



Provincial authorities and UNDP Laos staff cut a ribbon to hand over a new riverbank in Savannakhet province.

River embankment boosts flood defences in Savannakhet

Families in Dong Meuang village, Champhon district, Savannakhet province, are now better protected from flooding and riverbank erosion following the installation of stabilisation infrastructure by the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment through the Department of Water Resources, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The project aimed to tackle the recurring flood and erosion risks that have affected houses, farmland and livelihoods, particularly during the devastating floods of 2019.

The work was carried out under the Integrated Water Resources Management and Ecosystem-Based Adaptation Project, financed by the Global Environment Facility's Least Developed Countries Fund.

The project handover ceremony held recently in Savannakhet province was attended by the Resident Representative of UNDP Laos, alongside authorities from the Savannakhet and Luang Prabang provincial Departments of Agriculture and Environment.

Dong Meuang village has faced increasing risks of flooding and riverbank erosion for years, with the situation worsening after the devastating floods of 2019, which caused extensive riverbank collapse and accelerated soil erosion.

A representative of Dong Meuang village said "Ever since the village was hit by a severe flood in 2019, the rainy season has always brought intense anxiety about flooding and riverbank erosion."

"Now that the embankment is complete, we feel much more secure and confident. We don't have to live in fear anymore, and we are very grateful to the developers."

Financed by the Global Environment Facility's Least Developed Country Fund, the riverbank stabilisation infrastructure represents a core activity promoting nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based adaptation approaches tailored to address long-term environmental vulnerabilities.

The primary objective of this structural intervention is to mitigate severe soil erosion, prevent land degradation along critical riparian zones, and significantly strengthen communities' capacity to manage and adapt to increasingly frequent climate-related hazards, specifically severe seasonal floods and prolonged droughts within the Xe Bang Hieng River Basin.

The handover of the riverbank goes beyond simply delivering physical civil works; it reflects the joint commitment of the Government of Laos, UNDP and the Global Environment Facility to empowering local authorities and communities through inclusive, sustainable water governance.

UNDP remains dedicated to supporting the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, the Department of Water Resources and provincial authorities in both

Savannakhet and Luang Prabang provinces to advance integrated water resource planning, climate change adaptation frameworks, and ecosystem conservation, ensuring a more resilient, adaptive, and sustainable future for vulnerable rural communities across Laos.

By **Times Reporters**

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