

Internal Ex-Post Evaluation for Technical Cooperation Project

conducted by Vietnam office: July, 2013

Country Name	The Project on the Village Support for Sustainable Forest Management in Central Highland
Vietnam	

I. Project Outline

Project Cost	258 million yen	
Project Period	June 2005 – September 2008	
Implementing Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) Division of Forestry, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) of Kon Tum Province Kon Tum Province Forestry Project Management Board 	
Cooperation Agency in Japan	Forestry Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)	
Related Projects (if any)	Feasibility Study on the Forest Management Plan in the Central Highland in the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (JICA)	
Background	<p>The Central Highlands in Vietnam was recognized as having higher potential for forestry development because the area sustained large scale natural forests. The region plays important roles for conservation of bio-diversity, conservation of water resource, livelihood of ethnic minorities and so on. However, the expansion of agricultural land, especially by slash and burn shifting cultivation practice, mainly caused by the growing population, had been causing deforestation and forest degradation. This had been resulting in the decrease of agricultural productivity of those lands, as well as decrease of forest production. Under these circumstances, the Feasibility Study on the Forest Management Plan in the Central Highland in the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam had been conducted by JICA for 35 months from 2000, targeted to Kon Tum Province, and concluded the need of decreasing slash and burn shifting cultivation to realize forest protection in the region.</p>	
Inputs	Japanese Side	Vietnamese Side
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Experts: 7 persons (Long-term: None, Short-term: 7) Trainees received in Japan: None Third-Country Training: 16 persons in Thailand Equipment: 13.8 million yen Local Cost: 60.2 million yen Others: (including dispatch of missions): 176 million yen 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Staff allocated: 13 persons Equipment: None Local Cost: 2,192 million VND Land etc. provided: Project office by Kon Tum
Project Objectives	Overall goal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The livelihoods of villagers in the 5 model villages are improved. Successful model developed in the model villages are expanded to other villages located in the two districts (Kon Plong District and Kon Ray District) 	
	Project Objective <p>Agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, and agroforestry activities are improved in model villages of (i) Kon K Tau (Po E Commune), (ii) Vi Chiring (Hieu Commune), (iii) Nuoc Not (Ngoc Tem Commune), (iv) Kon Tuc (Dak Phe Commune), and (v) Tu Ro Bang (Dak Koi Commune) in Kon Tum Province.</p>	
	Outputs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Villager's knowledge and skills in agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, and agroforestry are improved. Capacity of government staff in implementation and management of livelihood improvement projects is strengthened. Villagers' capacity in marketing agricultural, forestry, and livestock products is strengthened. Knowledge of villagers and government staff on sustainable use of forest and land is improved. Preparations are made for extending results of project activities to other regions. 	

II. Result of the Evaluation

Summary of the Evaluation
<p>Kon Tum Province, a target area of the project, was one of the localities that faced deforestation and forest degradation and attempted to promote alternative production activities in order to avoid and/or mitigate further deforestation and forest degradation. However, the administration bodies of the Province lacked technical and human resources due to limited experiences in supporting the development of such alternative production activities.</p> <p>The project has achieved the project purpose of improving the agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, and agroforestry activities in the model villages, and somewhat achieved the overall goals of (i) improvement of the livelihoods of villagers in the 5 model villages and (ii) expansion of the successful models developed in the model villages to other villages located in the two districts (Kon Plong District and Kon Ray District). As for sustainability, the project has some problems in structural, technical and financial aspects because of the weak monitoring and follow-up capacity of the project by DARD of Kon Tum Province due to limited financial and human resource. Therefore, the sustainability of the project is fair. For relevance, the</p>

project has been highly relevant with Vietnam's development policy, development needs, as well as Japan's ODA policy. For efficiency, the project cost exceeded the plan.

In the light of the above, this project is evaluated to be partially satisfactory.

