

### Needs and gaps at the National University of Laos as identified by the University of Helsinki

After the first needs assessment workshop, University of Helsinki (UH) paired with the National University of Laos (NUoL) and started working on a plan on how to support the development of their higher education in forestry. Compared to the other two Lao HEIs, NUoL already provides four MSc. and one PhD. degrees. While workshoping with the representatives of the Lao government, NGOs, and private sector, UH found that all three stakeholder groups identified technical skills in forestry as key for graduates. Naturally, govt. stakeholders stressed the need to improve competences in creating and implementing policies and regulations, NGO stakeholders wished for better knowledge of environment protection and communication skills, while representatives of the private sector accentuated the need for better IT skills and those used in practical forest governance and certification. UH and NUoL are working together to close the identified gaps.



### Needs and gaps at the Souphanouvong University as identified by the Albert Ludwigs University in Freiburg

The position of Souphanouvong University (SU) and Albert Ludwigs University in Freiburg (ALS) was perhaps the most demanding, as SU is only at the start of the process to provide a forestry MSc. program. ALS worked with SU and stakeholders to devise a list of the most pressing gaps that need to be filled before the MSc. program is greenlit. Firstly, both the faculty reps. And stakeholders are aware English proficiency of the staff, and therefore graduates, is rather poor. Aside from this, SU should focus on closing the gaps in skills including working with IT (GIS) and on the environmental side of forestry, such as watershed management, carbon accounting or landscape restoration. Naturally, material and administrative must lead to closing these academic gaps.

### Needs and gaps at the Savannakhet University as identified by the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CULS) was teamed with Savannakhet University (SKU), which already started the process of establishing an MSc. in forestry. Based on the input from the stakeholders and the vision of the SKU representatives, SKU should focus on closing gaps in multifunctional and production based forestry, such as silviculture, forest management, plantation forestry or enterprise management. The strategy to close said gaps was devised and will use the resources provided by the ForHeal project and creating synergies with funding available from a grant provided by the Asian Development Bank.