

Summary of Terminal Evaluation

1. Outline of the Project		
Country: Laos P.D.R.		Project Title: Forest Management and Community Support Project (FORCOM)
Issue/Sector: Forest Resource Management, Community Development		Cooperation Scheme : Technical Cooperation
Division in charge: JICA Laos Office		Total cost (at the terminal evaluation study): About 660,000,000 yen
Period of Cooperation	February 2004- February 2009 (5 years)	Partner Country's' Implementing Organization : National Agriculture and Forestry Extension Service (NAFES), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)
<p>1-1 Background of the project</p> <p>Agriculture and forestry sector, in which about 80% of the total population currently sustains their livelihood, is the most important industry accounting for a half of total gross domestic product in Lao PDR. Shifting cultivation is the major agriculture production system in the northern Lao PDR. The land type mainly consisting of fallow of the shifting cultivation has rapidly increased in recent year and it occupies more than 60% of the total land in the north in 2002. It is considered that the increase of shifting cultivation is the primary cause of the higher rate of forest loss in the region than the national average.</p> <p>Forest Management and Community Support project (FORCOM) aims at shifting cultivation stabilization and preventing forest resources through Community Support Programme (CSP). Income generation activities of CSP are livestock activities, aquaculture, agroforestry, waving, orchard, paddy field expansion and so on. Before six month of the project termination, the Team implemented evaluation study in order to assess the achievement level of the project and make recommendations on measures to be taken for improvement of the project.</p> <p>1 - 2 Project Overview</p> <p>(1) Overall Goal</p> <p>Decreasing rate of forest cover is reduced in the districts where project sites are located.</p> <p>(2) Project Purpose</p> <p>Activities leading to sustainable land and forest use begin to expand in the project site and its surrounding areas, initiated by villagers.</p> <p>(3) Outputs</p> <p>Output 1: Activities based on appropriate land and forest use are demonstrated in the Initial Sites.</p> <p>Output 2: Extension staff (DAFEO/PAFEC) gain extension skills and techniques through training.</p> <p>Output 3: Under the framework of Community Support Programme (CSP), activities based on appropriate land and forest use are implemented at the Pilot Sites by villagers and extension staff.</p>		

Output 4: Recommendations are made on sustainable land and forest use practices and on extension systems and methods.

(4) Inputs (JFY 2004-2008)

Japanese Side

Long-term Experts: 11 personnel in total of 323PM

Short-term Experts: 9 personnel in total of 15PM

Training of Lao Counterparts in Japan: A total of 25 personnel

Equipment supplied by JICA:

29 units of motorbike, office equipment and so on. Total cost US\$ 1,258,116(as of March 2008)

Local cost: JPY17,000,000

Lao Side

Counterparts: Presently 43 personnel (the project office 11, 13 from PAFO in 6 provinces, 24 from DAFO in 9 districts and NAFES 3)

Facilities: Office spaces (Luang Prabaung and NAFES)

Local cost: NAFES 52,525US\$ (JPY5,600,000) Provincial and district government 60,652US\$ (JPY 6,500,000) (Note : Cost of Provincial and district government does not include budget of JFY 2008/9)

2.Evaluation Team

Members of Evaluation Team	<p>Mr. Hiroto Mitsugi (Team Leader) Director, Forestry and Nature Conservation Division I, Global Environment Department, JICA</p> <p>Mr. Shozo Kitamura (Forest Management) Auditor, Forestry Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries</p> <p>Mr. Akira Nagaoka (Community Development) JICA Expert, Department of Planning, MAF</p> <p>Mr. Shingo Takeda (Evaluation Planning) Associate Expert, Forestry and Nature Conservation Division I, Global Environment Department, JICA</p> <p>Mr. Makoto Hatano (Coordinator) Assistant Resident Representative, Laos Office, JICA</p> <p>Mr. Toyomistu Terao (Evaluation Analysis) Senior Consultant, Fisheries Engineering Co., Ltd.</p>	
Period of Evaluation	June 29 th , 2008-July 25 th , 2008	Type of Evaluation: Terminal Evaluation

3.Result of Evaluation

3 - 1 Accomplishment of the project

(1) Activities

The project activities related to Output 1, 2 and 3 have been implemented as planned.

Some activities under Output 4 were delayed, however it is supposed to be finished until December 2008. The first six months of the project term was spent to lay the groundwork for the overall project operations, where PDM, PO, and Project Document were revised through the basic survey and workshops. Since commencement of the major project activities in August 2004, most activities in the Initial Sites have been implemented according to the original plan. The production activities in the Pilot Sites started a little earlier (2nd quarter 2005) than the original plan (3rd quarter 2005) because the project was positively received by the target provinces and there was a keen interest from some districts in the target provinces to expand the project activities. As a result, the project sites reached 34 sites in total, 4 sites as the Initial Sites and 30 sites as the Pilot Sites as of 30 June 2008.

(2) Outputs

Most of the indicators for the outputs have been achieved. Output 1 (Initial sites) included a process to review plan and management of CSP and thus gave a base to draft CSP Operational Manual. Output 2 (training) had been focused mostly on OJT in village level. Output 3 (Pilot sites) developed 30 pilot sites in the 9 districts. Output 4 is aimed at development of recommendations to be extracted from operation of activities under the above outputs.

(3) Project Purpose

Among five indicators for the project purpose, indicators 1 and 2 are difficult to achieve. Performance of both of them depend on a period of time needed to operate the revolving fund, that is to say, a time period needed to revolve fund and to generate income. Activities of long-term return such as cow raising and orchard have shown they will need more time to meet the indicators 1 and 2. Activities of short-term return such as pig and chicken raising have mostly achieved these indicators.

