

LAO POVERTY REDUCTION FUND II IMPACT EVALUATION



BASELINE SURVEY PRESENTATION

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LAO PRF II PROGRAM DESIGN: 2011-2016

- **Project Development Objective:** Improve access to and the utilization of basic infrastructure and services for the Project's targeted poor communities in a sustainable manner through inclusive community and local development processes
- **Component 1: Community Block Grants**
 - USD 35,000 per year over four years provided to each kumban
 - Funds allocated for sub-projects to villages by kumban committee consisting of elected village representatives
- **Component 2: Local & Community Development Capacity-Building and Learning**
 - Capacity-building to assist communities in identifying needs, developing proposals and implementing sub-projects
 - Training activities will be directly related to sub-projects financed under Community Development Grants



OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES: IMPACT EVALUATION

- Obtain credible evidence on the impact of the Lao Poverty Reduction Fund II (PRF) on key indicators *attributable to the project* (Quantitative Component)
- Understand how and why these impacts are occurring (Qualitative Component)
- Provide evidence-based recommendations to support future policy decision-making

IMPACT EVALUATION DESIGN

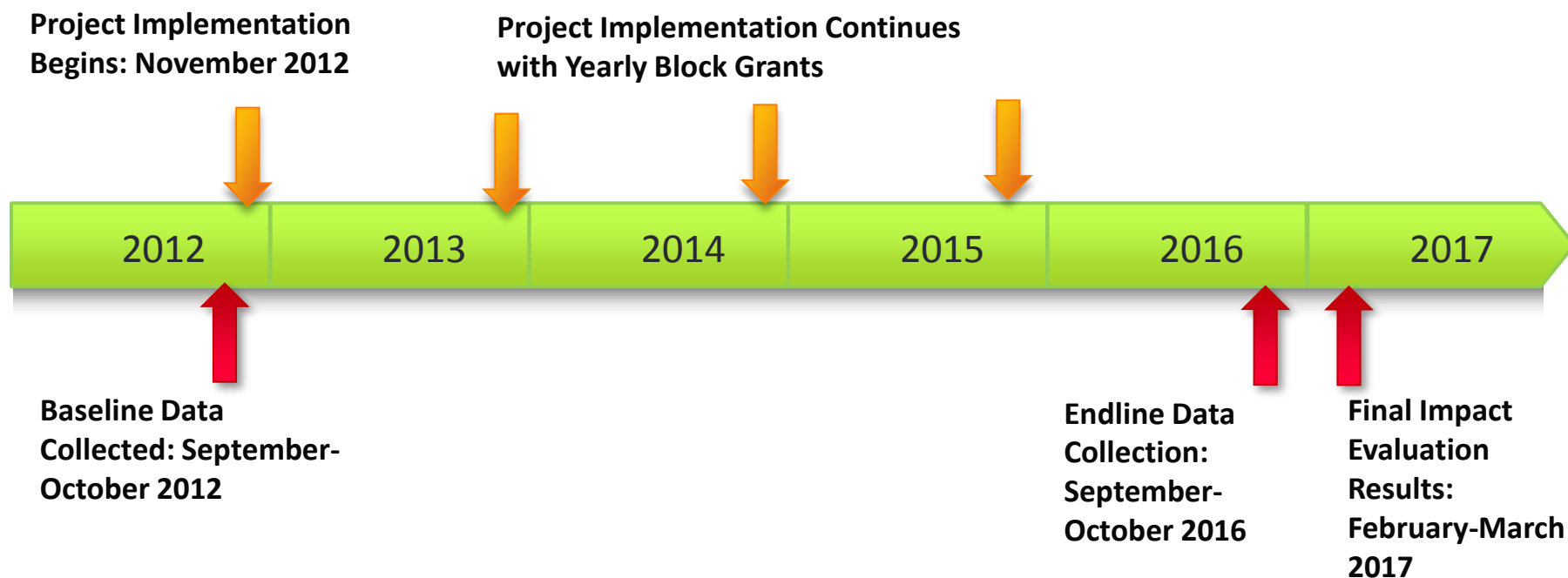
- **Gold Standard:**
 - Mixed methods
 - Randomized design
 - Pre-analysis plan
 - Representative Sample
- Randomized Design: Randomized Controlled Experiment including random selection of kumban receiving PRF II
- Mixed methods incorporates quantitative & qualitative components
- Pre-analysis plan disclosed in Oct 2012
- Representative sample of new PRF II areas beginning participation in November 2012

IMPACT EVALUATION IS PART OF OVERALL PRFII M&E SYSTEM

Other components include:

- Project MIS, reporting
- Beneficiary assessment study
- Thematic reviews:
 - ✓ Technical quality and cost effectiveness
 - ✓ Capacity building review
 - ✓ Planning, institutions
 - ✓ Gender

TIMELINE: KEY PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT EVALUATION MILESTONES



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the impact of PRF on poverty incidence?
2. Does PRF improve utilization/access to basic services (education, health, water, roads)?
3. Does PRF increase villagers' awareness and participation in development?
4. Does PRF increase social capital and accountability of local government?
5. Who benefits from PRF?
 - Poorest
 - Women
 - Ethnic minorities
 - Persons with disabilities
 - Other
6. Are government officials and villagers satisfied with PRF?

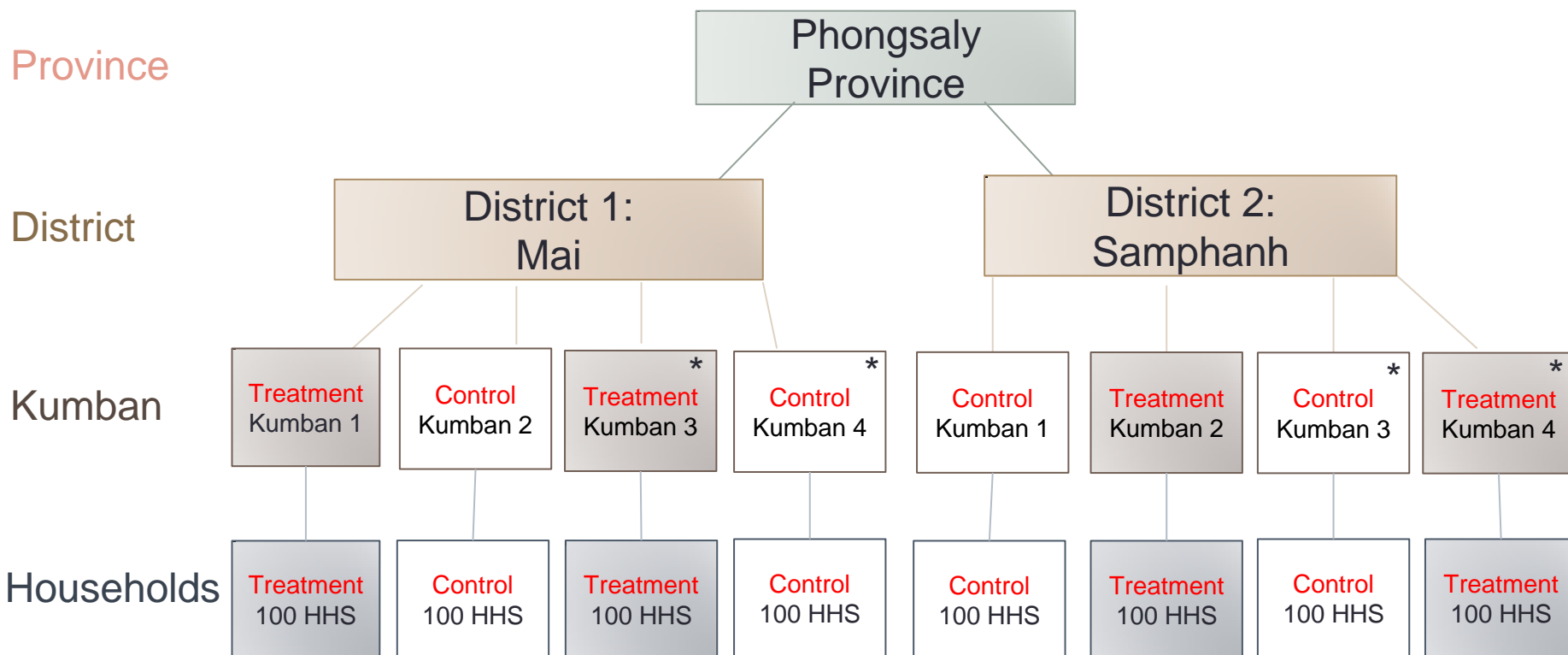
PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE: BASELINE SURVEY

