

Country Name	<b>Project for Establishing Business Oriented Agricultural Cooperative Model</b>
Kingdom of Cambodia	

**I. Project Outline**

Background	<p>In July 2001, the Government of Cambodia issued the "Royal Decree on the Establishment and Operation of Agricultural Cooperatives, Agricultural Cooperative Associations and Pre-Agricultural Cooperatives". In June and September 2013, the "Law on Agricultural Cooperatives" was enacted to strengthen policies and improve institutions related to the promotion of agricultural cooperatives (ACs). The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) has been encouraging to organize farmers to support farmers in rural areas, with the aim of increasing agricultural productivity and creating jobs. Consequently, with the support of the government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the number of ACs increased to 437 as of August 2013. However, most of ACs were primarily involved in credit business rather than business-oriented activities, such as the joint delivery of agricultural products and production of processed agricultural products. These activities cloud have contributed to increasing the income of cooperative members in the market economy. In addition, ACs lacked the organizational management infrastructure, know-how and information necessary to plan and implement their projects. Therefore, there was an urgent need to improve their business management capacity.</p>				
Objectives of the Project	<p>Through i) improving the support systems of both the Department of Agricultural Cooperative Promotion (DACP) and the 4 Provincial Departments of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (PDAFFs) for providing technical assistance for AC, ii) strengthening the organization, management and business operation of Participating ACs, iii) introducing and operating pilot businesses in Pilot ACs, and iv) implementing AC business networking, the project aims at establishing business-oriented AC models, thereby contributing to disseminating AC models that comply with the AC Law and ICA principles and intend two or more businesses prescribed in the "Law on Agricultural Cooperatives" in the target areas and non-target areas in Cambodia.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall Goal: AC models that comply with AC Law and ICA principles and intend two or more businesses prescribed in the" Law on Agricultural Cooperatives" are disseminated to AC in the target areas and non-target areas in the Kingdom of Cambodia.</li> <li>Project Purpose: Business-oriented AC models are established in the target areas.</li> </ol>				
Activities of the Project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Site: Phnom Penh (Pilot site target areas: Takeo, Kampong Cham, Svay Rieng, Kampong Speu Provinces)</li> <li>Main Activities: i) improving the support systems of both DACP and the 4 PDAFFs (Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) for providing technical assistance for AC, ii) strengthening the organization, management and business operation of Participating AC, iii) introducing and operating pilot businesses in Pilot AC, and iv) implementing agricultural cooperative business networking</li> <li>Inputs (to carry out above activities) <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <b>Japanese Side</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experts: 5 persons</li> <li>Trainees Received: 19 persons</li> <li>Trainees received in the third countries: 77 persons (Thailand and Vietnam)</li> <li>Equipment: Tractor, truck, shelter of truck, shelter of fertilizers for pilot business of pilot ACs, and so on</li> <li>Local cost: Cost for training to PDAFFs and ACs, monitoring to ACs, developing products of project, procurement of fertilizers of pilot ACs, and so on.</li> </ol> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <b>Cambodian Side</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff Allocated: 33 persons</li> <li>Land and facilities: Office space with necessary equipment, etc.</li> <li>Local operational expenses: Supply and replacement of machinery, equipment, instruments, vehicles, tools, spare parts and any other materials necessary, water, electricity, and so on.</li> </ol> </td> </tr> </table> </li> </ol>			<b>Japanese Side</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experts: 5 persons</li> <li>Trainees Received: 19 persons</li> <li>Trainees received in the third countries: 77 persons (Thailand and Vietnam)</li> <li>Equipment: Tractor, truck, shelter of truck, shelter of fertilizers for pilot business of pilot ACs, and so on</li> <li>Local cost: Cost for training to PDAFFs and ACs, monitoring to ACs, developing products of project, procurement of fertilizers of pilot ACs, and so on.</li> </ol>	<b>Cambodian Side</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff Allocated: 33 persons</li> <li>Land and facilities: Office space with necessary equipment, etc.</li> <li>Local operational expenses: Supply and replacement of machinery, equipment, instruments, vehicles, tools, spare parts and any other materials necessary, water, electricity, and so on.</li> </ol>
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Project Period	(ex-ante) March 2014 – February 2019 (60 months) (actual) May 20, 2014 – May 19, 2019 (60 months)	Project Cost (Japanese side only)	(ex-ante) 404 million yen, (actual) 330million yen		
Implementing Agency	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) / Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) (the current Department of Agricultural Cooperative Promotion: DACP)				
Cooperation Agency in Japan	N/A				

