into planning, implementation, and monitoring processes.

Throughout implementation, safeguarding was included in risk assessments for events and activities. Contractors, including external service providers such as video production teams, received safeguarding orientation, with consent forms signed and explained to all stakeholders.

The PMU maintained regular contact with safe programming coordinators from Oxfam affiliates and country programs to ensure implementation in the four targeted countries.

## 6.3 Environmental Management

The SCR project incorporated environmental considerations across its design and implementation to strengthen climate and disaster resilience while minimising negative environmental impacts. Small-scale, low-input livelihood activities were adopted that generally have a low environmental footprint, supporting sustainable climate adaptation. In Cambodia, climate-smart agriculture plots and community water-level monitoring improved food security and strengthened local hazard awareness, with 28 households piloting solar-powered irrigation systems and other farming techniques that reduced water use. In Viet Nam, water-saving irrigation systems enabled farmers to conserve water during dry seasons, reducing vulnerability to drought and salinity intrusion. In Lao PDR, mushroom cultivation offered income-generating opportunities that aligned with sustainable resource use. Across all project target areas, interventions helped communities balance productive livelihoods with environmental sustainability.

The project also promoted nature-based solutions to build ecosystem health and resilience. In Thailand, wetlands were replanted and protected, contributing to local flood mitigation, increased biodiversity and greater community understanding of the role of ecosystems in DRR. In Viet Nam, mangrove plantations strengthened coastal protection and improved fishery habitats, and advanced climate adaptation outcomes with active

participation from women and youth. These interventions highlight that environmental sustainability can be integrated into disaster risk management and livelihood efforts.

The project applied an adaptive programming approach to respond to recurrent environmental and climate impacts such as the extreme weather events that occurred during project implementation. As DFAT standards did not support the establishment of an integrated Rapid Relief Fund through the SCR, to support communities impacted by climate disasters during implementation, immediate recovery assistance, when required, was identified and coordinated through available humanitarian processes within DFAT and Oxfam. SCR teams worked with local humanitarian actors to respond to SCR communities impacted by extreme weather events such as flooding in Thailand and Lao PDR.

Oxfam will continue to prioritise environmental considerations in future iterations of the program. The PMU will maintain adaptive programming practices, responding to the evolving environmental and disaster-related needs of target communities in consultation with in-country teams. Situational reports and requests for response funding will be shared with relevant development partners on an as-needed basis, ensuring immediate recovery interventions are both coordinated and environmentally responsible.

Future climate resilience programming, including IP3, will build on SCR's experience by integrating low-impact livelihoods and nature-based solutions, while maintaining alignment with environmental safeguards.

## 6.4 Value for Money

Given the constrained resource environment in which CSOs operate, Oxfam has sought to ensure value for money throughout the SCR project. This was achieved by leveraging existing community infrastructure and established partners, as well as integrating available resources from other projects, such as safeguarding initiatives, to avoid duplication and promote efficiency. Costs incurred were commensurate with the quality of inputs through Oxfam's procurement processes, which require competitive quotes for goods and services above a defined threshold. Where feasible, country teams undertook joint procurement to achieve economies of scale.

The project prioritised the use of local technical expertise, drawing on government, academic, and consultant resources rather than relying on external consultants and encouraged competition in service provision where options existed. Transparent and proportional decision-making processes were applied to procurement and delegation of authority, ensuring procedures matched the scale and impact of the planned activities. Partners were supported to leverage SCR activities to attract additional resources. For example, in Champasak, PCVA findings informed a concept note that successfully raised USD 50,000 for irrigation systems. The integration of SCR elements into commune socio-economic development plans in Viet Nam and Commune Investment Plans in Cambodia further demonstrates value through potential scale-up and replication.

SCR also promoted experimentation and innovation, adapting context-specific interventions and facilitating intra- and inter-country learning processes to support ongoing project results.

Over the three years, DFAT Partnership Performance Assessments consistently rated the project's value for money as Adequate or Good across all five parameters.

The DFAT Partnership Performance Assessments on five parameters over three years are as shown below; the rating on Value for Money has been consistently Adequate or Good.

**Table Eight: Partnership rating**

Performance Metric	Aid Works Rating		
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Delivers the agreed outputs to the standard required	4 - Adequate	5 - Good	5 - Good
Delivers value for money through ethical, efficient, economical use of funds	4 - Adequate	5 - Good	5 - Good
Works collaboratively and communicates effectively	5 - Good	4 - Adequate	5 - Good
Complies with DFAT policies and effectively manages risk and safeguards	5 - Good	5 - Good	5 - Good
Personnel demonstrate effective leadership, management and subject knowledge, achieve results and receive effective support and oversight from the Head/Regional Office	5 - Good	5 - Good	5 - Good

## 6.5 Welfare, Religious and Partisan-political activities policy

All partners were trained during the inception phase on fund utilisation policies that are periodically monitored to ensure funds are used for the intended Project purposes and not diverted to other activities. Contracts with partners had clauses to ensure funds from DFAT channelled through Oxfam were not used in activities related to welfare, religion, or partisan politics.

## 6.6 Partnership and Synergy

Partnerships were central to the SCR project, reflecting Oxfam’s understanding of collaboration as mutually empowering relationships that acknowledge power imbalances, provide organisational development, strengthen institutional capacity and maximise impact. Oxfam’s approach recognises that partnerships develop collective knowledge, skills and reach, while promoting meaningful participation and ownership among people living in poverty. While partnerships can be complex and present challenges, Oxfam seeks to learn from these experiences to strengthen relationships over time. Engagement is guided by six Partnership Principles: shared vision and values; complementarity and value added; autonomy and independence; transparency and mutual accountability; clarity of roles and responsibilities; and commitment to joint learning. These principles underpin collaboration with local communities, civil society, government bodies and other actors, across both funding and non-funding relationships.

During SCR implementation, Oxfam systematically strengthened relationships with partners by creating safe spaces for feedback and redress. Partner feedback was largely positive, highlighting Oxfam’s flexibility in adapting interventions to context, opportunities for mutual learning, space to innovate, and a sense of joint ownership over project outcomes. The project engaged a diverse range of stakeholders, including government bodies, academic institutions, NGOs, youth and women’s groups, farmer organisations, and private sector actors, working with both funded and collaborating partners aligned on shared goals and values.

Challenges were observed in some contexts. In Lao PDR, communication and planning between provincial and national government actors could have been stronger, and clarification of roles and responsibilities between Oxfam and partners was needed. Limited financial resources, exacerbated by currency fluctuations, affected efficiency in some activities. Ensuring disaster risk management and climate change strategies are integrated into broader socio-economic development frameworks was also identified as a priority to increase impact and sustainability.

Key lessons learned include the need for a regional learning platform linked to ASEAN to enable cross-country knowledge exchange and scale impact. Capacity limitations among some in-country partners affected timely financial reporting to Oxfam Australia and DFAT. Similarly, implementation of GEDSI and MEAL was more consistent with CSO partners than government or academic partners, reflecting differences in organisational experience and systems. Nevertheless, the participatory, locally led approach of SCR, where communities self-identified needs and preferred activities, remained a core strength, ensuring contextual relevance, local ownership and strong buy-in.