- Collect accurate data on indicators of interest before project implementation begins for comparison with data at endline
- Demonstrate that randomized approach is successful by comparing baseline results for treatment and control households in balance tests
- Provide snapshot of conditions at baseline before project implementation

METHODOLOGY: QUANTITATIVE COMPONENT

- Randomized approach allows the evaluation to determine the impact *attributable* to Lao PRF II on indicators of interest
- Kumban are randomly assigned by lottery to one of two groups:
 - Treatment: receiving Lao PRF II
 - Control: not receiving Lao PRF II
- Impacts are determined using a difference-in-differences approach:
 - Before and after project implementation
 - With and without project implementation

RANDOMIZATION PROCESS: PROVINCIAL LEVEL EXAMPLE



* Qualitative Study, 1 village in 1 treatment kumban, 1 village in 1 control kumban in each district = total 16 villages

BASELINE SURVEY DATA COLLECTION

- Data collected September-October 2012
- Eleven Districts were surveyed in four provinces: Phongsali, Oudomxai, Luang Prabang and Attapeu
- Number of villages visited: 274
- Number of households interviewed: 4393
- Survey instrument topics:
 - Household consumption and housing characteristics
 - Access to health care, education, water, sanitation, employment and markets
 - Social capital and governance (half of respondents are female)
 - Village characteristics
- Ethnic Group Breakdown (92% non-Lao):
 - Khmu: 56%
 - Others: 25%
 - Hmong: 11%
 - Lao: 8%

SURVEY LOCATIONS

Phongsaly:

- 2 districts
- 8 Kumban
- 800 households
- 4 qualitative study villages

Oudomxai:

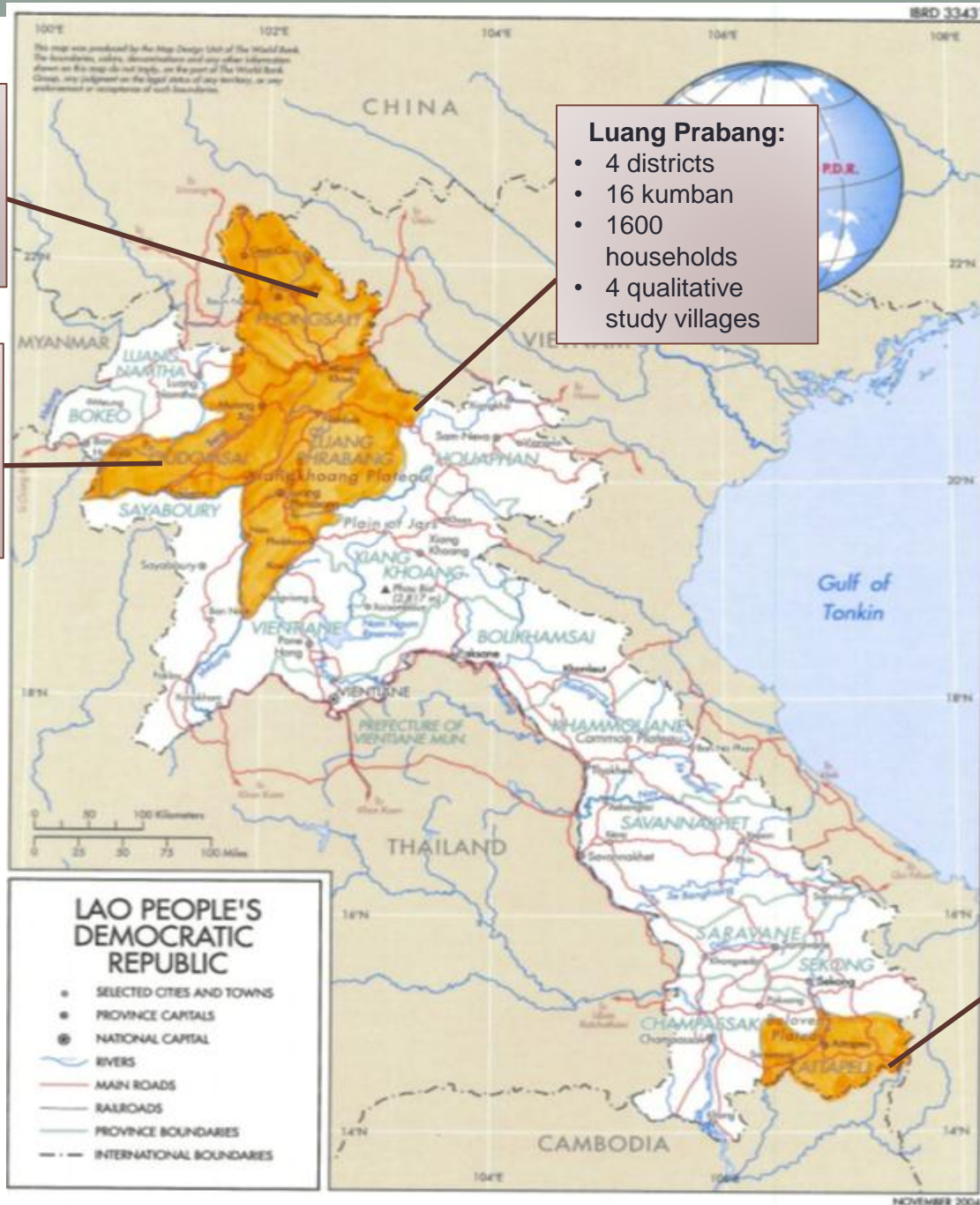
- 3 districts
- 12 kumban
- 1193 households
- 4 qualitative study villages

Luang Prabang:

- 4 districts
- 16 kumban
- 1600 households
- 4 qualitative study villages

Attapeu:

- 2 districts
- 8 kumban
- 800 households
- 4 qualitative study villages



METHODOLOGY: QUALITATIVE COMPONENT (1)

- Tools: In-depth interviews (IDIs) and focus groups discussions (FGDs)
 - FGDs were conducted among five to eight groups in each village of 4-6 persons:
 - Majority and Minority Ethnic Groups
 - Poor and Non-Poor
 - Male and Female
 - IDIs with key informants were conducted with: District Governor, PRF district coordinator, PRF village group (Kumban) facilitator, and village head.
 - Total of 574 respondents across all FGDs and IDIs
- Sampling:
 - 4 Provinces: Phongsaly, Oudomxai, Luang Prabang, Attapeu
 - 2 districts were chosen in each province for a total of 8 districts
 - 1 village in one treatment kumban and 1 village in one control kumban were chosen in each district for a total of 16 villages

METHODOLOGY: QUALITATIVE COMPONENT (2)

Focus Group Discussions

Type of FGD	Total
Poorest villagers – female	15
Poorest villagers - male	15
Poorer villagers - female	9
Poorer villagers – male	9
Wealthy villagers – female	5
Wealthy villagers - male	5
Ethnic minority villagers – female	8
Ethnic minority villagers – male	8
Ethnic majority villagers – female	9
Ethnic majority villagers – male	8
Formal groups (animal raising, savings groups, production group ,weaving group)	14

Key Informant Interviews

Type of FGD	Total
District Government Vice/Head	8
Rural Development Official	6
Kumban Facilitator/ PRF District	3
Village Vice/Head	16