**II. Result of the Evaluation**

1 Relevance/Coherence	<p>[Relevance] &lt;Consistency with the Development Policy of Cambodia at the Time of Ex-Ante Evaluation &gt;</p> <p>The project was consistent with the development policy of Cambodia at the time of ex-ante evaluation. In the "National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP)" (2009-2013), the agricultural sector was a key sector for economic growth as well as poverty reduction, and was given high priority. The NSDP (2014-2018) aimed at increasing agricultural productivity, diversifying cultivated products, and commercializing agriculture.</p>		
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<Consistency with the Development Needs of (country name) at the Time of Ex-Ante Evaluation >

The project was consistent with the development needs of Cambodia at the time of ex-ante evaluation. As mentioned above (“Background”), improving business management capacity of ACs was urgently required in order to contribute to increasing cooperative members' income in market economy, agricultural productivity and creating employment.

<Appropriateness of Project Design/Approach>

The project design/approach was appropriate. ACs in Cambodia traditionally used to be the women’s groups in rural areas, and generally many women were active as the AC board members. Gender equality was promoted throughout the project period. The key points of the project design/approach were as follows; i) the project planned to intentionally select the ACs with the female leaders as the Pilot ACs for promoting AC businesses, and ii) the project planned to organize GAD (Gender and Development) workshops during the project. The project utilized the lessons learnt from “Battambang Agricultural Productivity Enhancement Project (BAPEP)” (2003-2006) to consider active collaborations with private sectors as much as possible. As a result, 8 Business Forums were conducted, which promoted the networking of ACs and between AC and private companies.

No problem attributed to the project design/approach was confirmed.

<Evaluation Result>

In light of the above, the relevance of the project is ③<sup>1</sup>.

[Coherence]

<Consistency with Japan’s ODA Policy at the Time of Ex-Ante Evaluation>

The project was consistent with the Japan’s ODA policy to Cambodia at the time of ex-post evaluation. "Country Assistance Policy for the Kingdom of Cambodia" (2012) focused on "strengthening the economic infrastructure," "promoting social development," and "strengthening governance". Under the priority area of "strengthening the economic infrastructure", "agriculture and rural development" was placed as a major issue. In terms of support for agriculture, it aimed to improve the livelihoods and reduce the poverty of the farmers by enhancing the productivity of the agricultural products and increasing their income.

<Collaboration/Coordination with JICA’s Other Interventions>

Although the collaboration/coordination between the project and the “Agricultural Productivity Promotion Project in West Tonle Sap” (2010-2015) was planned at the time of ex-ante evaluation but not implemented. However, “Rice Seed Production and Promotion Project (RSPP)” (2017-2023) utilized the AC support system of DACP, which was improved by the project, and the counterpart in DACP, whose capacity was strengthened by the project, actively collaborated with RSPP Project in the business management trainings. As a result, their target ACs could submit their annual reports and hold their annual general assemblies in the proper ways for implementing their rice seed business. It was observed that AC support system and counterparts of DACP extremely contributed to one of the outcomes of RSPP Project.

<Cooperation with other institutions/ Coordination with International Framework>

Although the cooperation/coordination with other development partners was not planned at the time of ex-ante evaluation, the cooperations with the Embassy of Japan in Cambodia and some Japanese private companies were implemented, and positive effects were confirmed at the time of ex-post evaluation. Under the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects: (KUSANONE) projects supported by the Embassy of Japan in Cambodia and Top Planning Japan, more than 7 ACs in Kampong Cham, Tbong Khmum and Kampong Thom provinces (both target and non-target provinces) have implemented their business for vegetables, peppers and cashew nuts, with the strong initiative of DACP for the period from 2019 to 2021. Idemitsu Saison Microfinance (Cambodia) Plc. supported to the relationship with PDAFFs of target provinces, at the project’s business forums, and have continued. As a result, ACs and AC members enabled to access the financial service for their business activities. Macro Supermarket supported Sambor Meanchey AC, one of the Pilot ACs operating marketing business as pilot, have been supplying their agricultural products (papaya, watermelon and banana) to Macro Supermarket, one of the largest supermarkets in Phnom Penh.

<Evaluation Result>

In light of the above, the coherence of the project is ③.

[Evaluation Result of Relevance/Coherence]

In the light above, the relevance/coherence of the project is ③.