Based on Oxfam Partnership Principles and prior partner reflections, the PMU of the Mekong Regional Water Governance Program (MRWGP) and International Rivers conducted a comprehensive Partner Health Check (PHC) between November 2023 and February 2024. The purpose was to consult partners on what effective partnership means to them, what support, learning, and interventions work best, and whether participation in MRWGP projects (IP2 and SCR) has contributed to organisational change and broader impact. Significant time and resources were invested to ensure the process was inclusive, with country-level workshops coordinated alongside existing meetings to optimise partner participation. The PHC was designed as a conversational and reflective exercise, rather than a purely extractive learning or evidence-gathering process and involved 57 participants from 23 partner organisations. Key findings include:

- Partners value their relationship with Oxfam/IR, despite acknowledging it is challenging and demanding.
- Partner organisations maintain a strong sense of identity and mission, actively participating in multiple types of partnerships.
- While partners recognise the high demands of Oxfam/IR projects, they report learning and growth through the process but indicate a desire for more technical support.
- Opportunities exist to simplify reporting requirements, allowing partners more time to focus on community engagement. Partners proposed best practices and strategies to improve reporting efficiency.
- Improved communication between partners, and between partners and the PMU, was identified as a priority to embed learning more effectively. Alignment across program, finance, and functional leads is needed to prevent parallel or contradictory requests.
- Oxfam/IR is reliant on its partners and seeks deeper engagement; however, compliance requirements pose challenges. Clearer delineation of project risk responsibilities may support more effective collaboration.

## 6.7 Effectiveness and Efficiency

The project operated across a sub-region of four countries with no common language, presenting both challenges and opportunities. This diversity enriched the project, bringing multiple perspectives and approaches to programming. In assessing effectiveness and efficiency, the focus is on the extent to which project goals were achieved and resources were used optimally. Implementation in Lao PDR and Viet Nam was delayed due to the late finalisation of MoUs and government approvals, which constrained timely and efficient delivery. Despite these delays, strong partnerships with local organisations and government departments, alongside the credibility of Oxfam and its partners, supported the effective implementation of project interventions in both countries.

**Table Nine: Funds utilisation (by budget heading)**

	Y1 - Y4 Mar 22 - Nov	Y4 Jan- Nov 25	Y3 Jan- Dec 24	Y2 Jan - Dec 23	Y1 Mar - Dec 22
<b>INCOME</b>					
Grant Received from DFAT	4,500,000	500,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	2,000,000
Interest Income	49,392	3,103	22,685	23,473	131
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>4,549,392</b>	<b>1,557,339</b>	<b>2,493,228</b>	<b>2,594,673</b>	<b>2,000,131</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
A. Staffing Costs	680,974	159,360	234,431	191,852	95,332
B. Project operation costs	148,258	33,859	49,220	39,356	25,823
C. Activity costs	2,758,136	956,213	916,517	678,232	207,173
D. Performance Monitoring Costs	507,084	252,173	94,926	102,276	57,710
E. Administration and Overhead	454,939	155,734	143,899	112,413	42,893
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>4,549,392</b>	<b>1,557,339</b>	<b>1,438,993</b>	<b>1,124,130</b>	<b>428,931</b>

**Table Ten: Funds utilisation (by Oxfam office)**

BY COUNTRY OFFICE	BUDGET (AUD)	SPENDING (AUD)	% SPENT	OVERSPENT (AUD)	% OVERSPENT
PMU*	2,188,654	2,235,458	102%	(46,804)	-2%
OIC	732,924	732,887	100%	37	0%
OIL	358,386	372,921	104%	(14,535)	-4%
OIV	700,000	655,766	94%	44,234	6%
OAU	97,421	97,421	100%	(0)	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,077,385</b>	<b>4,094,453</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(17,068)</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>OVERHEAD COST</b>	<b>453,043</b>	<b>454,939</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(1,896)</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>4,530,428</b>	<b>4,549,392</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(18,964)</b>	<b>0%</b>

\*Includes partners in Thailand, regional partners ad some country partners

During implementation, the project earned interest totalling AUD \$49,392. Of this amount, AUD \$30,427 was allocated to support additional activities delivered between July and November 2025 under the no-cost extension. These funds enabled targeted investments to strengthen project outcomes, including refresher DRM training for Provincial, Commune and Village Committees for Disaster Management in Cambodia, expansion of CSA vegetable production using drip systems and market linkages in Stung Treng, rapid assessments of CSA models including hydroponics in Ratanakiri, pond rehabilitation and tree planting in Ratanakiri, and the replacement and installation of loudspeakers for early warning systems in Lao PDR and northern Cambodia following damage caused by the 2024 floods. The remaining interest was applied to overall project costs at consolidation in line with financial management requirements.

The two tables above demonstrate efficient budget management and execution. As shown in Table 9, the PMU was responsible for 49% of the total budget, reflecting the fact that all management costs, including planning,

MEAL, oversight, governance, regional coordination, pilot initiatives and gap-filling where activities could not be managed at country level, were covered under this budget line. The end evaluation highlighted the effectiveness of the PMU, noting its contribution to regional learning and the visibility of project outcomes through active engagement in networking and knowledge sharing. As Oxfam does not have an office presence in Thailand, all activities implemented by MFL in Thailand were managed under the PMU expenditure line, accounting for 9% of the total project budget.

Strong oversight enabled timely corrective action where interventions were not delivering expected results, contributing to efficient implementation. However, some efficiency challenges emerged. Oxfam's internal structure and the complexity of relationships between country programs and the Asia Regional Platform at times slowed decision-making and coordination. Engagement with government ministries, for whom SCR was one of several concurrent initiatives, also occasionally affected responsiveness and timelines. These challenges were managed through sustained engagement, clear communication and effective use of established relationships to maintain momentum.

Online platforms for monitoring and technical support were widely used across the region, facilitating timely information sharing, reducing travel costs, lowering the project's carbon footprint and strengthening cross-country coordination.

The evaluation found that working with many of the same partners and target communities as IP2 enabled SCR to leverage established relationships and build on prior gains. This continuity strengthened both effectiveness and efficiency. Shared roles, such as the Partnership and Networking Coordinator across SCR and IP2, also supported efficiency through resource optimisation and cross program learning.

## 6.8 Accountability and Complaints

To ensure accountability and continuous improvement, the project established accessible feedback and complaints mechanisms enabling participants, communities and partners to raise concerns and provide input. Dedicated phone and email channels allowed complaints to be submitted directly to the project team, complemented by regular partner check-ins and a formal Partnership Health Check process to facilitate structured reflection and candid feedback. Learning workshops also incorporated feedback sessions to inform ongoing implementation.

These mechanisms were proactively communicated through workshops, events and routine engagement to ensure awareness. Accountability was further strengthened through joint financial reporting and review, regular audits and oversight to ensure compliance with funding requirements and ethical standards in research and data management.

Accountability and complaints handling were reported annually, with partner feedback informing adaptive management. In 2024, for example, partners recommended increased resourcing for emerging priorities such as climate resilient livelihoods, leading to budget reallocation in line with community needs and project objectives. In Thailand, partner requests for emergency response funding resulted in reallocation to support recovery efforts, highlighting the project's commitment to responsive management and partner-informed decision making.