RESULTS

BALANCE TESTS

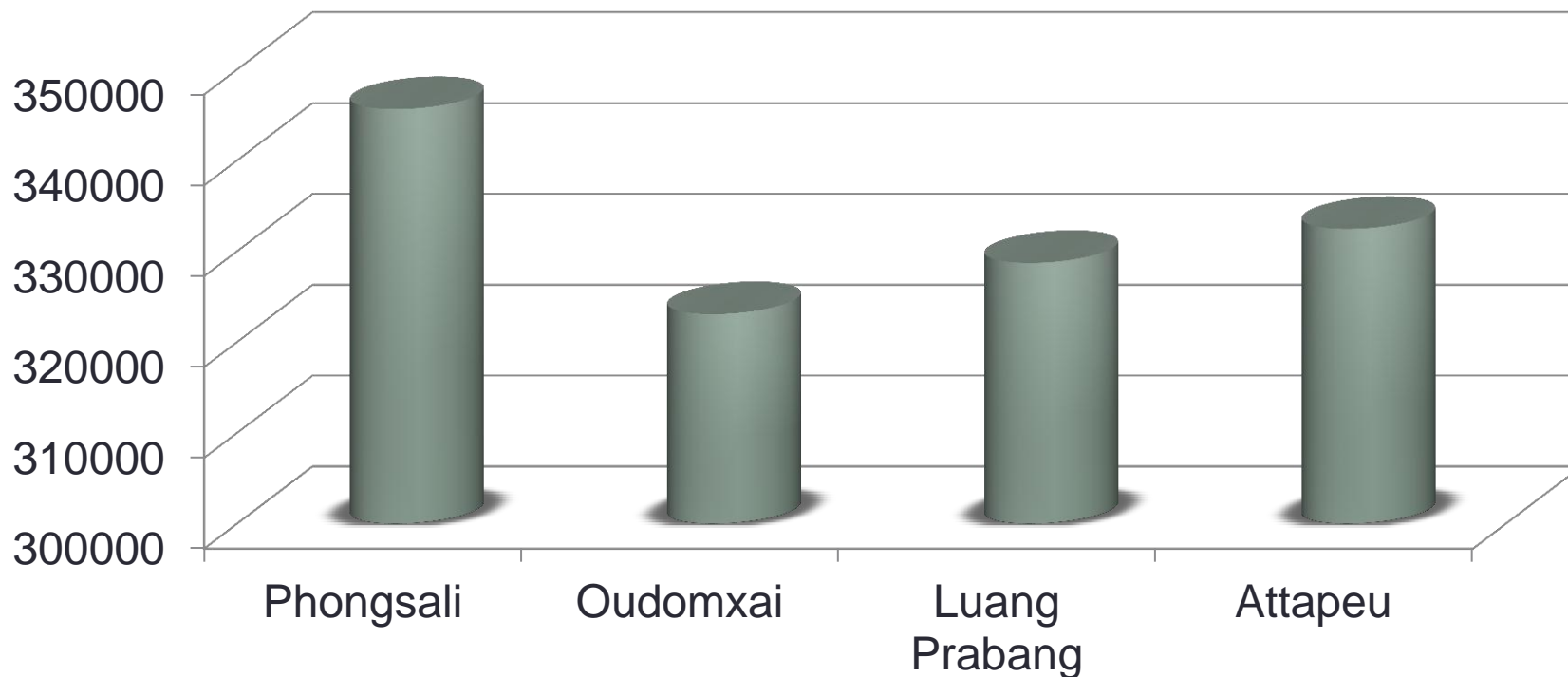
- **Purpose:** demonstrate treatment and control households have identical statistical properties for all key indicators before project implementation begins
- **Methods:** (1) comparison of means test and (2) tests of distributional equivalence
- **Results:** balance tests confirm statistical equivalence

BALANCE TESTS: RESULTS

Indicator	PRF Mean	Control Mean	P-value
Consumption per capita (Kip/month)	317908	344077	0.336
Primary Enrollment Rate (% of relevant aged children enrolled)	89.37	90.67	0.653
Secondary Enrollment Rate (% of relevant aged children enrolled)	68.26	71.38	0.514
Access to Health Care when sick (% of individuals)	27.56	33.18	0.198
Access to Clean Water (% of HHs with piped in or protected well)	5.05	5.88	0.848
Access to Adequate Sanitation (% of HHs with toilet)	33.91	30.23	0.56
Detailed Understanding of Village Development Plan (% of HHs)	32.27	35.7	0.416
Community Members Petition the Government to Address a Communal Problem in the Last 12 Months (% of HHs)	6.55	9.90	0.316
Access to Information on Use of Village Government Funds (% of HHs)	23.95	15.23	0.155
HH Member Spoke in Village Meeting in Last 6 Months (% of HHs)	35.91	34.25	0.699
Satisfaction with Village Government Resolution of Identified Communal Problem (% of HH which are satisfied)	68.58	61.23	0.239
Community Has Significant Influence on Village Decision-making (% of HHs agreeing)	42.09	46.19	0.445

HOUSEHOLD WELFARE AND POVERTY

Consumption Per Capita Per Month by Province (kip)



- Poverty Rates to be calculated when 2012 poverty line is made available by the Department of Statistics
- Poor/Non-Poor comparison made by defining bottom 40% of households in monthly consumption per capita as poor

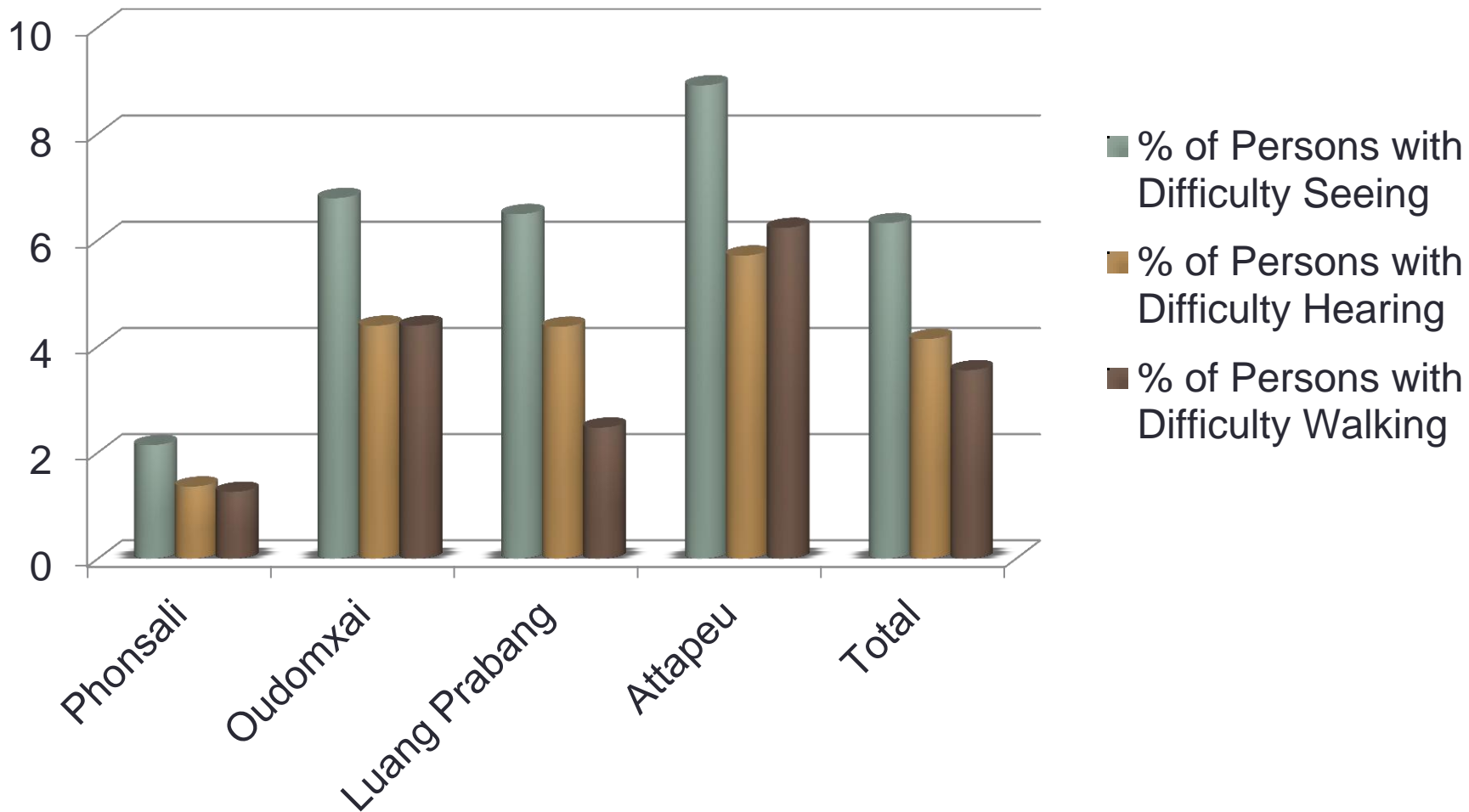
PERCEPTIONS OF POVERTY

- Poverty is perceived as generational:
 - “Women and men both reported that poverty is inherited from parents.... Poverty is seen as a thread passing through generations. If a person is born into a poor family it is likely that they will marry a spouse from a similar economic class and that their children (and grandchildren) would stay poor.”
 - From the Qualitative Report
- Key characteristics of poverty common across groups:
 - Shortage of rice during the year
 - Lack of assets, particularly animals
 - Housing conditions