2 Effectiveness/Impact

<Status of Achievement of the Project Purpose at the Time of Project Completion>

At the time of project completion, the Project Purpose was achieved as planned. 98% of the Participating ACs submitted annual reports required by AC law to MAFF and 75% of those submitted annual reports had decent contents (Indicator 1-1), 96% of the Participating ACs had standard organizational structures such as general meeting, board, and supervisory committee and had run business(es) for their members complying with the AC law and ICA Principals (Indicator 1-2). Also, pilot businesses in 10 Pilot ACs were continuously conducted in line with pilot business plan. They increased their turnovers and benefits for members (Indicator 2-1) and the pilot businesses in 4 Pilot ACs were considered as advanced business activities (Indicator 2-2). Moreover, case studies including good practice and lessons learned of 10 pilot ACs have been collected and compiled. Percentage of Participating ACs which used the materials for development of business plan are as followed; 100% in Kampong Cham, 100% in Kampong Speu, 97% in Takeo, 100% in Svay Rieng (Indicator 3).

<Continuation Status of Project Effects at the Time of Ex-Post Evaluation>

By the time of the ex-post evaluation, the project effects have been continued. The Participating AC have submitted annual reports required by the AC Law to MAFF every year because PDAFFs had conducted a conference every year and each ACs has to present their report including the success and challenge. Also, the submitted annual reports had decent content since PDAFFs advised all ACs to follow the project’s annual report format as it is easy for them to review. Even though some ACs in Pursat province faced a challenge to fill some contents of the annual report due to their level of knowledge, they have still kept following the same annual report format established by the project. The pilot businesses and/or advanced businesses in all Pilot ACs in the target areas have continuously conducted and further developed since the project completion. The AC membership offers benefits to all members, including the opportunity to earn additional income through various business ventures. For example, Svay Chrum AC has recently expanded its operations beyond providing

<sup>1</sup> ④ : very high, ③ : high, ② : moderately low, ① : low

agricultural credit and supplying fertilizer to local farmers. They now also cultivate and sell rice and vegetables, catering to both local markets and exporting to Phnom Penh. The pilot businesses and/or advanced businesses in the Pilot ACs disseminated in the target areas and non-target areas. There is an annual exchange visit among ACs, along with a business forum or conference, including both ACs and the private sector. These events aim to disseminate information about business activities and plans among all ACs at both target and non-target areas. Since the project's completion, all ACs in both target and non-target areas have continued to utilize the materials developed by the project, including the format of the annual action plan, format of the annual financial plan, guideline on allocation of profit for agricultural cooperatives in Cambodia, guideline on credit management of agricultural cooperatives, and guidebook of bookkeeping and accounting, and so on. Furthermore, PDAFFs in both target and non-target areas have used the materials developed by the project to train all new ACs and they use the case studies as good practices and lessons learned to promote the business activities among all new ACs. Even during the annual business forum or annual conference, the ACs with successful or good practice in their business had shared their experience and lessons learned to all participants as well. For example, the PDAFF has used the case study of Svay Chrum AC as a model business to promote and motivate all new ACs to follow this model as well. Similarly, the Takeo PDAFF has used case studies from Rolus Meas AC, Cheong Koun Chok Chey AC, and Stoeung Slakou AC to promote business activities among new ACs.

<Status of Achievement of the Overall Goal at the Time of Ex-Post Evaluation>

At the time of ex-post evaluation, the Overall Goal has been achieved beyond the plan. Within the first 5 years from the project completion, the percentage of ACs that comply with the AC Law and ICA Principles increased to 83.8% in the target areas and 87.7% in non-target areas, respectively (Indicator 1), and the percentage of the number of ACs that are engaged in two or more businesses increased to 40.97% in the target areas and 24% in non-target areas, respectively (Indicator 2).

<Other Impacts at the Time of Ex-Post Evaluation>

Some positive impacts by the project were confirmed at the time of ex-post evaluation. The project contributed to the leadership management of running a business, members profit, better living standard, increase in work to women. ACs have also assisted their communes and districts by helping poor farmers and achieved better economic living standards and become more empowered and aware. The Participating ACs have also empowered members to increase their knowledge and skills. Notably, women's involvement is growing, with a female AC leader in Svay Chrum recently being promoted to the commune council due to her active participation. Across the 86 ACs in Svay Rieng, 3 women hold leadership positions, 150 served as board advisors, and 120 participated in monitoring committees. This demonstrates the increasingly important role women play in ACs. In Kampong Cham, there are 30% of women playing a role as AC leaders and members. In addition, when their business project starts, they start to work in groups and joint businesses such as buying inputs, selling agricultural products together, and joining utilization businesses.