## 6.9 Key Governance and Management Systems

The SCR project was managed by a dispersed PMU across the four-country target area, with the Project Manager reporting to the Mekong Water Governance Program Manager. The core management team included a GEDSI Coordinator, Partnership and Networking Coordinator (shared with Inclusion Project Phase II), Technical Climate Resilience Coordinator, Senior Finance Officer, Finance and Operations Manager, and MEAL Coordinator. Oversight was provided by a Project Steering Group comprising senior Oxfam members and DFAT staff, which met biannually. In addition, a Project Coordination Group, including the Project Manager, Thematic Leads and Country Coordinators, met monthly to address operational issues, promote accountability, and ensure project effectiveness. Thematic leads also participated in Communities of Practice to exchange best practice and improve collaboration across partners and thematic areas.

Management systems were aligned with Oxfam’s established frameworks and closely mirrored those of Inclusion Project Phase II, including shared staff and governance structures. This approach enabled cross-program learning, collaboration and consistent risk management across overlapping contexts. The SCR Steering Group was modelled on the IP2 Steering Group, with several members serving on both projects to facilitate knowledge sharing and alignment of strategic oversight.

The system proved adaptable in responding to unexpected operational challenges. In Thailand, flooding in 2024 damaged pilot sites for Culture-Based Fisheries and Fish Conservation Zone activities, necessitating a rapid pivot to recovery support. The PMU and partners redirected resources to provide emergency inputs, including seeds, seedlings, livestock and aquaculture stock, while replanning livelihoods and learning activities to sustain project objectives. In Viet Nam, prolonged national-level approval processes delayed baseline and GEDSI planning. In this case the PMU secured provincial approval and established sub-national delivery partnerships, allowing participatory assessments and training to proceed while central approvals remained pending. In Cambodia, heightened risk during the 2023 election period required the creation of an “election situation room,” a structured monitoring and communication mechanism that guided safe field operations, adapted standard operating procedures, and maintained continuity where feasible. In Lao PDR, stringent approval requirements repeatedly slowed partner engagement with communities. The PMU maintained continuous dialogue with authorities, clarified partner roles and leveraged academic partners to deliver training on climate hazards, GEDSI and women’s leadership. Across contexts, the PMU also provided technical support to speed up fund disbursement and partner onboarding, mitigating delays in project delivery.

To address MEAL related staffing challenges identified during implementation, Program Management support SCR MEAL through a role shared with IP2 utilising the experience of an existing staff member and commissioned external consultants for key initiatives such as Outcome Harvesting XX. In response to issues identified and recommendations from the endline evaluation and as highlighted in Oxfam’s Management Response, improvements will inform future systems and approaches under the Inclusion Project Phase 3 (IP3), including strengthened MEAL protocols and guidance, a simplified MEAL system, clearer responsibilities for data collection and analysis, and succession planning to ensure sustained capacity for GEDSI and MEAL. For example, moving forward to IP3, the PMU has established a Program Quality and Partnership Unit with dedicated capacity to capture and document results at partner, country, and regional levels.

The endline evaluation highlighted that these governance and management arrangements contributed to both effectiveness and efficiency. Shared roles, such as the Partnership and Networking Coordinator and continuity of engagement with IP2 communities and partners, facilitated adaptive management, leveraged prior investments and strengthened the quality of project delivery.

Boonta Kantakew, aged 74 was born and raised in Pa Kha village in Kun Tan district of Chiang Rai province in Thailand. Boonta is a farmer growing both rice and corn. He also fishes. He has 20 rai (3.2ha) of irrigated rice land and 60 rai (9.6) for corn, which he grows in the dry season. He also owns 25 head of cattle.

Boonta said that floods came quite unexpectedly in recent years and are doing a great deal of damage. Floods used to be predictable, he said, usually coming in September. Now, they come earlier and can completely destroy crops. In last year's flood, there was THB 300,000 (AUD \$15,000) worth of damage done.

"There's nothing that can be done to prevent the floods", he said. After last year's floods, he said that he'd received the standard government provision of THB 9,000 (AUD \$430) of compensation per household to support repair of damaged houses and to replace agricultural implements.

Talking about his experience of evacuation during the floods he said the displacement lasted for about one month, though people could go back by boat to check on their houses and belongings. Livestock had all been brought to higher ground before the floods rose, in accordance with the village plan which had been developed in collaboration with MFU. When the floods reached their greatest height, they completely surrounded the high ground in the village, which is where people and livestock had been evacuated to.

As for his expectations for the future, Boonta said there might not be floods like that every year, but they certainly could happen. At least when the source of the floods is in Phayao province, i.e. upstream along the Ing River, they can get early warning via the app, which the village community now makes full use of. This had been developed earlier by the government's Office of National Water Resources but not systematically used.

Part of the training was on how to effectively use the app for early warning, and now communities along the Ing river basin collaborate to share information. The project also helped the village to organise and plan for disaster management. One important part of this was the PA system, which had been provided by the government, but not systematically used before. The system was complemented by advice on evacuation procedures and response after the flood had hit. This enabled village leadership to get timely warnings and transmit them to the village population and coordinate evacuation and relief efforts.

Photo: Harjono Djoyobisono/Oxfam



## 7. CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNT

### 7.1 Challenges

The SCR project faced a range of significant challenges during implementation that affected the pace, scope and outcomes of activities. While the project team worked to mitigate or adapt to these challenges, some were structural or systemic and could not be fully resolved within the project timeframe. Key challenges included delays in government approvals, barriers to participation by people from marginalised and vulnerable groups, funding and time limitations, countries highly affected by climate and disaster risk, alignment with government priorities and constraints in data management, early warning systems and MEAL. These challenges illustrate the complexity of delivering multi-country resilience initiatives in diverse socio-political and environmental contexts. While the SCR project achieved meaningful progress in strengthening community resilience and local capacity, structural, systemic and contextual barriers constrained the full realisation of longer-term outcomes.

**Delays in government approvals and project commencement:** In Lao PDR and Viet Nam, project commencement was delayed due to the time required to secure formal government permissions. This compressed the implementation window, requiring rapid adjustments to targets and activity schedules and led to a no-cost extension. Shortened timelines limited the opportunity to demonstrate long-term impact, although evidence of positive short-term changes is apparent. Coordination with government departments was uneven, with some ministries highly supportive and others, including those overseeing infrastructure development in Lao PDR, less engaged. This affected alignment with national priorities and the pace of implementation.

**Barriers to participation:** Engaging people from the most marginalised communities proved challenging. Participation was constrained by economic pressures, cultural norms, competing survival priorities, linguistic diversity and remoteness. Inclusive engagement in activities such as early warning systems was further restricted where multiple ethnic groups were present and where communities lacked access to smartphones or internet services.

**Weak market linkages impacted income:** While agricultural productivity interventions succeeded in improving techniques and outputs, these gains did not always translate into increased household income due to weak market linkages in remote areas. As a result, the project's objective of strengthening resilience through diversified livelihoods was partially achieved with economic benefits varying across communities and countries. This was highlighted in the endline evaluation and response. In future Climate Resilience livelihood or agriculture initiatives, targeted value chain and market analysis will be undertaken to inform the design of these activities.