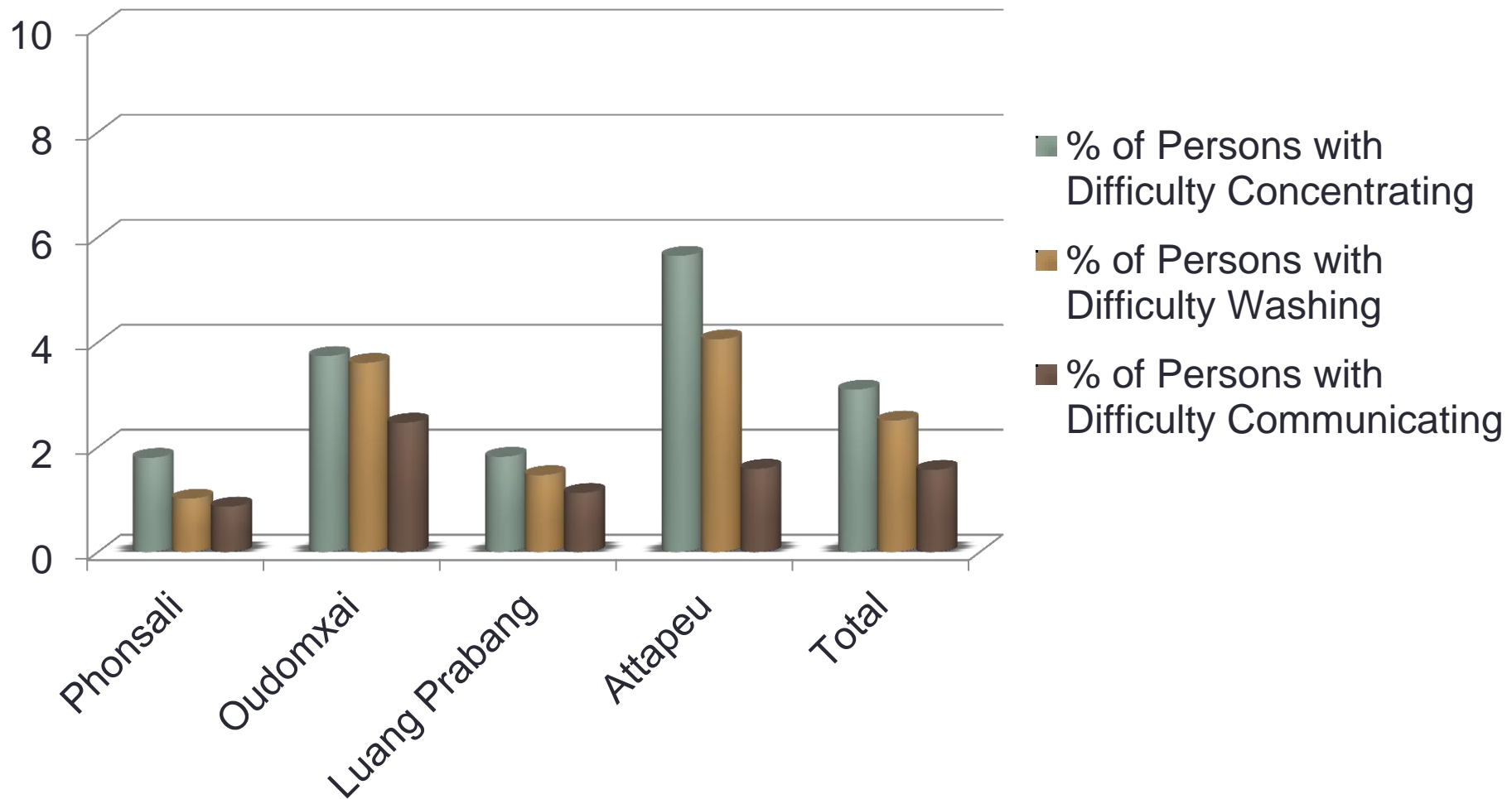
PERCEPTIONS OF POVERTY: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

Group	Poverty Characteristic 1	Poverty Characteristic 2	Poverty Characteristic 3
All Groups	Shortage of rice	Lack of assets (particularly animals)	Housing conditions
Men	Lack of assets	Debt	Newly married
Women	Shortage of labor	Lack of education	Large family size
Poor	Rice shortage more than 6 months per year	Not keeping large animals	Housing: grass roof, bamboo floors and walls
Lao-Tai	Widowed/disabled	No agriculture equipment	Small landholding
Mone-Khmer	Limited agricultural production	No access to capital	Not motivated
Hmong-lu-mien	Lack of respect to elders	Shortage of labor	No knowledge of trading

INCIDENCE OF DISABILITY (1)



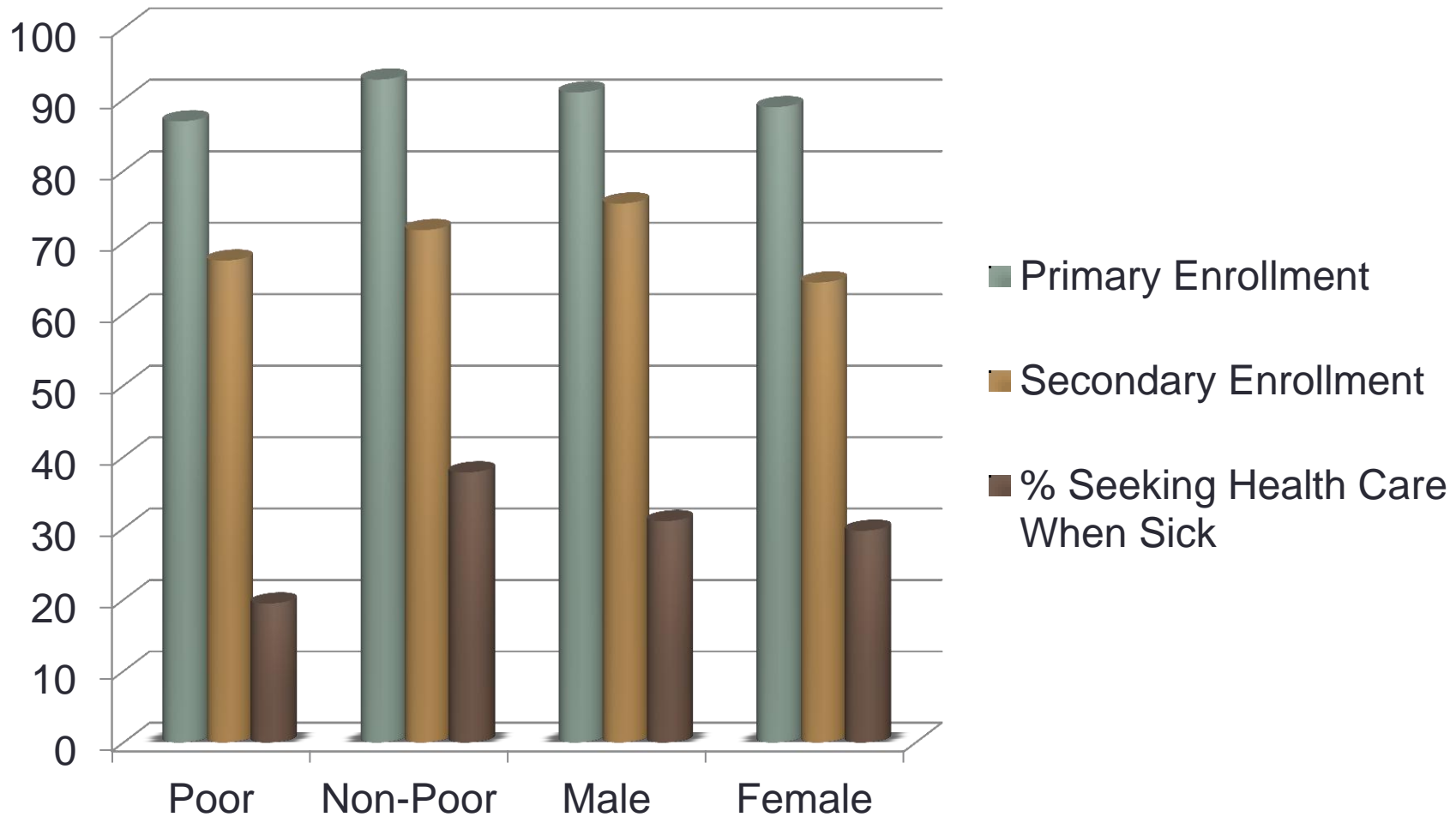
INCIDENCE OF DISABILITY (2)



