**Feature**

**Wetlands – a natural source of food that may not last forever**

Truong Thanh Thuy

“Here is our breakfast, our lunch and our dinner,” a middle-aged villager tells us, pointing to a large pond.

She lives in Nongtha village in Champassak district, where one of three wetland areas in Vientiane can be found.

Every day, villagers go to the pond to collect various kinds of vegetables that flourish here and the men go to catch fish.

“We are a lot of fish here. We don’t need to buy any at the market,” Mr Bounthom Vorasane, a 64-year-old fisherman, told us.

“Catching fish in the pond has enabled me to feed my son and daughter over the years. Although we’re not rich, we’re not poor,” he said.

Fishing in the pond has been his only way of earning a living since 1988. In the past, he could catch 10kg per day. On a good day, the old man could bring in over 20kg.

Just 2-3kg was enough for his family of four so the remainder was sold at the market.

Thirty households grew up next to the pond in Nongtha village. The wetland area became a source of food that seemed inexhaustible.

“Everyone used to fish. We even caught fish in the pond with four other villages. This made it difficult to manage and control, especially with regard to economic and environmental concerns,” said Village Head Mr Savanh Chanthakoummane.

In spite of this, as head of the village I have asked people to clean around the pond. I think we should protect it because the pond can benefit not only this village but others nearby as well.”

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Country Representative, Ms Latsamy Silavong, said: “Some areas in Laos are low areas, which are all wetlands. We need local people to recognise how important wetlands are. All the functions of wetlands should be understood by everyone. Wetlands can provide jobs for people. We really want to conserve them.”

Villagers in Nongtha try to express their hopes and expectations.

“We want this area to be developed. We hope the government protects it. This is all we have to live on.”

The village head said, “Wetlands can provide jobs for people. We really want them to be developed. We hope the government protects it. This is all we have to live on.”

Mr Savanh Chanthakoummane said the government was trying to make local people understand the importance of forestry and wetlands. His activities now focus on the establishment of laws and regulations to protect them.

Villagers in Nongtha village collect vegetables from the pond.

**Vacancy Announcement**

**For Locally Recruited Staff**

The World Bank

The World Bank is one of the world’s largest sources of funding for the developing world. Its primary focus is on helping the poorest people and the poorest countries. It uses its financial resources, its staff, and its expertise to help developing countries reduce poverty, increase economic growth, enhance environmental and social sustainability, and improve their quality of life. The World Bank is expanding its Vientiane Office as part of its ongoing commitment to supporting the development vision of Lao PDR. The World Bank invites applications from qualified individuals for the following Locally Recruited Staff positions to join the Lao PDR Country Team in Vientiane.

**SHORT TERM CONSULTANT**

**PUBLIC SECTOR AND GOVERNANCE**

The short-term consultant will work under the direct supervision of the Public Sector Program Coordinator of the World Bank. As the consultant will develop the knowledge of operations, her/his tasks will evolve to ensure career development and progression.

**Job Description and Accountabilities:**

1. Assisting the task team preparing the Treasury Modernization Project;
2. Working with the task team on providing technical guidance to the Ministry of Finance on implementation of the Public Finance Management Strengthening Program;
3. Participating in the Poverty Reduction Support Operations missions and preparing status updates on policy actions and triggers;
4. Working with Bank sectoral colleagues under guidance of the task team leader on the Nam Theun 2 Revenue Management Arrangements, with specific focus on determining eligible programs;
5. Working with the task team on dissemination of the PFM diagnostic studies as public expenditure review and integrated fiduciary review, and their PEFA assessment documents;
6. Working with the task team in managing the public finance management multi-donor trust fund;
7. Any other work assigned by the supervisor on the public finance management program of the World Bank.

**Qualifications and Experience:**

- A master degree in economics, public administration or other relevant fields.
- Fluent in English and Lao.
- Interpersonal and client engagement skills.

**Duration of Contract**

The work will be for 250 working days commencing on March 2010 and ending December 31, 2010, with possibility of ETC conversion.

**Applications can be submitted electronically through the website or in paper copy to the address below by February 12, 2010.**

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(Only shortlisted candidates will be notified)