**MEAL limitations:** The project-wide MEAL framework, while robust, proved complex and not fully adaptable to country contexts or partner capacities. Implementing partners and country teams faced difficulties contributing consistently to the common MEAL framework, which in turn limited its usefulness for project-wide monitoring, evaluation and adaptive management.

### 7.2 Lessons Learned

The SCR project generated a range of lessons that informed ongoing implementation and provide guidance for future initiatives. Some lessons prompted immediate adjustments to project activities, while others highlight considerations for sustaining DFAT investment outcomes, supporting replication, scaling up and strengthening system-level interventions. Key lessons include:

**Lesson 1:** Community-based design and planning increases adoption of activities, leverages local knowledge and provides a foundation for continued benefits beyond DFAT funding. In future programming, co-design processes will be embedded with communities to ensure interventions are relevant, locally owned and likely to be sustained beyond project timelines.

**Lesson 2:** Complexity in MEAL frameworks, long baseline lead times, staff turnover and varying partner capacities limited timely understanding of project learnings and impacts. IP3 and future projects will apply lighter, earlier baseline methods, clear core indicators and targeted partner capacity building. Adaptive MEAL approaches will

ensure evidence is captured consistently and used to inform timely decisions, strengthen adaptive management and support the long-term monitoring of outcomes.

**Lesson 3:** Early, site-specific GEDSI analysis is critical to address local social, cultural and institutional diversity. Uniform GEDSI approaches were not always suited to local contexts. IP3 and future Oxfam climate resilience programming will prioritise regional, country and partner-level GEDSI assessments as well as site-specific analysis. Gender Impact Assessment methodologies will be applied where scale or context indicates significant differences from national GEDSI norms.

**Lesson 4:** Economic viability of livelihood interventions varied by context. While all models demonstrated some effectiveness, hydroponics involved high establishment and technical maintenance costs and was only feasible where high-value markets existed. Drip irrigation delivered lower yields but was scalable and locally maintainable, particularly where water was limited, while sprinkler systems were most appropriate for perennial gardens. Future work will integrate cost-benefit and market analyses to ensure livelihood interventions are economically viable, context-appropriate and sustainable over time.

**Lesson 5:** Extreme weather events, such as the 2024 floods, can affect social capital, community cohesion and interventions. Adaptive management enabled SCR to remain relevant and support core objectives. Future programming will incorporate contingency planning and resource flexibility to respond to shocks, including rapid reallocation of inputs and support to maintain livelihoods and community resilience.

**Lesson 6:** Community-based early warning systems must be simple, standardised and designed around local needs to ensure inclusion of people from marginalised groups. Future work will focus on community-centred design, accessibility for those without smartphones or internet and verification mechanisms to ensure information is trusted, accurate and acted upon.

**Lesson 7:** Nature-based solutions, such as mangrove plantations, deliver both long-term DRR and environmental benefits. Future programming will continue to invest in ecosystem-based interventions to provide durable, sustainable resilience outcomes with environmental benefit.

**Lesson 8:** Inter-country learning exchanges amplify civil society voices, strengthen coordinated advocacy and support transboundary solutions. For example, exchanges between upstream and downstream river communities helped stakeholders understand how upstream development affects downstream water management and disaster risk, promoting solutions that would not have been possible if communities acted in isolation. Future projects will dedicate resources to facilitate these exchanges and strengthen cross-border learning.

**Lesson 9:** Technology and innovation are critical for DRM and climate adaptation, but information must be carefully managed to maintain community trust. While social media can rapidly disseminate messages, it can also spread misinformation and cause panic during extreme events. Future programming will combine digital tools with community engagement and verification to ensure early warning and climate information is accurate, trusted and acted upon.

**Lesson 10:** Aligning project design with local regulations, strategies and community structures increases engagement, ownership and replication. For example, in Viet Nam, integration with the four-on-the-spot disaster management principles strengthened community engagement. Future work will continue to embed activities within existing DRM structures and government strategies to ensure interventions are locally relevant, supported and more likely to continue beyond DFAT funding.

Koh Sralao is a village that sits in the floodplains of Stung Treng Province. Life here has always revolved around the land and river. Fishing and small-scale agriculture are its primary livelihoods. Its remoteness increases vulnerability to floods and sudden changes in river flow. Climate change is shifting the timing and intensity of rains and dry spells, raising flood risk in the wet season and water stress in the dry season.

Rice farming didn't guarantee a steady livelihood for Thoeung Lam and Duong Pi, two women farmers in the village. Like many households here, they needed to diversify their income and improve food security by growing vegetables. In 2023, SCR introduced climate-smart agriculture (CSA) in Koh Sralao. With the support of local partners, families were selected to join training sessions on techniques like organic composting, seed saving, raised-bed preparation, and efficient watering systems. Thoeung and Duong were among them. They also learned basic financial management and recordkeeping. Local partners provided gender equality training and leadership support, so women in the CSA groups could benefit fully.

CSA provided a new way of thinking. As their yields increased and labour became easier, the women discovered that CSA didn't just grow vegetables, it grew their confidence. While the income from their produce remains modest, its impact on daily life has been profound. Each woman now earns a steady amount. "It's not a lot," Duong Pi shared, "but it fills the gap. It supports things we couldn't afford before."

Rice still provides the bulk of the family income, but vegetables have become an essential complement. "These techniques really help with production," Lam said. "I now want to grow bigger crops or maybe fruit that brings in more money." With better soil health and smarter planting schedules, they now cultivate leafy greens, cucumbers, eggplants, and long beans even during erratic rainfall. Their vegetables look healthier, last longer, and sell more easily at the local market. Soon, they became role models: other families began adopting CSA techniques on their own, supporting one another and investing in equipment.

New challenges also emerged. Improved yields sometimes led to market saturation. "We have more vegetables to sell," Lam explained, "but sometimes prices drop because many farmers harvest at the same time. And fuel for our water pumps keeps getting more expensive. We want to switch to solar power, but the initial cost is high. We're saving up for that."

Combining climate smart agriculture with basic financial and leadership training creates both economic security and social capital for women, which reinforces their participation in community decision-making. Beyond income, these women have become community leaders. Neighbours sought their advice as gardens flourished and confidence grew. Freed from endless manual labour, the women began attending village meetings, participating in community events, and encouraging others to follow their path.

Photo: Oxfam in Cambodia



## 8. COMMUNICATIONS

SCR communications were aligned with the broader Mekong Regional Water Governance Program and the IP2 communication strategy, leveraging existing platforms such as country webpages, social media channels, planned learning events and monitoring visits. During project implementation, a range of communication products were developed to share insights, progress and results with stakeholders. These included short films, posters, briefing papers, reports, stories highlighting change and change-makers, blog posts and social media content, all designed to engage partners, communities and wider audiences while promoting learning and visibility of project outcomes. Annexure I lists these communication products and links, including case studies, videos and other content designed to increase project visibility, raise awareness of key issues, and amplify the voices of project participants. The SCR project was also featured on Oxfam’s wider Mekong Regional Water Governance FaceBook page, which has an estimated 148,000 regular users. In addition, the project conducted targeted awareness and outreach campaigns, including 41 posts over the project period, which reached an estimated 97,793 people and generated 2,404 interactions, including comments and content shares, as summarised in the table below.