ACCESS TO SERVICES OVERVIEW

- Primary education enrollment is high due to schools in most villages (>90%) but the cost (materials, transport, boarding) and distance of attending reduces secondary enrollment
- Access to health care is significantly limited by time, cost and distance to travel to health centers which are primarily located in kumban centers
- Access to Sanitation and Clean Water are constrained by broken infrastructure, high user fees and reluctance to adopt toilets for sanitary disposal

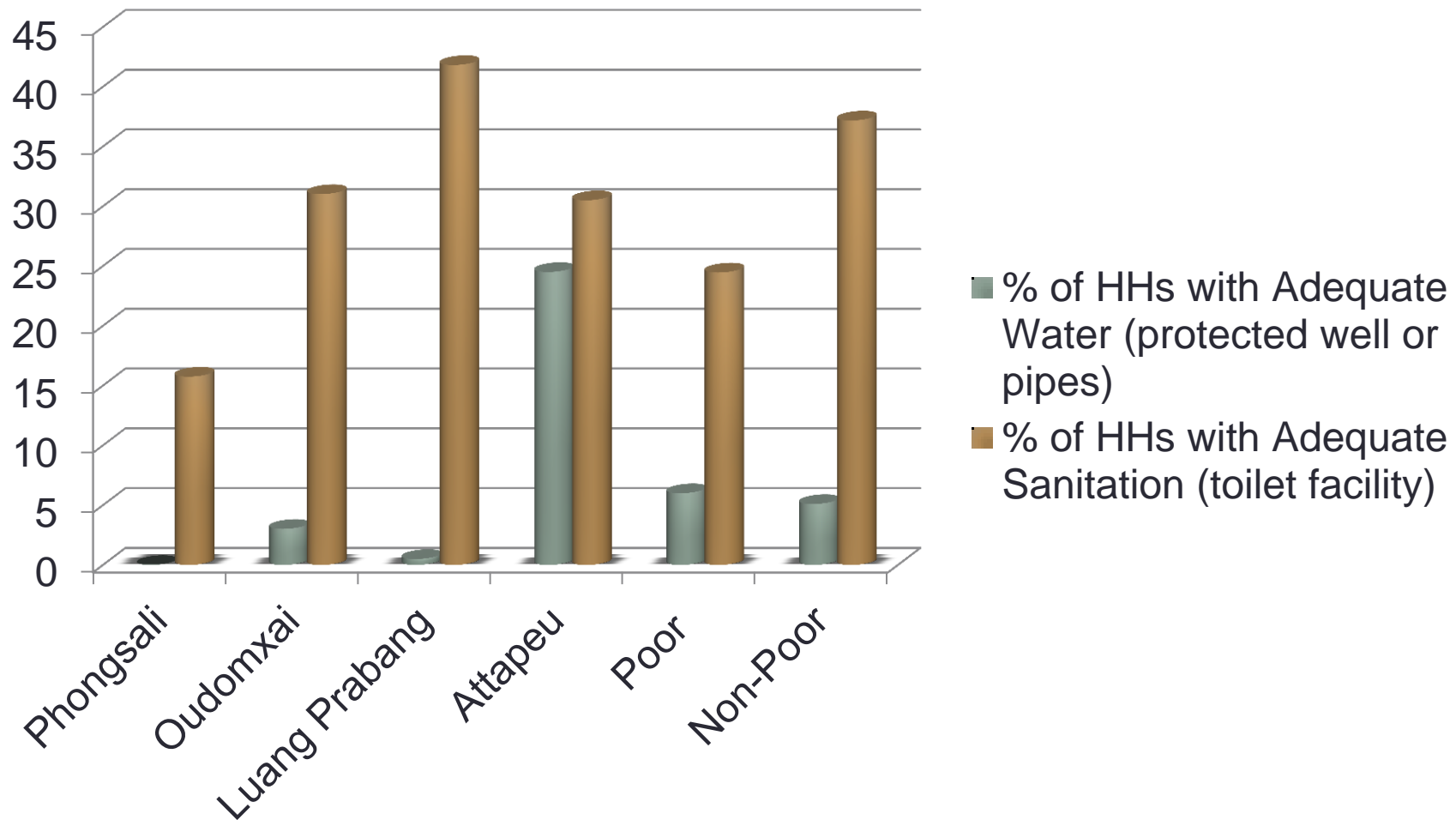
ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE



ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND HEALTH: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

- **Access to health care:** health care centers with registered providers is available only in kumban/district. Primary factors constraining access:
 - Distance to health center
 - Cost and affordability of service
 - Difficulty obtaining care due to exclusion/discrimination
- Traditional healers are available in villages, but only for minor problems
- Using a hospital/health center presents fears of affordability and difficulty obtaining care:
 - A poorer male expressed feelings of being excluded: *“Doctors and nurses did not take good care of the poor people. Sometimes they ignore poor people, when we were there they pretended not to see us.”*
 - (FGD poorer male, Vangbong Kumban, Viengkham, Luang Prabang)
- **Access to education:** access beyond primary school is still a problem due to school locations in the kumban or district center, particularly the poor due to cost of transport, materials and living expenses away from the village

ACCESS TO WATER AND SANITATION



ACCESS TO WATER AND SANITATION: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

- **Access to Clean Water:** constraints include the lack of a functioning water system, unaffordable water fees, pollution of rivers, and the cost of fetching water
 - *“2 months ago, 2 boreholes were broken. The water committee had to ask villagers who use those boreholes to pay for repairs and now they are working again. People who didn’t contribute for repairs are not allowed to use the boreholes. This is a big problem now, with people fighting each other for water.”*
 -(IDI Village headman, Oudomsouk Kumban, Sanamxay, Attapeu)
 - *“I do not have money to pay the water fee. The fee is not much, but we have 6 people in our household and 6,000 LAK per person per year will cost us 10 kg of rice.”*
 -(FGD poorest male, Oudomsouk Kumban, Sanamxay, Attapeu)