No negative impact on natural environment was confirmed.

<Evaluation Result>

In light of the above, the effectiveness/impact of the project is ④.

Achievement of Project Purpose and Overall Goal

Aim	Indicators	Results	Source
(Project Purpose) Business-oriented AC models are established in the target areas.	Indicator 1 The basis for maintaining organization is built by developing managerial capacity of the ACs.  Indicator 1-1: 80% of the Participating ACs submit annual reports required by the AC law to MAFF and 60% of those submitted annual reports have decent contents.  Indicator 1-2: 80% of the Participating ACs have standard organizational structures such as general meeting, board, and supervisory committee and run business(es) for their members complying with the AC Law and ICA Principals.	Status of the Achievement (Status of the Continuation): achieved as planned (continued) (Project Completion) Indicator 1-1 in the fiscal year of 2017: - Submission of annual reports required by the AC Law: 98% - Submission of annual report with decent contents: 75% Indicator 1-2 in the fiscal year of 2017: - 96% of the Participating ACs had standard organizational structure. (Ex-Post Evaluation) Indicator 1-1: The Participating ACs submitted annual reports required by the AC Law to MAFF every year. The submitted annual reports had decent content. PDAFFs advised all ACs to follow the project's annual report format as it is easy for them to review. Even some ACs in Pursat province faced a challenge to fill some contents of the annual report due to their level of knowledge, they have still kept following the same annual report format established by the project. Indicator 1-2: In the target area as well as non-target area, the project effects of maintaining organizational basis, AC businesses and materials utilization have continued.	Project Completion Report, Information provided by DACP, PDAFFs of target area (Svay Rieng, Takeo, Kampong Cham, Kampong Speu) and non-target area (Pursat)
	Indicator 2 The Pilot ACs produce tangible outputs that prove the effectiveness of the pilot businesses to develop AC models.  Indicator 2-1: Pilot businesses in the Pilot ACs in the target areas are continuously conducted in line with pilot business plan and they increase their turnovers and the	Status of the Achievement (Status of the Continuation): achieved as planned (continued) (Project Completion) Indicator 2-1: Pilot businesses in 10 Pilot ACs were continuously conducted in line with pilot business plan. They increased their turnover and benefits for members. Indicator 2-2: Pilot businesses in 4 Pilot ACs were considered as advanced business activities. (Ex-Post Evaluation)	Project Completion Report, Information provided by DACP, PDAFFs of target area (Svay Rieng, Takeo, Kampong Cham, Kampong Speu) and non-target area (Pursat)