**Table Eleven: SCR Facebook postings and reach**

	Contents	Awareness Raised	Reached	Interactions
1	Water data sharing dialogue-1	Inclusive and actionable water data sharing	N/A*	61
2	Partnership in Thailand (MFU)	SCR work in Thailand	N/A*	47
3	GEDSI consultative workshop*	Strategies on inclusive DRM/CCA	N/A*	29
4	International Day of Climate action	Promote the DRM simulation exercise in Kratie province	N/A*	2
5	World Wetlands Day	Biodiversity for resilience	418	16
6	Research findings sharing discussion in Thailand	Community climate related issues	998	24
7	World Water Day, Community consultation for the study on water data sharing	Inclusive and actionable water data sharing	359	9
8	Scaling Nature-Based Solutions in the Mekong in Bangkok	NBs in DRM/CCA	1,234	43
9	Learning on water data politics as well as the regional context of Mekong countries	Promote the issue of water governance in the Mekong	1,187	43
10	Open call for Innovation idea on climate resilience	Promote innovative idea for Resilience	2,363	80
11	Presentation at the UNESCO Studio: the study on actionable and accountable water data	Inclusive and actionable Water data sharing	690	25
12	World Environment Day	Promote sustainable environment	219	7
13	Climate resilience session at the Asia Women and Rivers Congress	Inclusive DRM/CCA	515	16
14	Field visit in Luang Prabang province	Promote community resilience	424	11
15	Green cinema	Promote sustainable environment	91	1
16	Regional Closure workshop	The achievement of the project	3,486	115
17	Livelihood training on cattle feeds	Promote Research to Action for strengthening community resilience	1,519	48
18	GEDSI online campaign- International day of indigenous Peoples	Inclusive DRM/CCA	997	28
19	GEDSI online campaign- Amplify Voices of marginalised group for climate actions	Inclusive DRM/CCA	1,066	24

20	GEDSI online campaign - Data for Change	Inclusive DRM/CCA	903	22
21	GEDSI online campaign - Inclusive DRM	Inclusive DRM/CCA	3,277	87
22	GEDSI online campaign - empowering communities	Inclusive DRM/CCA	1,598	47
23	GEDSI online campaign - climate actions	Inclusive DRM/CCA	1,527	43
24	GEDSI online campaign - inclusive decision making	Inclusive DRM/CCA	1,669	50
25	GEDSI online campaign - inclusive information sharing	Inclusive DRM/CCA	1,517	56
26	GEDSI online campaign - inclusive Climate Action	Inclusive DRM/CCA	1,326	46
27	GEDSI online campaign - left no one behind	Inclusive DRM/CCA	3,187	78
28	GEDSI online campaign - participation	Inclusive DRM/CCA	1,520	60
29	GEDSI online campaign - fair access to safe water	Inclusive DRM/CCA	1,808	50
30	inspired story from field - Vietnam	Technologies adoption to increase resilience	3,937	89
31	Closure workshop in Vietnam	SCR work in Vietnam (mangrove, water-saving models and DRM)	3,223	94
32	Regional GEDSI workshop- Stories from Indigenous women revealed a common thread-1	Inclusion	1,718	95
33	Regional GEDSI workshop- Stories from LGBTQ+	Inclusion	5,622	165
34	Regional GEDSI workshop- opening	Inclusion	5,949	166
35	Community learning exchange on DRM/CCA-1	Disaster experience in Mekong countries, hearing community voice	1,554	89
36	Community learning exchange on DRM/CCA-2	Disaster experience in Mekong countries, hearing community voice	5,225	177
37	Women congress - 1-VDO	Women in water governance	24,000	35
38	Water data sharing dialogue - 2	Inclusive water data sharing for early warning	2,037	55
39	Mekong Youth dialogue	Climate and Geopolitics in the Mekong region	5,637	185
40	Field monitoring	Promote community climate issues	676	8
41	Water data sharing dialogue at Mekong ASEAN environmental week	Inclusive water data sharing for early warning	4,317	78
		Total audience reached	97,793	2,404

## The Change Makers

Sovanthong Sit, who works with MVI in Stung Treng, began integrating GEDSI across her work. “Many people had never heard of inclusion as a concept,” she explained. “In the past, women, poor families, older people, People with Disability, and LGBTQI+ individuals were discriminated against. It takes time, but the effort is worth it. I can now see these groups being included and consulted in project activities, climate change adaptation plans, and disaster management plans.”



As a long-established organisation embedded in local communities, MVI didn't stop GEDSI work with just one project. Their learning has extended to other programs and vice versa. The organisation's deep commitment to GEDSI has become a key contributor to success.

Nen Cannvatha of 3SPN, whose own experience of exclusion informs her work, is well trusted by the community, especially by the women she supports. Cannvatha brought her lived experience into her leadership style. She helped identify women with leadership potential and offered them extra coaching and confidence-building support. Her approach was deeply personal, driven by a belief that leadership can be nurtured with care and trust.

Through a combination of hands-on mentorship, technical training, and community outreach, MVI and 3SPN set out to change not just perceptions but participation. They worked closely with Village Disaster Management Groups (VDMGs), encouraging them to include and support women, youth, People with Disability and people from marginalised groups.

Crucially, they didn't stop at one-off trainings. The field teams have built relationships with local authorities, community leaders, and households and ensured new committee members felt supported. In many cases, this also meant bridging tensions within families. One woman leader in Ratanakiri, for example, initially faced resistance from her husband when she joined the VCDM. But through repeated engagement and encouragement from Ms. Cannvatha and her colleagues, he gradually came to understand and eventually support his wife's role in the community. These efforts paid off. Across target villages, women began stepping into active leadership roles.

“I can see the change in the women's confidence when I go to the community,” said Ms. Sovanthong. “They can speak up and represent other women during meetings. They are the ones promoting the value of leaving no one behind.”

Women farmers also benefited from climate-smart agriculture (CSA) training, which had a ripple effect on their confidence. “The women farmers who use CSA techniques are also VCDM members,” said Ms. Sovanthong and Ms. Nen. “They're showing more leadership—maybe because the income helps boost their confidence. It shows they can take on both production and community roles at the same time”.

Photo: Oxfam in Cambodia

## 9. MONITORING, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING (MEAL)

The SCR project operated under a MEAL Framework developed in its first year, grounded in the project's Theory of Change. The Framework established outcome and output indicators, incorporated GEDSI-sensitive measures, guided data collection, and informed reporting and reflection processes. Methods included field monitoring visits, focus group discussions, surveys, outcome harvesting, real-time digital monitoring tools, and the development of case studies and change stories. Annual reflection and learning workshops were held to synthesise findings and support adaptive programming.

The program-wide MEAL system was designed to guide the development of country-level frameworks tailored to each context. In practice, country teams experienced challenges fitting their work into the project-wide structure, contributing to difficulties in data consistency and comparability. The rapid endline evaluation identified several structural weaknesses in the results framework, including delayed approval of the Baseline Study Synthesis Report, a proliferation of indicators across multiple levels causing confusion, lack of tailoring to diverse country contexts, attribution challenges due to overlapping activities with the concurrent IP2 project and insufficient coverage of PMU regional work, sustainability outcomes and partner capacity-strengthening contributions.