1 Relevance

This project has been highly relevant with Vietnam's development policy ("increase in forest areas" in the Vietnam Forestry Development Strategy (VFDS) 2001-2010, and VFDS 2006-2020), development needs ("conservation of natural forests in Kon Tum province by reducing slash and burn cultivations"), Japan's ODA policy "Improvement in life and social dimensions including improvement of agriculture and rural development and environment" at the time of both ex-ante evaluation and project completion. Therefore, relevance of this project is high.

2 Effectiveness/Impact

This project has largely achieved the project purpose of improving the agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, and agroforestry activities in the model villages. At the time of terminal evaluation, 95% of households that participated in the project had continued their diversified agricultural activities. It can be assumed that the participating households have increased the amount of products, at least, for the model activities they have introduced.

The overall goals were partially achieved. According to the interview results with farmers, the average income of households in the 5 model villages increased and the number of poor households in the 5 model villages decreased by 44% from 247 in 2006 to 137 in 2010, which mostly met the target value of 30% in 2011. Knowledge and skills concerning the agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, and agroforestry activities applied in the model villages are disseminated to approximately 16% of all households in Kon Plong District and Kon Ray Districts, which meets its target value of 10%.

However, the mechanism for the successful models introduced by the project; i) Assignment of Community Facilitators (CFs)*, ii) Establishment of Village Development Boards (VDBs)**, iii) Introduction of Animal Bank System, iv) Monitoring and Supervising of the Project by using Periodical Workshop/Meeting, and v) Introduction of Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation, were limited in their function and have not extended to other villages. Also, since the project terminated before the actual implementation of Community Forest Management (CFM) Plan in the pilot village (Vi Chring village), the project was not able to assess the applicability of the CFM plan, and the implementing agency was not able to fully acquire the required capacity to continue and expand such model.

According to the interview results to the counterparts and villagers of the target villages at the time of ex-post evaluation, the project has enhanced the participation of the ethnic minorities and women to the communities and also contributed to the improvement of participants' nutrition through introduction of improved agricultural practices for their self-consumption.

No negative environmental impact by the project was observed. The forest area of Kon Ray District and Kon Plong District remains stable since the project completion in 2008. The project did not involve any land acquisition and resettlement of the people. Therefore, effectiveness/impact of this project is fair.

* Community Facilitators (CFs): CFs are the temporary staff hired by the project dispatched to five pilot villages by DARD in order to support villagers to prepare the participatory planning, to organize workshops as well as to monitor the project implementation.

** Village Development Boards (VDBs): VDBs are established in each model villages to (i) assist villagers in implementing and maintaining project activities in the villages, (ii) identify and resolve problems, etc., for the effective progress of the project, (iii) monitor and evaluate project activities, and (iv) manage the animal bank system.



<Interview to the villagers>

<Fruits tree supported by the project>

Outcome	Indicator (Target Value)	Actual
Overall Goal: 1. The livelihoods of villagers in the 5 model villages are improved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average income of households in the 5 model villages is increased by 20% compared to the time of project initiation (by 2011). 	(At the time of ex-post evaluation in 2012) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to the interview results to the farmers group, average income of households in the 5 model villages is increased compared to the time of project initiation. But no quantitative data is available.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of poor households in the 5 model villages is decreased by 30% compared to the time of project initiation (by 2011). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of poor household in the 5 model villages has decreased by 44% from 247 in 2006 to 137 in 2010 (no data available for baseline year of 2005 and 2011).
2. Successful models in model villages are expanded to other villages located in the two districts (Kon Plong District and Kon Ray District)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge and skills applied in the model villages are extended to 10% of all households in two districts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge and skills applied in the model villages are expanded to 873 households in the five communes (Poe, Hieu, Ngoc Tem, Dak Phe and Dak Koi) in two districts, which is about 16% of all households in two districts.
Project Purpose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture, forestry, animal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 70% of the households that participated in the project increase the 	(At the time of project completion in September 2008) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No baseline and result data available. However, it can