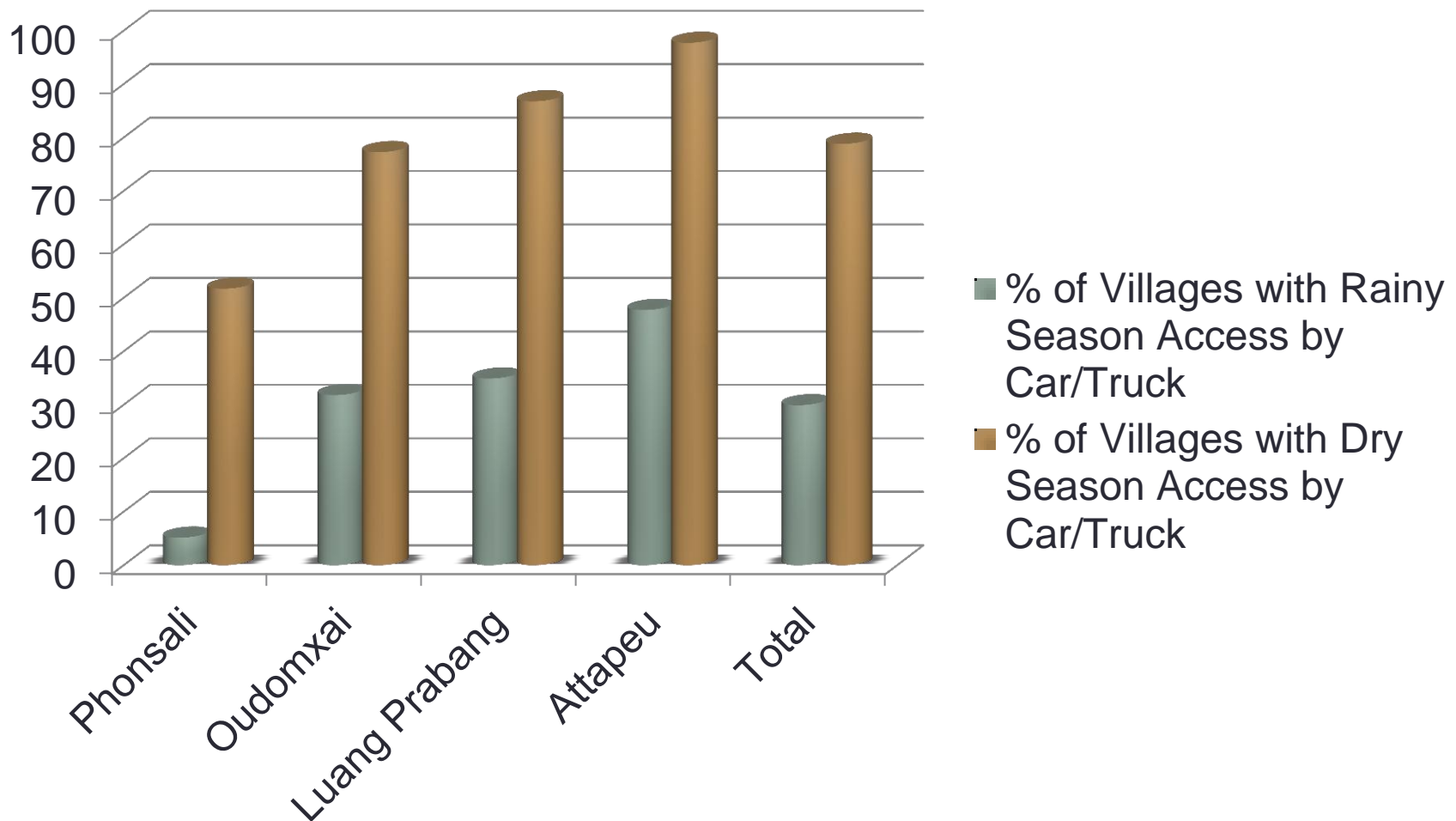
- **Access to sanitation:** limited by broken infrastructure, lack of capacity to fix toilets and preference against using toilets
 - *“They didn’t get used to using the toilet, so they broke it.”* (to avoid having to use it)
 -(FGD poorer female, Vangbong Kumban, Viengkham, Luang Prabang)

ACCESS TO MARKETS OVERVIEW AND QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

- Road access by car/truck is limited in rainy season
- Even in the dry season, district and other markets access is constrained by:
 - Time and distance
 - Cost of travel
 - Lack of transport
 - Lack of road (15% of villages) and bridges
- Almost all goods produced by households are sold in the village (>90%)
- A poor male villager from Oudomxai:
 - *“We don’t have a car and the market is too far. If we go by motorbike we cannot carry many goods and it is not worth the trip to the market...”*
-(FGD Poorer Male, Tangdu Kumban, Bang, Oudomxai).

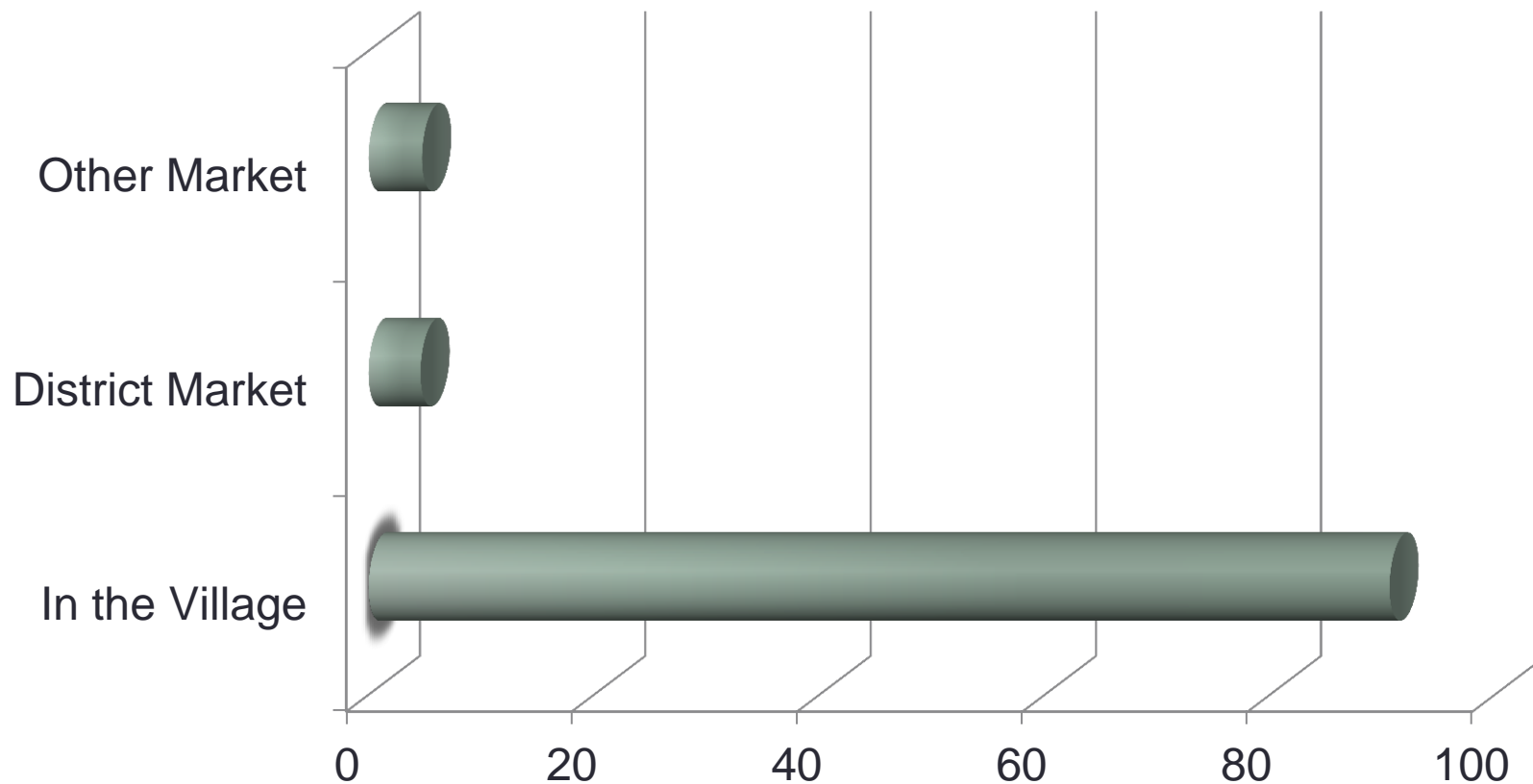
ACCESS TO MARKETS (1)

