

Terminal Evaluation

Asia

1. Outline of the Project

Country:

Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Project title:

In-country Training Program for Leaders of Agricultural Cooperative

Issue/Sector:

Agriculture/General

Cooperation scheme:

In-country Training

Division in charge:

Indo-China Division,
Regional Department 1(Southeast Asia and Indo-China)

Total cost:

50 million yen

Period of Cooperation

Fiscal Years 1999 - 2003

Partner Country's Implementing Organization:

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)

Supporting Organization in Japan:**Related Cooperation:**

Dispatch of Long-term Expert: "Agricultural Cooperatives"

1-1 Background of the Project

VN government has been promoting economic reform introducing market economy mechanism under Doi Moi Policy since 1986. In this regard, JICA has conducted the development study known as Study on Economic Development Policy in the Transition toward a Market-oriented Economy in Vietnam (hereinafter referred to as Japan-Vietnam Joint Research), and proposed policy advices from medium and long-term viewpoint.

The Japan-Vietnam Joint Study emphasized the importance of fostering agricultural cooperatives as supporting institutions in rural areas in agriculture and rural development. Based on that, VN government has addressed the fostering of agricultural cooperatives for multi-purpose and integrated rural development. However, many of new agricultural cooperatives formed under the 1997 Cooperative Law (the number of agricultural cooperatives registered in June 1999 was 10,044) still continue agricultural functions and management method of the old collective farms. (Until 1996 the old collective farms were agricultural production groups. Before Doi Moi, the collective farms were "Production Cooperatives" where farmland, machines and facilities were under collective ownership. Their activities focused on cooperation in production stage such as irrigation and drainage, technical instruction, joint plant protection, and joint purchasing of production materials. New agricultural cooperatives are "Distribution Cooperatives" where production is managed individually and joining and withdrawing are voluntary.) The improvement of agricultural cooperative management has been put on the agenda.

Therefore, JICA has dispatched a long-term expert to MARD to give advices and instruction regarding agricultural cooperative policies and improvement of agricultural cooperative management. The expert has established 2 systems: (1) a monitoring system (30 monitoring agricultural cooperative) to measure the effectiveness of policies regarding agricultural cooperatives; (2) a pilot system of business enhancement (9 pilot agricultural cooperatives). These business strengthening policy targeted agricultural cooperatives are expected to be model for other agricultural cooperatives. Survey on the real situation of the monitoring agricultural cooperatives has been conducted in the first fiscal year.

From then on, to better promote agricultural cooperative development, it became important to promote the understanding of leaders of agricultural cooperative in characteristics of agricultural cooperative, legislations regarding agricultural cooperative, organization and business administration in agricultural cooperative.

Under these circumstances, upon the request from the government of Vietnam, the government of Japan implemented In-country Training Program for Leaders of Agricultural Cooperative to foster agricultural cooperatives in Vietnam.

1-2 Project Overview

The project provides the leaders of agricultural cooperatives with the training to foster agricultural cooperatives in Vietnam.

(1) Overall Goal The function of agricultural cooperatives in Vietnam and support to farmers is strengthened.

(2) Project Purpose

To improve knowledge and skills of the agricultural cooperatives' leaders in the field of agricultural cooperative management.

(3) Outputs: participants would have understanding of

- 1) Policies on agricultural cooperatives.
- 2) Forming enterprises.
- 3) Management of businesses and finances.
- 4) Experiences on comprehensive agricultural cooperatives in Japan.

(4) Inputs

Japanese side:

(Long-term Expert	1 (related input))
Short-term Experts	5
Local Cost	50 million yen

Vietnamese Side:

Counterparts 48

Land and Facilities

2. Evaluation Team

Members of Evaluation Team

JICA Vietnam Office
(Commissioned to the following individual consultants:
Nguyen Viet Dang, M.Sc, Faculty of Economics and Rural Development, Hanoi Agricultural University
Mai Thanh Cuc, Ph.D, Faculty of Economics and Rural Development, Hanoi Agricultural University)
Tran Van Cong, M.Sc, National Institute of Agricultural Economics

Period of Evaluation

January 2003 - March 2003

Type of Evaluation:

Terminal Evaluation by Overseas Office

3. Results of Evaluation

3-1 Summary of Evaluation Results

(1) Relevance

As the related systems of agricultural cooperatives were developed, agricultural cooperatives plays a more important role in agriculture and are expected to greatly contribute to the socio-economic development in Vietnam. However, according to the results of a survey conducted at the end of 2002, (a general report on agricultural cooperatives activities for five years after the legislation of the Cooperative Law), 73.5% of the existing agricultural cooperative managers had not had sufficient technical education, or had many chief accountants and chief conductors. Therefore, the development of human resources in charge of agricultural cooperative management was an urgent issue, and the project met those needs and was relevant to the policy of agriculture and rural development.

(2) Effectiveness

When interviewed, all the participants mentioned that the training course was very useful for the leaders of agricultural cooperatives. The participants indicated that they could understand the policies on agriculture, rural development, and agricultural cooperatives, and could clearly recognize the role and responsibilities of agricultural cooperatives in the economic development of agricultural villages. Many participants mentioned that the training improved their managing capability. For example, Dong Du agricultural cooperative got a loan after the training and developed some businesses. Also, some improved the delivery of fertilizer. In the field of finance, management, leadership, planning, marketing and organization, 78% - 82 % of the participants answered that they could understand the contents of the training.

