

Internal Ex-Post Evaluation for Technical Cooperation Project

conducted by Laos office: October, 2011

Country	The Project for Capacity Building in PIP Management
Laos	

I. Project Outline

Project Cost	273 million yen	
Project Period	November, 2004 - October, 2007	
Implementing Agency	Committee for Planning and Investment (CPI) (currently the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI))	
Cooperation Agency in Japan	IC-Net Limited (Proposal-based Technical Cooperation Project: PROTECO)	
Related Projects (if any)	Japanese cooperation: Technical Cooperation Project: Project for Enhancing Capacity of Public Investment Program Management (PCAP II) (March 2008 - August 2011)	
Background	In Laos, the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) has responsibility to assess new Public Investment Program (PIP) projects and also to monitor and evaluate the on-going PIP projects on a regular basis. However, MPI and the Provincial Departments of Planning and Investment (DPIs) had limited capacity of project management, so that domestically funded PIP projects have been arbitrarily planned and implemented. Also, it was difficult to verify the contribution of PIP to the achievement of goals in the national development plan. Consequently, there was a huge gap between the national development plan and implementation of the PIP. Therefore, the government of Laos requested the government of Japan technical cooperation for capacity building in PIP management.	
Inputs	Japanese Side	Laos Side
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Experts None for Long term, 11 experts in 8 areas for Short term 2. Trainees Received: None 3. Equipment: 11 million yen 4. Local Cost: 41 million yen 5. Others: 3 million yen 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff Allocated: 11 counterparts 2. Equipment: None 3. Buildings and facilities: project office space, meeting room, training room in CPI 4. Others: Salary of Department of Evaluation (DoE), Department of General Planning (DGP), Department of International Cooperation (DIC) staffs, administrative costs and other miscellaneous costs.
Project Objectives	Overall Goal Effectiveness and efficiency of PIP planned and implemented by the Lao Government improve.	
	Project Purpose PIP projects are appropriately appraised, monitored and evaluated.	
	Outputs Output 1: Appraisal, monitoring and evaluation method which are suitable to Laos are developed. Output 2: Staff at supervising agencies attain knowledge and skills for PIP management appraisal, monitoring and evaluation. Output 3: PIP projects are managed under the newly developed methods at the designated monitor provinces and ministry. Output 4: Organization-based coordination network in PIP management is established and functioning appropriately.	

II. Result of the Evaluation

Summary of the Evaluation
<p>In order to adequately implement PIP projects* in Laos, it is critical for MPI to strengthen the capacity to assess, monitor and evaluate new and ongoing PIP projects. The Project has contributed to the proper implementation of PIP projects through the development of manuals and the trainings, but partly achieved the increase in the number of PIP projects to be assessed and evaluated in line with the manuals developed by the Project for the project purpose of execution of appropriate appraisal, monitoring and evaluation of PIP projects due to the limited capacity and budget at local level. And the Project also partly achieved the increase in the proportion of the projects to be reported from project owners to DPIs in line with PIP for overall goal of improving effectiveness and efficiency of PIP planned and implemented by the Lao government. As for sustainability, some problems have been observed in financial aspect of the executing agency due to budget constraints after the PCAPII but no problem has been observed in the term of policy background, structural and technical aspects due to the activities of PCAPII. For relevance, this project has been highly consistent with Lao's development policy, development needs and Japan's ODA policy at the time of ex-ante evaluation and project completion. For efficiency both the project period and the project cost were as planned. In the light of above, this project is evaluated to be satisfactory.</p> <p>(Note) * In order to avoid confusion, the PCAP III going to start from March 2012, utilizes the terms of "public investment projects" instead of PIP projects.</p>

1 Relevance

This project has been highly consistent with the 6th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2006-2010) aiming at improving and enhancing state management or governance, development needs for capacity development of public investment planning and implementation, as well as Japan's ODA policy to support improvement of administrative capacity and institutional building at the time of ex-ante evaluation and project completion. Therefore, its relevance is high.