husbandry, and agroforestry activities are improved in the 5 model villages.	amount of the products from agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and agroforestry.	be assumed the participating households had increased the amount of products, at least, for the model activities they have introduced.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 70% of the households that participated in the project diversify their production activities. 	(At the time of terminal evaluation in June 2008) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95% of households (i.e. 172 out of 181 households) had continued their diversified agricultural activities. Over twenty (20) types of farming activities were implemented in the model villages.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 70% of the households that participated in the project continue their activities introduced by the project. 	(At the time of project completion in September 2008) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 77% of households (i.e. 167 out of 218 households) have continued at least one of the agricultural activities introduced by the project.

Source: Terminal Evaluation Report and information provided by DARD of Kon Tum Province.

3 Efficiency

Although the project period was within the plan (100%), some inputs were not appropriate for producing the outputs as the project could not monitor the result of implementation of CFM Plan in the pilot village, due to the limited project period. And the project cost exceeded the plan (144%) because of increase in inputs of Japanese experts to substitute the local experts due to miss-match between the project strategy and the competency of the local resources. Therefore, efficiency of the project is fair.

4 Sustainability

The sustainable forest management has been promoted under the Vietnam Forestry Development Strategy 2006-2020 together with related government decrees and decisions and the Vietnamese government as well as foreign donors has been supporting this area. After the project completion, five Community Facilitators (CFs) are no longer working and the Village Development Boards (VDBs) established in each model village have been only functioning in a limited scope mainly due to lack of financial incentives to the VDB members after project completion. In this regard, DARD of Kon Tum Province assigned agricultural extension workers of communes to take over the roles of CFs and supplement the limited function of the VDBs, and the extension workers have continued to disseminate the knowledge and skills of successful farming activities to other villages to some extent through daily extension works. However due to the limited number of extension workers, technical capacity of extension workers and the limited budget, the implementing agency is still weak in monitoring and follow-up activities in the model villages, including implementation of CFM Plan in Vi Chring village, and organizing technical seminars to disseminate the successful farming practices to other villages.

The project has some problems in structural, technical and financial aspects, therefore, the sustainability of the project is fair.

III. Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Recommendations for Implementing agency

- MARD and DARD of Kon Tum Province are required to make efforts to monitor and follow up the activities in the pilot villages such as the agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, and agroforestry activities as well as to disseminate the knowledge and skills of successful farming activities in the pilot villages to other villages in the Province together with extension guidelines.
- In this regard, MARD and DARD of Kon Tum Province should consider sharing the project outcome with the on-going projects in similar sectors such as "Integrated Rural Development Sector Project in the Central Provinces (ADB)" and "Forest for Livelihood Improvement in the Central Highlands (ADB)" and to make use of available resources of the on-going projects for further dissemination of successful farming activities in the Province.

Lessons learned for JICA

- This project trained five Community Facilitators (CFs) who were the temporary staff hired by the project and dispatched to five model villages. CFs were expected to continue to monitor and support the project activities in the model villages after project completion. However, due to budgetary constraints, Kon Tum Province could not continue to mobilize the CFs to the model villages after the project completion. This affected the function of Village Development Boards (VDBs). For similar projects in the future, it is important to fully utilize the existing system and organization rather than to establish a new system and organization to ensure the sustainability of the project. For example, it should be considered that CFs be selected from the motivated villagers. In this case, the roles of CFs are mainly coordination with agricultural extension workers and supporting their activities.
- There were some overlaps between the extension guidelines developed by the project and the existing Vietnamese guidelines. If the project is to develop new guidelines, it must avoid overlaps and be developed as a supplementary material consistent with the existing guidelines. This may strengthen the usefulness of the guidelines as well as avoid confusions for the users.
- The CFM plan was added during the course of the project implementation; however, the project period to complete the plan was too short. Therefore, it is necessary to make sure whether project period is sufficient enough to complete additional plans before implementing them.