**MEAL staffing and capacity:** Repeated turnover in the MEAL Coordinator role significantly affected the project's monitoring system. The position changed three times, including a four-month gap, which led to inconsistent implementation, gaps in institutional memory and reduced guidance for country teams and partners. Partner MEAL capacity varied across countries, with government and university partners having limited experience in monitoring requirements. Data collection was more consistent in Cambodia due to stronger existing partner relationships and access.

**Data collection and adaptive responses:** The project combined quantitative indicator-level methods with qualitative approaches, including narrative reporting, case studies, and videos. GEDSI data was disaggregated by gender age, and disability where feasible, though inconsistently across contexts. In response to the midterm review limitations, the project commissioned 32 Most Significant Change stories across the four countries and introduced a standardised outcome harvesting process. Additional adaptive responses included reallocating resources in Vietnam from app development to community training, redirecting funds to flood recovery in Thailand and commissioning an external CSA assessment in Cambodia. Some communities reported monitoring fatigue from multiple data collection visits, highlighting the need for better coordination in future programming.

**GEDSI integration in MEAL:** GEDSI monitoring included disaggregated data collection and dedicated feedback sessions with partners in Lao PDR and Cambodia. However, consistent GEDSI results framework data was limited, partly because the project's GEDSI Strategy was not finalised until February 2024. The results framework also lacked sufficiently specific indicators to capture disaggregated GEDSI outcomes quantitatively. Qualitative fieldwork provided stronger insights into GEDSI gains, though these were context-specific across sites.

MEAL lessons and recommendations for IP3: The SCR project's MEAL experience offers several key lessons for IP3 and similar future programs:

- Simplify and contextualise the results framework, using fewer, SMART indicators tailored to each country context to capture regional PMU work, partnership outcomes, and sustainability gains.
- Invest in dedicated MEAL staffing, ensuring a consistent Coordinator throughout the program to maintain data quality, facilitate learning, and support adaptive management.
- Carefully time and align baseline studies to ensure they are completed before activities commence and are directly designed to track project outcomes.
- Collect only necessary, actionable data and coordinate visits to reduce community monitoring fatigue while improving data quality.
- Strengthen impact assessment by systematically combining quantitative data with qualitative change stories to provide a robust evidence base for reporting on knowledge, attitudes, and practice changes.
- For complex, multi-country programs, consider an evaluability assessment prior to commissioning evaluation work, with separate country-level evaluations coordinated centrally for stronger accountability and learning.

Oxfam has accepted all endline evaluation findings and agreed in full or in part with all 14 recommendations. The lessons relating to MEAL have already been embedded in IP3's design, including a redesigned results framework, a dedicated Program Quality and Partnership Unit, a completed baseline, and strengthened GEDSI monitoring from the outset.

Results framework performance: Despite data quality limitations, results framework data indicate an overall average achievement of 104% across the three Long-term Outcomes (LTOs). Progress was highest for LTO3 (use of hydro-meteorological data, 113%), followed by LTO2 (local authority support to communities, 111%) and LTO1 (communities implementing inclusive DRM/CCA plans, 91%). The lower score for LTO1 reflects missing data for indicators on knowledge, attitudes, and practice changes regarding women, People with Disability, and ethnic minorities. At the Project Objective Indicator level, the overall average achievement was 106%. These figures should be read alongside qualitative evidence and interpreted with caution, as reasons for overachievement were not systematically documented in real time.

## 10. SUSTAINABILITY

The project approached sustainability across three dimensions: financial, institutional and social. Lessons from implementation and the rapid endline evaluation suggest that results are likely to be sustained, or have strong potential to be sustained, across the EOPs, although the extent will vary by context, intervention type and partner capacity. While sustainability is influenced by local contexts, partner capacity and external factors, the project's intentional design and strategic sustainability measures suggest that many benefits are likely to continue beyond the project period. By focusing on low-cost, locally maintainable technologies, building institutional capacity, promoting community ownership and engaging in policy advocacy, the project established multiple pathways through which financial, institutional and social gains can be maintained across EOPs, as outlined below.

Financial sustainability was strengthened through an emphasis on affordability, local maintenance, and partner resource mobilisation. The project supported partners to leverage learning and evidence generated through implementation to seek funding from other donors, increasing the likelihood that approaches can be continued or scaled beyond the project timeframe. Design decisions were informed by costs, further reinforcing financial sustainability. For example, in Cambodia, the project selected a Water Tank and Drip irrigation system over a more costly hydroponics model, based on affordability, local availability of inputs and ease of maintenance. This decision supported higher adoption and contribution rates and increased the likelihood that households and communities will continue to use and replicate these approaches independently.

Institutional sustainability was supported through capacity strengthening of partners and project engagement with existing government structures at provincial, district, commune and village levels. The project deliberately worked through formal systems and developed pilot interventions intended for replication. Early evidence of replication, including uptake by non-targeted households and interest from government actors, suggests that institutional learning and practices introduced through the project have the potential to extend beyond the project lifecycle. The use of participatory tools grounded in local knowledge further increased the likelihood that approaches are relevant and can be retained and adapted by local institutions and partners over time.

Social sustainability was reinforced through investment in community awareness, skills, and inclusive practices. Strengthened knowledge and attitudes related to DRM, CCA, EWS, and selected CSA practices, alongside improved capacities of communities and local authorities, represent areas where sustainability is strongest. By promoting participatory decision-making and GEDSI integration, the project fostered local ownership and accountability, embedding inclusive practices within community and institutional processes. While these changes are expected to endure, the evaluation notes that in some contexts it remains too early to determine the full sustainability of outcomes, particularly where implementation delays and contextual challenges were significant.

The Rapid Endline Evaluation also identified sustainability-related risks that may affect the extent to which benefits are sustained, including maintenance challenges, migration, limited local funding for disaster plan implementation, CSA scalability, risk management constraints, lack of internet connectivity in some locations and the need for strengthened sustainability monitoring. The integration of sustainability learnings and approaches into the next phase provides an opportunity to consolidate gains, address these risks, and strengthen sustainability planning and monitoring.

### Sustainability by outcome

**Outcome 1:** Target riverine communities are implementing inclusive DRM/CCA plans: The project demonstrated strong potential for enduring impact in riverine communities by embedding inclusive, locally tailored DRM/CCA practices. Participatory planning processes, practical application of risk assessments and adoption of low-cost, climate-resilient livelihood options such as mushroom cultivation, intercropping and hydroponic drip irrigation have strengthened household resilience and created pathways for financial sustainability. Institutional

sustainability is supported through the formal adoption of DRM/CCA practices by community structures and the leadership roles taken by women, youth, and People with Disability, ensuring that inclusive governance and knowledge remain within communities. Social sustainability is reinforced as community members apply these skills and practices in day-to-day decision-making, promoting continued awareness, collective action and replication of successful approaches beyond project sites.