(3) Efficiency

According to the interview survey, 95.7% of the participants mentioned that the teaching methods of lecturers were appropriate, and 87.0% participants commented positively on the utilization of facilities and equipment. However, some participants indicated that the classrooms were too large or too hot.

As for the lessons and course period, some mentioned that there was not enough time for discussion or questions, and others indicated that the course duration was substantially long compared with a term of managerial boards of 5 years. The above-mentioned needs should be taken into consideration for the future.

(4) Impact

91.3% of the interviewed participants mentioned that through the participation in the training, they tried to improve the organizational structure of agricultural cooperatives. In particular, the Management Board has become more efficient. For example, the number of ACMB members was reduced from 25 to 7 at Khanh Hoa province, and the management became streamlined. Eighty-six point nine percent (86.9%) of the participants mentioned that they utilized the acquired knowledge and techniques taught in the training to contribute to the promotion of the development plan for their respective agricultural cooperatives. Of the participants, 78.3% indicated that they commenced new business related to the training. As the quality of services and businesses were upgraded and diversified, all the surveyed agricultural cooperatives achieved considerable improvement in total sales, productivity, finance and human resources. There were other positive impacts such as the promotion of partnership among agricultural cooperatives, between agricultural cooperatives and private corporations and research institutes.

(5) Sustainability

All the participants of the training in FY 2002 continued to work in the same agricultural cooperatives. In many cases, they were promoted after the course's completion. Judging from these facts, it is expected that the sustainability of techniques and knowledge are high. Eighty-seven point three percent (87.3%) of the interviewed participants considered "the improvement of governmental development policies on agriculture and agricultural villages" a key factor to sustainability." With further assistance from MARD and understanding and cooperation from regional governments, the sustainability of the project will be enhanced.

3-2 Factors that promoted realization of effects

(1) Factors Concerning the Planning

The project implemented training which met the needs and current status of agricultural cooperatives. The timing was also appropriate.

(2) Factors concerning the Implementation Process

- 1) As the government of Vietnam and agricultural cooperatives strongly supported the training, the acquired techniques and knowledge of the training could be fully utilized.
- 2) As the training lecturers of Vietnam and Japan were gathered from colleges, universities and research institutes of various different fields, the effects of the training were enhanced.
- 3) Participants came from 61 provinces with various geographical features, which made it possible for them to exchange information on successes and failures, thereby making the training more active and effective.

3-3 Factors that impeded realization of effects

(1) Factors Concerning the Planning

At the planning stage, details of the general plan based on Project Design Matrix (PDM) were not fully developed.

(2) Factors concerning the Implementation Process

- 1) The interpreter for the Japanese lecturer lacked technical knowledge. Some training instructors did not utilize the materials such as videotapes and photos, which resulted in participants having an insufficient understanding of the theme.
- 2) Funds are necessary in order to make the training effective and to diversify and improve the services. However, the agricultural cooperatives' own funds were not sufficient.

3-4 Conclusion

The training, as a whole, was completely consistent with Vietnamese government's development policies in agriculture and rural area and contributed to the improvement of knowledge and techniques of agricultural cooperative managers. The allocation and utilization of the Input items were efficient, and there were some positive impacts such as an improvement of management sector. However, the long-term sustainability of the training was not evaluated accurately enough in the terminal evaluation.

3-5 Recommendations

- (1) In order to achieve the goal of improvement of agricultural cooperatives in Vietnam, it is necessary that training activities should be continued at provincial level in all of the provinces from which the ex-participants come
- (2) It is necessary to establish Contact Agricultural Cooperatives in each region of the country to widely demonstrate the effects and impacts of the training course.
- (3) It is necessary to disseminate information on the Law of Cooperatives, contributions of agricultural cooperatives to socio-economic development in general and rural and agricultural development in particular.
- (4) It is necessary that the training curriculum is standardized so that it can be utilized by various training institutions.
- (5) The approximately 150 pilot agricultural cooperatives alone are not sufficient to widespread the movement. Therefore, in order to enhance the effects and impacts of the training, JICA should carry out at least some additional training to implement plans.
- (6) Development projects have been formulated by the majority of agricultural cooperatives since the training. However, some of the cooperatives are suffering from the tight budget. Therefore, it is necessary that JICA provide financial supports to such cooperatives for the development of those projects.
- (7) It is necessary to implement an ex-post evaluation in the next four to five years to fully measure the impacts and sustainability of the training course.
- (8) It is necessary to promote continuous and cooperative relationships among agricultural cooperatives and horizontal connections among participants in order to appropriately and effectively implement the training.
- (9) Appropriate projects should be planned by utilizing PDM for monitoring and evaluating of the project. It is essential to make training curriculum practical and applicable to the actual situation.
- (10) As the participants will play key roles of agricultural cooperatives for the future, it is necessary to select them by taking their ages (35 to 45 years old) and educational levels into consideration, and for more women to be allowed to participate in the activities.

3-6 Lessons Learned

It is necessary to develop an appropriate plan utilizing PDM for In-country Training.

3-7 Follow-up Situation

The training in the final fiscal year is now proceeding, and the future development and support policy will be discussed at the termination of the training.