3 - 2 Summary of Evaluation Result

(1) Relevance

The relevance of the project is high. The project's activities contribute to policy of Lao PDR, which are shifting cultivation stabilization, capacity building for agriculture and forestry sector and poverty eradication. One of the main tasks of NAFES has been placed on provision of effective training for extension staff in PAFO and DAFO. The project could give a series of practical training to the extension staff from DAFO in the target 9 districts and from PAFO in 6 provinces. Moreover, inputs and techniques of CSP are relevant with and meeting the needs of participating households, and 1404 participating households have received benefits from CSP activities.

(2) Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the project is high. It is judged that the project purpose is achieved. Most of achievement of the project purpose depends much on performance of CSP in 34. Outputs 1, 2 and 3 can be seen a series of task from preliminary work of CSP activities in initial sites to the development of CSP activities in pilot site. All these tasks are executed aiming at the achievement of the project target.

(3) Efficiency

The efficiency of the project is high. In respect of inputs from the government of Lao PDR and JICA, deployment of the experts and counterpart personnel, delivery of the equipment and preparation of the offices have been done as scheduled. Sufficient inputs have been made for operating the project activities, therefore outputs of the project are achieved.

(4) Impact

The impact of the project is moderate. Participating households of CSP have decreased their shifting cultivation area during the project period, therefore the route of accomplishment of overall goal is admitted. The 9 districts have 57,305 households in 699 villages in total. When 20,000 households is targeted after termination of the project, it would cost 4.3 million US\$ in order to achieve the overall goal. Even if necessary budgets are prepared, it is uncertain that the local governments can provide sufficient human resources for full scale implementation of the project. This means that NAFES/MAF will have to design a stepwise approach to achieve the overall goal.

(5) Sustainability

The sustainability of the project is high in terms of the current project benefits. In addition to that, remarkable development of efforts by related government organizations involved to sustain CSP was observed recently. Final draft of the Action Plan for implementing CSP after termination of the project has been prepared by many of the six CSs and submitted to the authorities for enabling budget allocation in FY 2008/9 that starts October in 2008. This will ensure strong government's support for continuing CSP. Action Plan specifies amount of budget that will needed for planned works for extension services including provision in-kind fund in case of some DAFO. In national level, it may be necessary to have a loan project assisted by some of donors for funding Action Plans in the 6 provinces.

3 - 3 Factors of promoting project progress

(1) Factors concerning to Planning

- It is thought that a background of CSP well function has a feature in a mechanism, for example revolving fund by in-kinds, adoption of the low-cost technology, introduction of various productive techniques not related to NTFP, and repeated training for extension staff and participants.

(2) Factors concerning to Implementation Process

- A series of consignment survey, which are baseline, households and self evaluation survey, was implemented, as a result it was able to improve an accuracy of the project design and feedback CSP

activities specifically by each implementation stage based on achievement

- Establishment of Committee for sustainability of FORCOM outputs recommended by mid term evaluation and making the Action Plan by 6 target provinces became one of the methods for ensuring government support for continuing CSP implementation.

3 - 4 Factors of inhibiting project progress

(1) Factors concerning of Planning

There is no correspondence

(2) Factors concerning to Implementation Process

- The project target area increased 6 to 9 districts, however the 9district have 699 villages in total. It is thought one of the reasons to make the condition of accomplishment of overall goal difficult.

3 - 5 Conclusion

FORCOM developed CSP for supporting production activities in a sustainable manner as alternatives of shifting cultivation, the project has expand CSP activities in 34 villagers, 9 districts, 6 provinces since February 2004 and total participating households reached 1,404. The project contributed to Lao government policies such as shifting cultivation stabilization, human resource development in agriculture and forestry sector and poverty eradication through the project activities.

3 - 6 Recommendations

(1) Consolidation of CSP

- 5) Consolidation of CSP activities into extension system through Coordination Group
- 6) Each target province should secure necessary budget and strengthen the implementation structure for continuing CSP through committee for sustainability of FORCOM' s outcomes
- 7) It is necessary to coordinate how CSP build in village cluster and technical service center and cooperate with other organizations
- 8) Training for extension staff by NAFES and relevent organizations

(2) Expansion of CSP at the fiela level

- 6) Continual capacity building of extension staff and villagers in order to CSP expansion
- 7) Development of visual extension materials
- 8) Analyze to improve revolving system
- 9) Examination of a method to develop revolving system to village fund creation
- 10) Analyze about changing of individual farmer's cropping system (influence on changing shifting cultivation and household income) though CSP activities

(3) Land and forest use

- 2) Strengthening of land and forest management by land use planning, public awareness and so on.

3 - 7 Lessons learned

- (6) The project document was revised six months after commencement of the project. By this revision, design of the project, especially in respect of CSP activities, could be made more specific and given details. This has led a successful operation of CSP afterwards.
- (7) Production activities of CSP include those of long-term return and short-term return. It seems some of the achievement indicators for these activities might require detail studies to reflect difference between them.
- (8) This project has been based at place far from a capital city, being the first case among the past Japan's ODA technical cooperation projects in Lao PDR. There are fewer officers in local government who are capable of speaking and writing English. Under such a condition, management of the project could be reinforced by assigning the Japanese experts who are fluent in Lao language.
- (9) Huge efforts have been paid to organize and hold the Evaluation Preparatory Committee for FORCOM (EPC) at time of mid-term and terminal evaluation. This process was prioritized by both NAFES and FORCOM as it was expected to be able to give chances for people involved to learn about the project. In fact, the EPC could give a rather remarkable contribution to deepen understandings of Lao members on what the project is going to achieve, as well as on procedures of the project evaluation.
- (10) Sufficient numbers of the counterparts have been stationed at LPB project office, and they have been assigned to tasks in full time basis. They could fully have contact with the experts and also contribute to operation and management of the project.