	<p>members receive benefits from such businesses.</p> <p>Indicator 2-2: Advanced business activities are taken up by some of the Pilot ACs.</p>	<p>Indicator 2-1: The pilot businesses and/or advanced businesses in all Pilot ACs in the target areas continuously conducted and further developed since the project completion. The AC membership offers benefits to all members, including the opportunity to earn additional income through various business ventures. For example, Svay Chrum AC has recently expanded its operations beyond providing agricultural credit and supplying fertilizer to local farmers. They now also cultivate and sell rice and vegetables, catering to both local markets and exporting to Phnom Penh.</p> <p>Indicator 2-2: The pilot businesses and/or advanced businesses in the Pilot ACs disseminated in the target areas and non-target areas by disseminating information about business activities and plans through business forums or conferences.</p>																																																																																					
	<p>Indicator 3 Good practices and lessons learned from the Project are compiled and promotional materials are made available for extension and at least 20% of the Participating ACs use such materials to develop plan of new business (es).</p>	<p>Status of the Achievement (Status of the Continuation): achieved as planned (continued) (Project Completion)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Case study including good practice and lessons learned of 10 pilot ACs were collected and compiled.</li> <li>● Percentage of Participating ACs which use the materials for development of business plan; 100% for Kampong Cham, 100% for Kampong Speu, 97% for Takeo, 100% for Svay Rieng</li> </ul> <p>(Ex-Post Evaluation) Since the project's completion, all ACs in both target and non-target areas have continued to utilize the materials developed, including the format of the annual action plan, format of the annual financial plan, guideline on allocation of profit for agricultural cooperatives in Cambodia, guideline on credit management of agricultural cooperatives, and guidebook of bookkeeping and Accounting, and so on.</p>	<p>Project Completion Report, Information provided by DACP, PDAFFs of target area (Svay Rieng, Takeo, Kampong Cham, Kampong Speu) and non-target area (Pursat)</p>																																																																																				
<p>(Overall Goal) AC models that comply with the AC Law and ICA Principles and intend two or more businesses prescribed in the Law on Agricultural Cooperatives are disseminated to ACs in the target areas and non-target areas in the Kingdom of Cambodia.</p>	<p>Indicator 1 Within the first 5 years from the project completion, the percentage of ACs that comply with AC Law and ICA Principles increases to 70% in the target areas and 30% in non-target areas respectively.</p>	<p>Status of the Achievement: achieved beyond the plan. (Ex-Post Evaluation) In the target area: (2) / (1) = 83.79% and (3) / (1) = 40.97% in average for the first 5 years</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="576 1108 1300 1568"> <thead> <tr> <th>Indicators</th> <th>Target (Year 2024)</th> <th>Actual (2019)</th> <th>Actual (2020)</th> <th>Actual (2021)</th> <th>Actual (2022)</th> <th>Actual (2023)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>(1) Total number of AC</td> <td>-</td> <td>321</td> <td>314</td> <td>315</td> <td>318</td> <td>323</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(2) Number of ACs that comply with AC Law and ICA Principles</td> <td>-</td> <td>283</td> <td>237</td> <td>234</td> <td>271</td> <td>311</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(3) Number of ACs that are engaged in two or more businesses</td> <td>-</td> <td>136</td> <td>140</td> <td>125</td> <td>130</td> <td>122</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Percentage of (2) / (1)</td> <td>70%</td> <td>88.01</td> <td>75.48</td> <td>74.29</td> <td>85.06</td> <td>96.13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Percentage of (3) / (1)</td> <td>40%</td> <td>42.37</td> <td>44.16</td> <td>39.68</td> <td>40.88</td> <td>37.77</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>In non-target area: (2) / (1) = 87.66% and (3) / (1) = 24.00% in average for the first 5 years</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="576 1668 1300 2128"> <thead> <tr> <th>Indicators</th> <th>Target (Year 2024)</th> <th>Actual (2019)</th> <th>Actual (2020)</th> <th>Actual (2021)</th> <th>Actual (2022)</th> <th>Actual (2023)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>(1) Total number of AC</td> <td>-</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(2) Number of ACs that comply with AC Law and ICA Principles</td> <td>-</td> <td>54</td> <td>48</td> <td>56</td> <td>52</td> <td>59</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(3) Number of ACs that are engaged in two or more businesses</td> <td>-</td> <td>8</td> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Percentage of (2) / (1)</td> <td>30 %</td> <td>90</td> <td>80</td> <td>93.33</td> <td>86.67</td> <td>98.33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Percentage of (3) / (1)</td> <td>15%</td> <td>13</td> <td>30</td> <td>32</td> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Indicators	Target (Year 2024)	Actual (2019)	Actual (2020)	Actual (2021)	Actual (2022)	Actual (2023)	(1) Total number of AC	-	321	314	315	318	323	(2) Number of ACs that comply with AC Law and ICA Principles	-	283	237	234	271	311	(3) Number of ACs that are engaged in two or more businesses	-	136	140	125	130	122	Percentage of (2) / (1)	70%	88.01	75.48	74.29	85.06	96.13	Percentage of (3) / (1)	40%	42.37	44.16	39.68	40.88	37.77	Indicators	Target (Year 2024)	Actual (2019)	Actual (2020)	Actual (2021)	Actual (2022)	Actual (2023)	(1) Total number of AC	-	60	60	60	60	60	(2) Number of ACs that comply with AC Law and ICA Principles	-	54	48	56	52	59	(3) Number of ACs that are engaged in two or more businesses	-	8	18	19	13	14	Percentage of (2) / (1)	30 %	90	80	93.33	86.67	98.33	Percentage of (3) / (1)	15%	13	30	32	22	23	<p>Information provided by DACP</p>
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	Within the first 5 years from the project completion, the percentage of the number of ACs that are engaged in two or more businesses increases to 40% in the target areas and 15% in non-target areas respectively.	(Ex-Post Evaluation) Refer to the tables for the Indicator 1 of the Overall Goal.	
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### 3 Efficiency

Both the project cost and the project period were within the plan (the ratio against the plan: 81% and 100%, respectively). The main reason for the cost saving was reduction of the total cost of equipment and facilities for the pilot ACs to implement their pilot businesses compared to the original plan. The project tried to keep a minimum scale of equipment and facilities to consider the pilot businesses sustainability, and the pilot businesses (supply business, joint utilization business and marketing business), which the project selected through careful screening, were implemented without much investment by the project.