Road Access for Cars/Trucks by Season



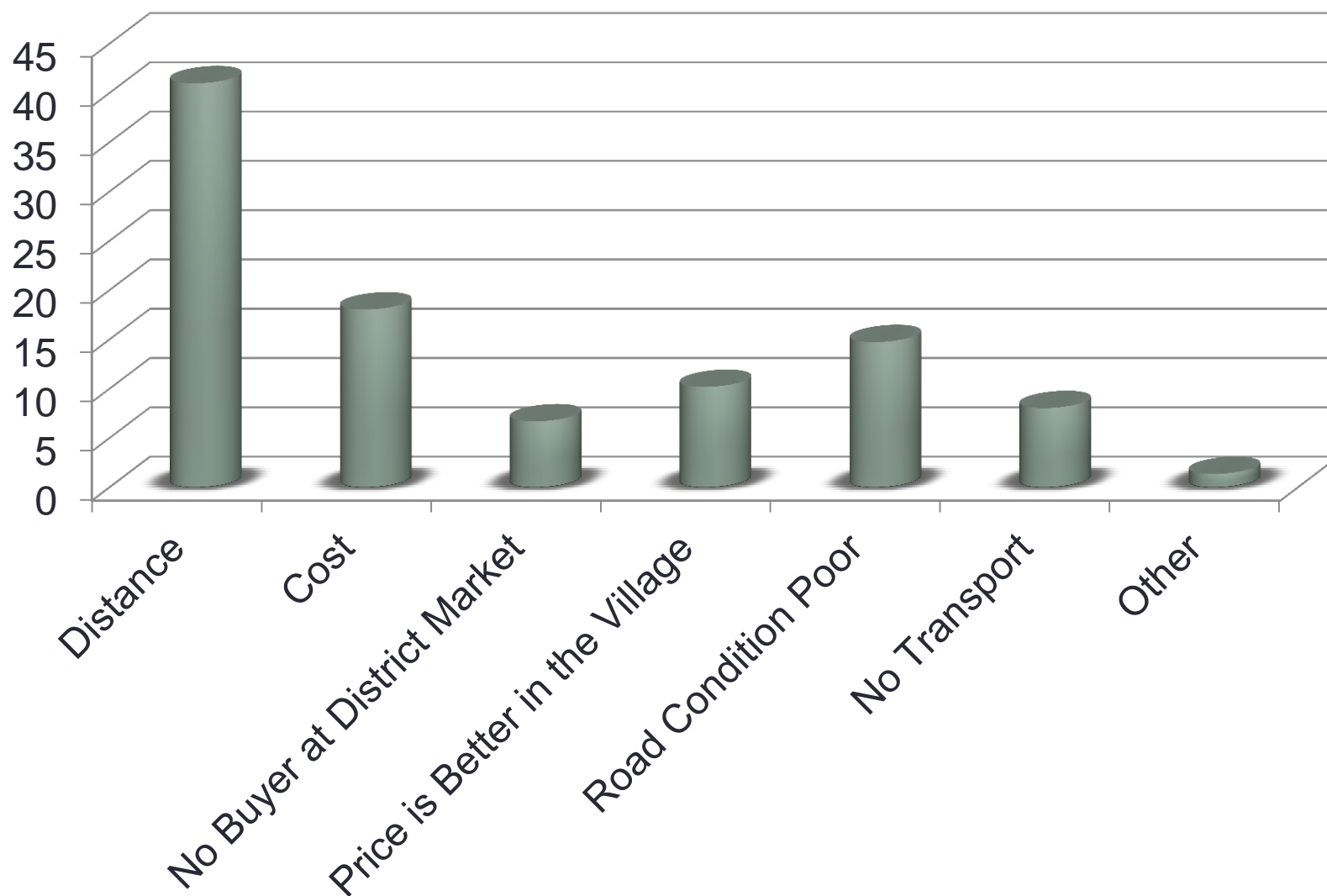
ACCESS TO MARKETS (2)

Location of Goods Sold (%)



ACCESS TO MARKETS (3)

Reasons for Not Selling Goods Outside the Village (%)



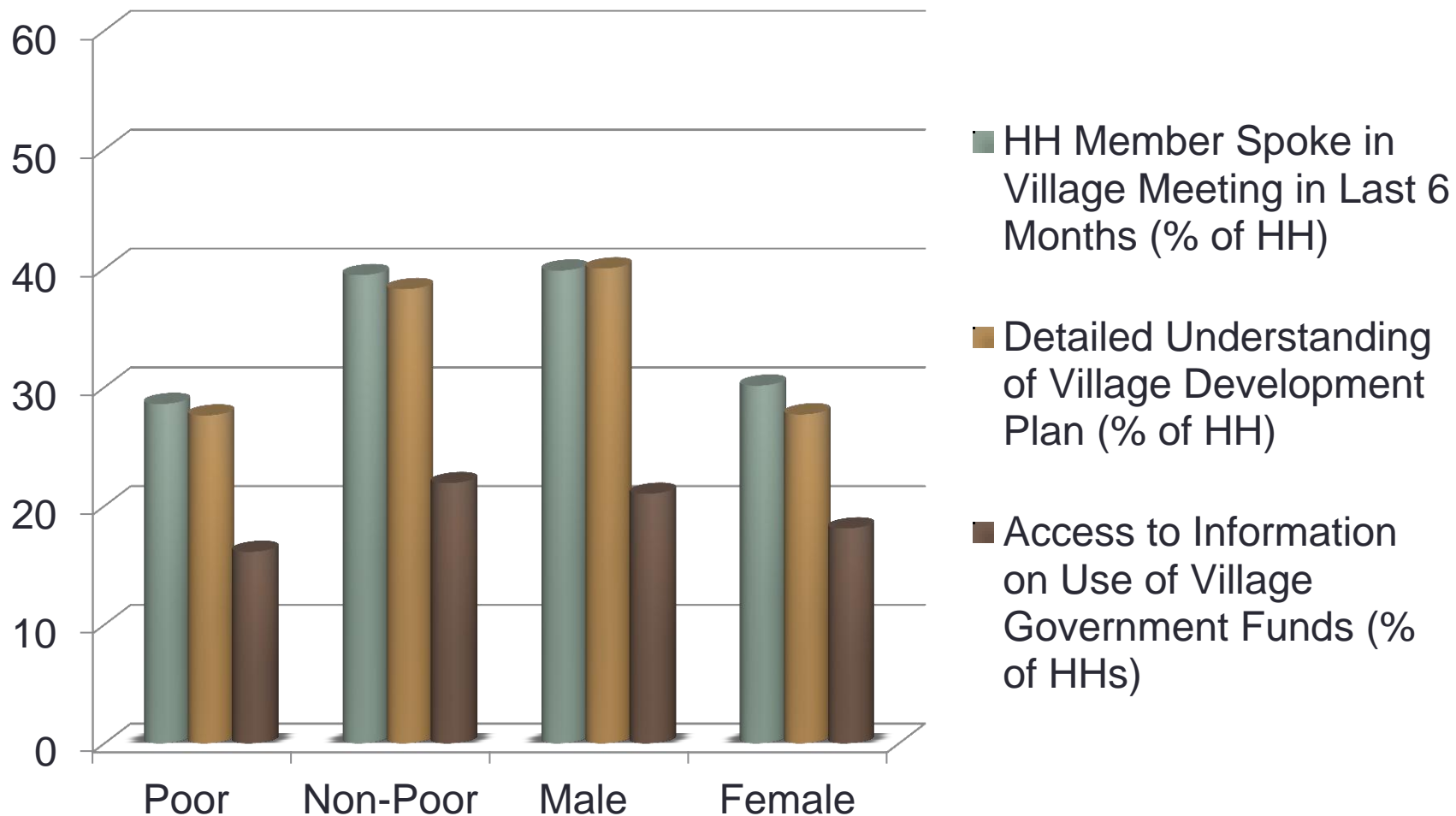
SOCIAL CAPITAL AND GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW (1)

- **Participation in the formal village government system is strong:**
 - Existing high levels of participation in village meetings (>95% of HHs attend)
 - Participation of women and some minority groups is limited, often due to language
 - Villagers view government as active in seeking out input from the community (>85%)
 - High rates of satisfaction with government performance (>60%)
- **Quality of participation is lacking:**
 - Actions in meeting tends to be limited to observing, particularly among the poor, some minority groups and women (<40%)
 - Access to information on use of funds and planning is relatively low (<25%)

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW (2)

- **Accountability in governance is via a well-developed set of formal channels to identify needs and resolve conflict:**
 - Information on community needs is gathered via well-attended village meetings
 - Requests, needs and grievances are handled individually through existing associations
- **When regular channels are not effective, other means to ensure accountability are limited:**
 - Collective engagement with local government to raise problems/issues is rare
 - Capacity among villagers with respect to ability to engage local government is limited, particularly among the poor and minority groups

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS (1)

Attendance:

