

Impacts of climate change on forest-harvested food and the nutrition of children and families in Lao

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INTRODUCTION:

Forests are an important source of food, medicine, and income for rural families in Lao PDR, especially ethnic communities. NTFPs contribute significantly to food security and income through consumption and sales. However, increasing land demand for cash crops (and, more recently, livestock rearing) has caused significant changes in forestland and resource use, posing threats to food security and livelihoods.

raising small livestock, and income through cash crops to cope with the situation. 84% of children consumed forest foods regularly. The higher proportion of children aged 0-24 months who do not consume forest foods regularly is stunted compared to those who do.



CONCLUSION:

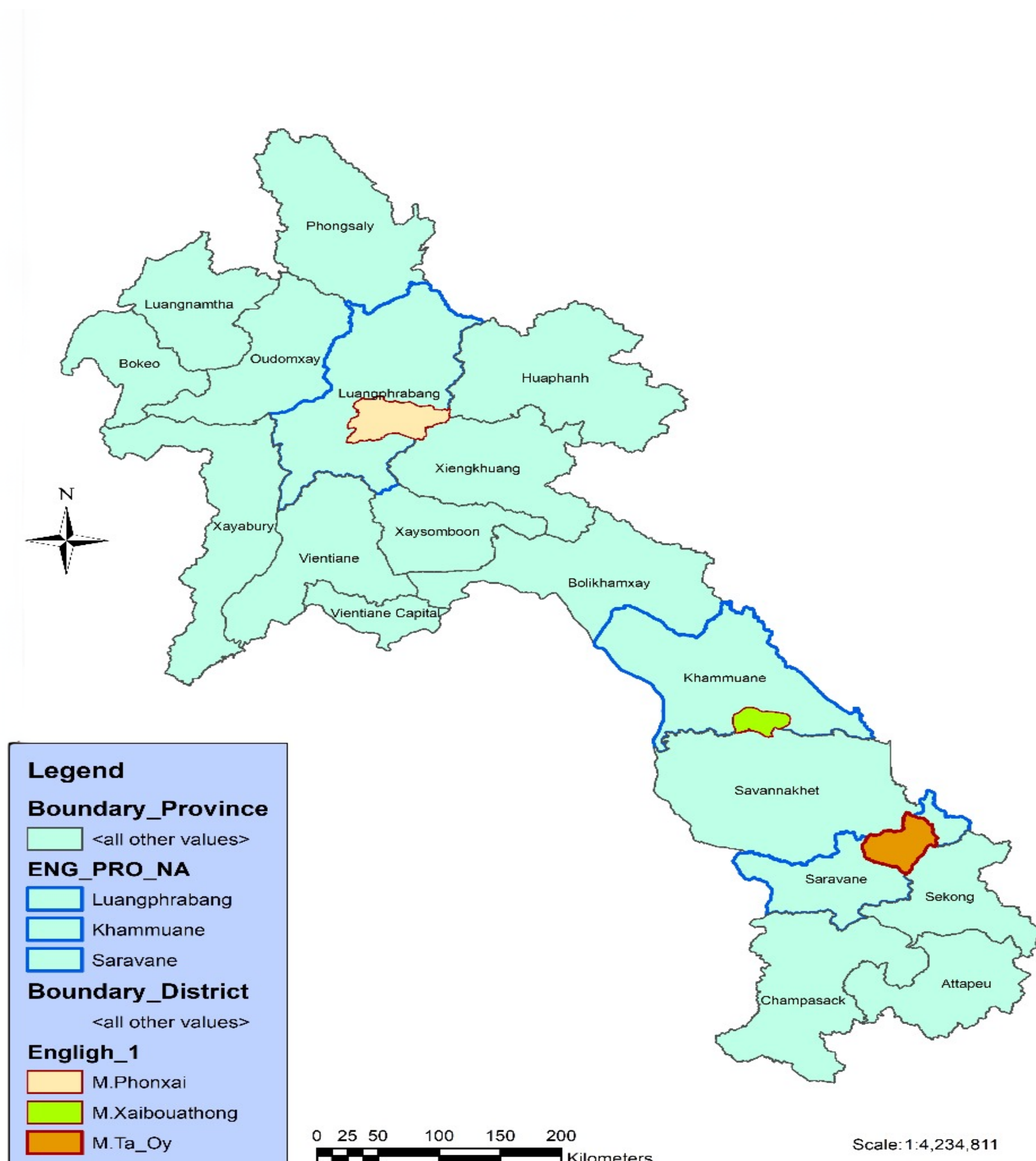
Climate change and cassava plantation have impacted forest-harvested food, impacting children's nutrition. However, alternative coping mechanisms have been adopted; climate monitoring, sustainable land use, and community empowerment for resilience and food security are recommended to mitigate the impact of climate change.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop and establish a Participatory Climate Change Monitoring System, to help communities keep track of changes in weather patterns in an easy and sustainable way. Work with communities, including vulnerable groups and women, to empower them to work in protected area management and conservation of ecosystems and wildlife in order to increase their resilience to natural disasters and climate change. Continue working with communities providing them with information on how to prepare nutritious food for children and support growing some of their own food. • Work with communities on developing and/or implementing their Forestry and Agricultural Land Use Planning and Management (FALUPAM) to ensure that they are using forests in a sustainable way. Work with communities to develop and implement a Disaster Risk Reduction Plan, if they have not done so, to ensure that they have the mechanisms to adapt and manage the expected increase in extreme weather events and disasters.

KEYWORDS:

Children, Climate change, Forest-harvested foods, Nutrition



OBJECTIVES:

This study aims to understand the impact of climate change on forest-harvested food and its effects on children's nutrition in communities near forests.

METHODS:

A comprehensive study included a desk review, household surveys of 259 families in six villages in three provinces, eight Focus Group Discussions, and four interviews with families.

RESULTS:

The study found that most (83%) households, including children, rely on forest products as part of their diet. Changes in the weather pattern, including heavy rain and unpredictable weather, have made farming more challenging. 90% of households have observed a reduction in forest-harvested food in the last few years. Only 23 % of households believed it was due to climate change, and the rest expressed that the current rise in cassava farming leads to extensive forest clearing. Families used home gardening,