**Outcome 2:** Local authorities are supporting communities to manage disaster and climate-related hazards: The engagement and capacity strengthening of local authorities has increased the likelihood that DRM/CCA outcomes will be sustained. Financial sustainability is promoted through resource allocation for climate-smart livelihood initiatives and integration of DRR into local development planning. Institutional sustainability is evident in the establishment and strengthening of village, commune, and district-level disaster management structures and in the adoption of inclusive planning processes that incorporate the perspectives of women, People with Disability, and people from marginalised groups. Social sustainability is strengthened through continuous collaboration between authorities and communities, inclusive training, and youth participation, which collectively promote local ownership, intergenerational capacity and community leadership in disaster preparedness and adaptation.

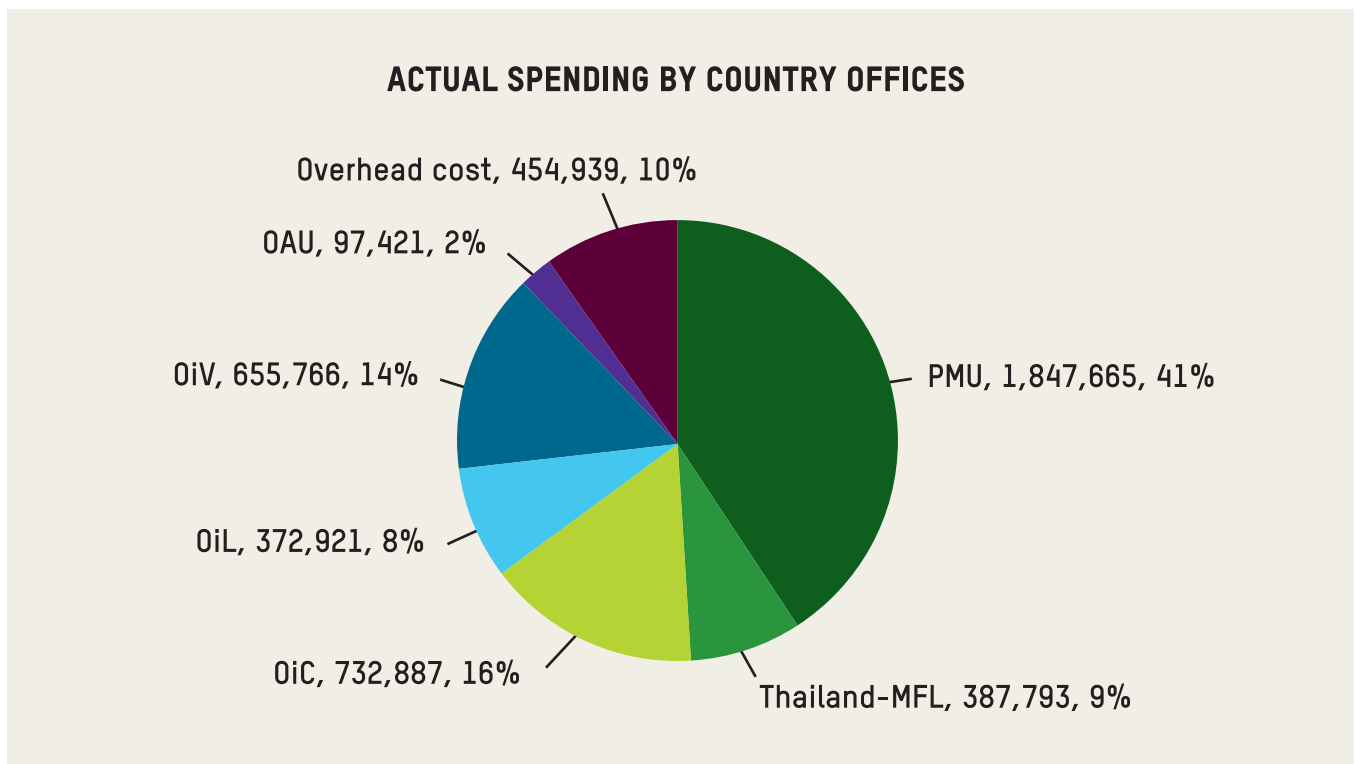
**Outcome 3:** Improved hydro-meteorological data is used by riverine communities, authorities and DRM structures: The use of improved hydro-meteorological data has created clear pathways for sustainable impact at both community and institutional levels. Financial sustainability is supported by enabling communities to optimise agricultural decisions and reduce losses using accessible, low-cost data platforms and technologies. Institutional sustainability is reinforced as local authorities and emergency response structures integrate data into formal planning and operational procedures, ensuring that knowledge and protocols continue beyond the project period. Social sustainability is evident in community-led actions to adapt livelihoods, apply early warning information and adopt inclusive technology solutions, strengthening resilience and maintaining behavioural changes that reduce vulnerability to climate and disaster risks.

# 11. FINANCE

The SCR project was implemented between March 2022 and 30 June 2025, with a no cost extension period from 1 July to 30 November 2025. The total approved budget for the SCR project was AUD \$4,530,428, with total interest earned of AUD \$49,392.

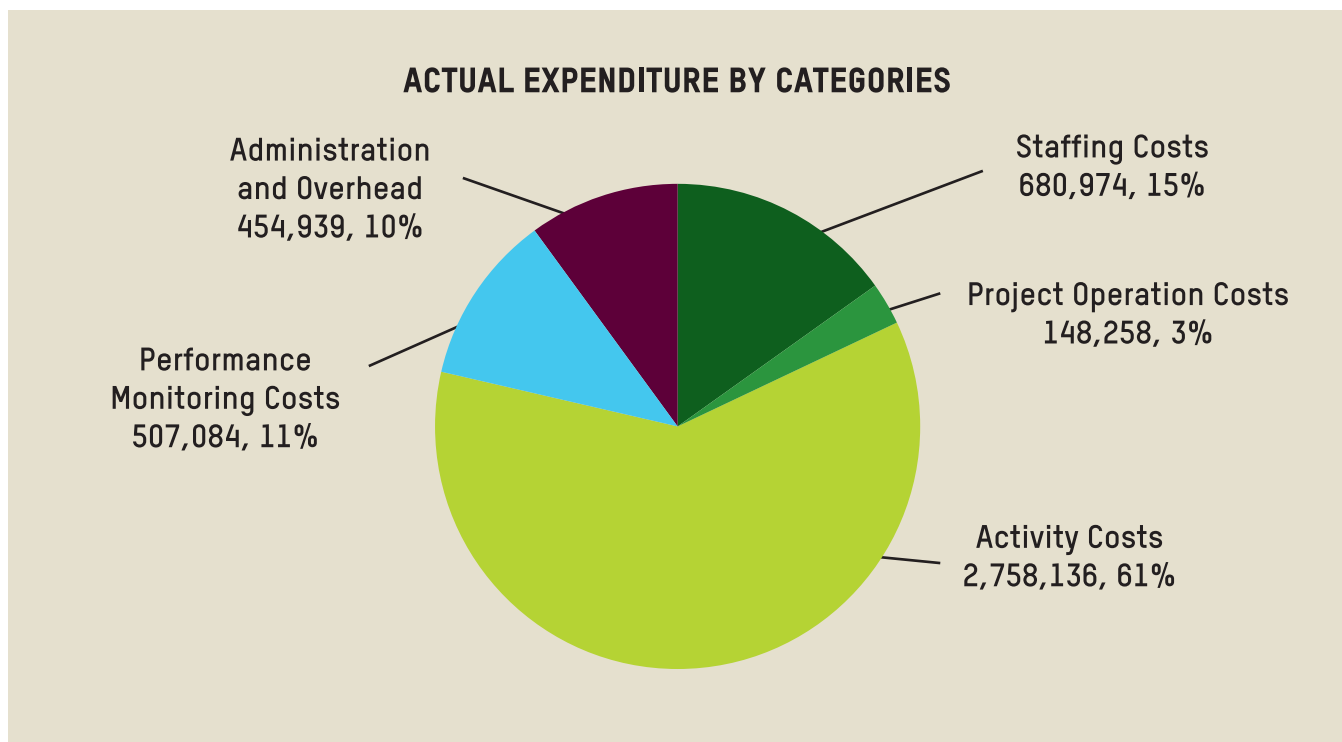
From start to end date, total project expenditure was AUD \$4,549,392, accounting for 100% of the total approved budget plus the interest earned. Of this amount, AUD \$30,427 was allocated as a top-up to project activities during the no cost extension planning in November 2024 and the remaining interest amount of AUD \$18,965 was used to cover project expenditure as of 30 November 2025. The spend pattern across different Oxfam country teams is highlighted below (see also Table Nine in Section 6.7 above).