- Overall participation, particularly among men is high but participation of women and some ethnic groups can vary
- *“We don’t specify who should attend the meeting. If a wife is home, a wife attends, but usually husbands attend the meeting. On average, only 30% of women attend the meeting, but they don’t like to talk because they are shy.”*
 - (IDI, Village headman, Sibounheuang Kumban, Houn, Oudomxay)
- *“I worried my buffalo might go eat other people’s rice fields but then the fine was higher if I missed the village meeting.”*
 - (FGD, poor male, Xamluang Kumban, Xanxay, Attapeu)

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS (2)

Quality of Participation:

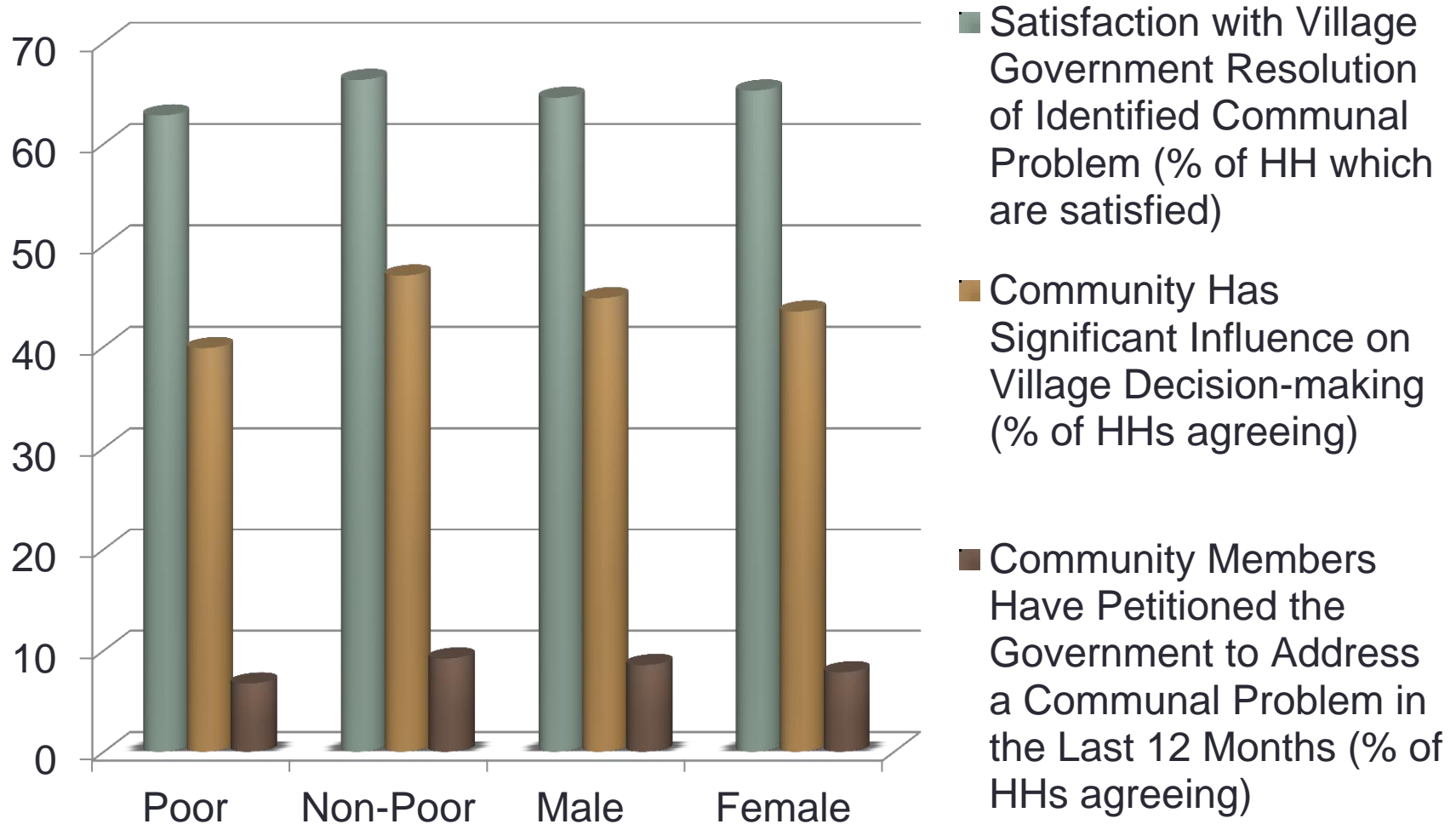
- The village authority, the village chief and elderly association members are the primary speakers. Women, the poorest families, and members of some minority ethnic groups tend to say little.
- *“I am shy to talk at the meetings because all the men look at me. Most women in this village are shy and don’t have knowledge so they have no ideas to contribute.”*
-(FGD poorest female, Lay Kumban, Bang, Udomxay)

COMMUNITY ACCESS TO INFORMATION: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS (3)

Information Flow:

- Formalized system of District to Village Head/Officials to the Community via semi-annual well-attended village meetings
- Lack of active engagement on the part of many groups, including the poor, ethnic minorities and women may lead to lack of understanding of the issues discussed and decisions taken with language being a key barrier to active participation
- *“Some women don’t speak although they know the situation. They are not brave to talk. If the meeting is in Lao, they don’t speak at all, but if the meeting is in Khmu, many of them will speak.”*
-(FGD poor Khmu female, Tangdu Kumban, Bang, Oudomxay)

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY



GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS (1)

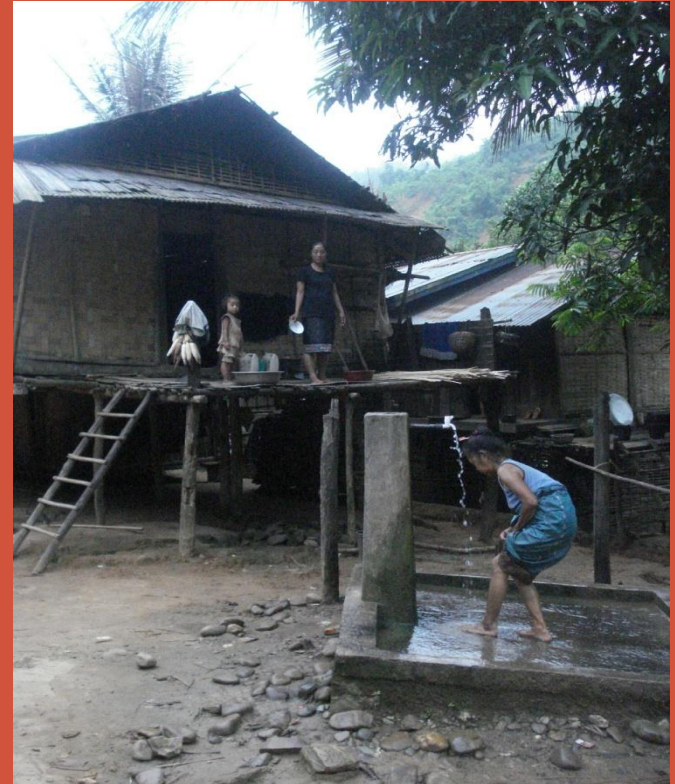
- Community members tend to trust the leadership of the village government:
 - *“If the head of the village comes to collect 5000 kip from me without reason, I will give it to him. Even if I don’t have the money, I will borrow from my neighbors and give it to him.”*
 - -(FGD poorest Khmu female Vangbong Kumban, Viengkham, Luang Prabang)
 - A weaving female from an ethnic group also confirmed that: *“I do believe what the village authority is doing for developing our village and for helping all of us to have better living conditions. He has tried very hard to get electricity for us.”*
 - -(FGD weaving female, Oudomsouk Kumban, Sanamxay, Attapeu)

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS (2)

- Villagers do not seem to come together to jointly solve problems through collective action; requests are processed individually to the elderly association or a village official. However, this process is not always effective:
 - *“I am not satisfied with the unfair collection and management of the water fee. The fee is not correctly collected and not correctly reported. I paid a fee higher than others, but the headman says that I paid the same as others.”*
- (FGD Poorer Hmong Male, Thongtheung Kumban, Nambak, Luang Prabang)

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS (3)

- Skill and education-based capacity constraints limit collective and individual efforts at accountability and overall community influence on decision-making:
 - Difficulty in written expression of grievances,
 - Language barriers for ethnic minority groups
 - Lack of time to pursue grievances which are already in the formal system



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