2 Effectiveness/Impact

Although the planned outputs were largely achieved by the Project, the project purpose was partially achieved by the time of project completion. While the number of PIP projects to be assessed and evaluated according to the manuals developed by the Project increased from nothing in 2005/06 to 115 in 2007/08. The number of middle scale PIP projects to be processed in line with the manuals and handbook, and to be submitted to the National Assembly was 9 out of 16 in 2007/08 in the monitoring provinces, which was lower than the plan (all the projects to be processed). Also, the number of inception or progress reports on the PIP project required by the manuals could not achieve the target (all of the projects), some of them were submitted although. That was because of the limited capacity and budget at local level for proper project management defined by the Project. It may attribute to the insufficient level of target value of the output 2 to contribute to the achievement of the project purpose despite that the planned outputs were largely achieved. The overall goal, which aims at improving effectiveness and efficiency of PIP, was partially achieved by the time of ex-post evaluation although the PCAP II, the second phase of this Project, continuously supported the nationwide extension of the enhanced project management of PIP. Despite that the target value was 100% of public investment projects, more than 70% of the listed investment projects were reported from the project owners to DPIs and more than 60% of projects were assessed in line with the required manner. Besides the expected impact, according to the interviews with the Department of Evaluation (DOE) of MPI, the Project brought about positive impact on the mind and attitude of officials concerned to enhance their responsibilities, in particular in DOE. Therefore, its effectiveness/ impact is fair.



Manual and handbook revised by PCAP II (based on PCAP)

3 Efficiency

Both the project period and project costs were as planned (ratio against plan: 100%, 80%), Therefore, efficiency of this project is high.

4 Sustainability

The policy framework for the PIP management developed by the Project is endorsed by the Prime Minister Decree No. 58. The decree stipulated that MPI is authorized to conduct and supervise appraisal, monitoring and evaluation of PIP at central level whereas DPIs are authorized agent at provincial level. Subsequently, the Public Investment Law came into effect in December 2009 specifying responsible organizations and legal procedures, also assessment of PIP projects shall comply with technical aspects and tools determined by MPI. From the institutional and operational aspect, MPI and DPIs have the sufficient number of competent staff to carry out the PIP management in line with the manuals developed by the Project though there is still a room to improve the number of public investment projects to be assessed, monitored and evaluated adequately. Also MPI and DPIs continued capacity development for the PIP management since PCAP II supported the nationwide extension of the PIP management through the trainings for ministerial and provincial officers. From the financial aspect, MPI has been making efforts to ensure sufficient budget for continuously conducting trainings and the proper PIP management, including assessment, monitoring and evaluation of the projects, but it is still uncertain. In terms of capacity development to extend the PIP management nationwide, MPI and DPI need continuous efforts to implement training for central and local officials after the completion of PCAP II. Therefore sustainability of this project is fair.



Training Program at MPI (organized by PCAP II)

III. Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Recommendations for Implementing agency:

The PIP manuals and handbooks should be revised and updated according to changes in government regulations and actual situations of development of the country. Also, continuous capacity development of officers in charge of the PIP management is essential along with dissemination of PIP manuals and handbooks. In particular, combination of training and "on the job training (OJT)" is effective for enhancement of their capacity. MPI needs to monitor performance of them in order to get feedback for improvement the PIP management including timely revision of PIP manuals and handbooks. Also sharing experiences in the Project of DPI is essential through future trainings by MPI for local officials in order to effectively enhance capacity of DPIs. Furthermore, it is required to ensure sustainable budget for trainings and PIP managements and operational system for further improvement of PIP management.

Lessons learned for JICA:

The project purpose gave DOE clear duty and responsibility of PIP management which highly motivated them to proactively participate in the Project. Therefore, a proper project design, including activities more directly linked to responsibilities of counterpart staff, can bring about their stronger commitment and more proactive participation in project activities. In addition, it is key to carefully consider levels of target values of indicators since inconsistency and inappropriateness of target value of indicators for outputs and the project purpose can harm achievement of the project purpose.