**Figure 1: The summary report by country Offices**



**Performance by country:** Based on the approved budget, Oxfam in Vietnam did not fully utilise its allocation, resulting in a remaining balance of AUD \$44,234, equivalent to 6% of its total budget. This balance was reallocated within the project to support other activities. Meanwhile, Oxfam in Lao PDR exceeded its approved budget by 4% (AUD \$14,535), which was covered through internal reallocation and top-up funds to cover additional project expenses. Oxfam in Cambodia fully expended its approved budget. Activities in Thailand (implemented via MFL) accounted for nearly 9% of total project expenditure, slightly exceeding the approved budget by AUD \$23,793. This over-expenditure reflects additional funds disbursed by SCR to support post-flood recovery and livelihood activities in affected communities in Thailand.

**Figure 2: Total budget and actual expenditure from 1 March 2022 to 30 November 2025**



**Performance by Expenditure Category:** Figure Two (see also Table Nine in Section 6.7 above) shows financial performance by category of staffing, operations, activities, performance monitoring, administrative and overhead. Under the activities line:

Grant to partners (36%) across the implementing countries accounts for AUD \$1,615,327. This represents grant disbursement to 18 implementing partners across four countries with equal distribution to government and university partners, and grants to civil society organisations.

Regional capacity building and networking support (15%) accounts for AUD \$662,616 of project expenditure. Of this, AUD \$117,342 were dedicated costs supporting GEDSI activities (or 3% of the total project cost).

Performance Monitoring (11%) cost accounts for AUD \$507,084 of the total project expenditures. The project baseline, mid-term review and rapid endline evaluation cost account for 40% of the Performance Monitoring cost (AUD \$204,941).

GEDSI and disability budget: Total expenditure specifically for GEDSI amounted to AUD \$232,331, representing approximately 5% of total SCR project expenditures. This allocation included: technical human resources, including the GEDSI Coordinator and GEDSI consultant costs; women’s leadership training activities; co-financing of the Women’s Resilience Conference 2024; regional GEDSI learning and action events; and GEDSI strategy orientation and related activities. Within this amount, staff costs, consultant fees and event convening represent the main financial allocations for GEDSI programming. While the GEDSI grant to partners cannot be broken down explicitly for specific activities, it contributed to advancing GEDSI objectives across project implementation. Disability-related expenditure was incorporated within the GEDSI budget and project activities through inclusive planning and consultation processes; reasonable accommodations for participation in trainings and events; accessible tools and technology, including adaptations for People with Disability in DRM/CCA and hydro-meteorological initiatives; and technical support to partners to ensure inclusion of People with Disability in project interventions.

For detailed information, please refer to the SCR consolidated acquittal in Annex III Financial Report.

## 12. CONCLUSION

Measurable impacts in climate resilience building and disaster preparedness for riverine communities in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam were achieved through the SCR. The project demonstrates that locally tailored, participatory and inclusive approaches can build climate and disaster resilience in at-risk Mekong riverine communities. Despite challenges including political constraints, delayed approvals, COVID-19 disruptions and extreme weather events such as Typhoon Yagi in Vietnam and severe flooding in Thailand and Lao PDR, the project developed the capacity of communities to anticipate, plan for and respond to extreme weather events and climate change-induced hazards.

At the community level, residents reported strengthened knowledge of hazards, vulnerabilities and disaster preparedness, alongside the adoption of CSA practices and engagement with locally led monitoring systems. Some key practical examples include: in Cambodia, CSA and community water-level monitoring pilots improved food security and strengthened understanding of flood risks; in Vietnam's Mekong Delta, women, older people and People with Disability benefited from water-saving irrigation systems, mangrove plantations and other nature-based solutions; in Thailand, youth and women reported clearer understanding of their roles in disaster preparedness and increased confidence to participate in local DRM planning; and in Lao PDR, climate-smart mushroom cultivation provided both income-generating opportunities and resilience-building. Participatory approaches, such as PCVA, ensured that community priorities were central to intervention design, increasing ownership and buy-in and improving prospects for sustainable climate and disaster resilience beyond the project period.

Partnerships with local authorities, civil society and research institutions strengthened the integration of inclusive DRM and climate adaptation into planning processes. GEDSI outcomes were evident. Women, youth, ethnic minorities and People with Disability increasingly participated in community DRM committees, decision-making processes and regional workshops. Change stories documented shifts in confidence, leadership and engagement, particularly among groups traditionally marginalised in community planning, though barriers to full participation remain.

SCR was highly relevant not only to community priorities but also aligned with national DRR and climate adaptation strategies across all four target countries as well as Australia's development priorities on gender equality, social inclusion and climate resilience and their development investments in the Mekong region. The project also demonstrated relevance at regional and transboundary levels, with anecdotal evidence of improved data sharing between countries and increased recognition among policy makers that decisions on water resource management impact riverine communities both domestically and internationally.

Monitoring and reporting were challenged by a complex results framework, contextual variations and turnover in MEAL project staff, but qualitative data, case studies and participatory evaluation captured nuanced changes in knowledge, attitudes and practices. Sustainability prospects are promising, particularly for early warning systems, CSA and livelihood initiatives, nature-based solutions and strengthened governance structures, though continued support under IP3 will help consolidate and scale gains.

While systemic change in the way governments and communities approach climate resilience and disaster planning and preparedness has not yet been fully achieved due to the project's limited timeframe, a clear proof-of-concept pathway has been established, with outcomes that provide a foundation for longer-term, scaled impact. Overall, SCR demonstrates that participatory, context driven and GEDSI integrated interventions, supported by flexible management and strong partnerships, can build climate and disaster resilience. The project provides actionable lessons for future programming, highlighting the importance of adaptive planning, robust and contextually appropriate monitoring frameworks and alignment with community and government priorities, reinforcing the relevance of continued investment in multi-level, inclusive resilience-building initiatives.

## 13. ANNEXES

- I. Communication Products (see attached)
- II. Final evaluation report (see attached)
- III. Financial report (see attached)
- IV. Project Closure Workshop Report (see attached)



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