	Project Cost (Japanese side only, yen)	Project Period (months)
Plan (ex-ante)	404 million	60
Actual	330 million	60
Ratio (%)	81	100

Outputs were produced as planned.

In the light above, the efficiency of the project is ④.

### 4 Sustainability

#### <Policy Aspect>

It is expected that the new government priority policy programs will positively continue to promote the AC support system which was improved by the project. The “Priority Policy Program for Development of Modern Agricultural Cooperatives” (2023-2028) aims to transform small farm holders to strong agricultural economic enterprise with high integration, economies of scale and market competitive capacity. The “Priority Policy Program for Development of Commune/Sangkat<sup>2</sup> Agricultural Officers” (2023-2028) targets to deploy 1,600 agricultural officers to the agriculture-based communes across the country to address challenges of access to technology by farmers and local communities, orient farmers in their production and facilitate their access to the market at time of their harvest. The “Cambodian Sustainable Agriculture Development Program” (2024-2031) focuses to support farmers through the strengthening of ACs.

#### <Institutional/Organizational Aspect>

There has no change in DACP with 38 staff members. The number of staff of DACP has been sufficient to promote AC business activities. Each PDAFF has the Agricultural Cooperative Promotion Office. The number of office staff at each PDAFF, 5-6 officials on average, has been sufficient for PDAFF to promote the AC activities though some staff members have changed due to the personnel changes, retirement, and so on.

Due to the recent decentralization, the agricultural staff at the district level now fall under the Ministry of Interior. This has led to a requirement for all collaboration between the PDAFF and district officers to be formally documented, which can cause delays, even when the PDAFF needs urgent updates. For solutions, under the “Priority Policy Program for Development of Commune/Sangkat Agricultural Officers” (2023-2028), 1,600 commune agricultural officers will be deployed to work closely together with both PDAFF and district officers, so that the project effects can be sustained efficiently.

Also, Svay Chrum AC in Svay Rieng has established a network for supply business with other 2 ACs located close each other. The number of ACs joining the AC Union for supply business has increased from 34 to 66 since the project completion, and will increase year by year.

In addition, MAFF has promoted agricultural commune staff to serve AC and also try to promote to modern AC with adding the external structure to support both technical and management businesses.

#### <Technical Aspect>

The technical levels for the AC supporting system have been firmly sustained through continuous dissemination inside DACP and PDAFFs, as well as from DACP to NGO development partners (NGO-DPs). DACP conducted training of trainers (TOT) for NGO-DPs focused on AC promotion and materials produced by the project were utilized. Besides, NGOs-DPs actively seek new strategies to enhance their skills, which inevitable to implement the new government’s “Priority Policy Program for Development of Modern Agricultural Cooperatives” (2023-2028), to promote modern AC for expand the business. Although new staff lack skills in AC development, particularly in business orientation, PDAFFs have trained them to fulfill their tasks effectively.

Most of the published manuals, guidelines, and materials have been used by DACP and PDAFFs to train all ACs. For example, DACP has continuously used the following materials for training new ACs, such as “Model annual report format”, “Format and example of annual action plan & financial plan”, “Guidebook of bookkeeping and accounting”, and the “Concept and guideline on setting up AC business networking”. Kampong Speu PDAFF reported that ACs continue to utilize some materials developed by the project as well. Similar practices have been followed by Svay Rieng, Kampong Cham, and Takeo PDAFFs. Additionally, case studies of successful ACs are incorporated into annual AC meetings/conferences. For instance, Svay Rieng PDAFF uses the case study of Svay Chrum AC to motivate ACs to increase their business activity. Furthermore, DACP has developed some materials based on success stories related to AC's business planning and marketing and has introduced as training resources.

<sup>2</sup> Administration unit of Cambodia at subdivisional level. Districts are divided into Communes and Sangkat, and Cities are divided into Sangkat.

Furthermore, DACP, through its government project budget plan, proposes to train the staff of the PDAFFs and the ACs on the existing materials. Additionally, MAFF offers a booth at exhibitions, annual congresses, and the GDA annual meeting, displaying the materials. This approach has generated significant interest, with technicians, development partners (DPs), NGOs, and even the ACs themselves requesting copies..

<Financial Aspect>

The budget from the government and DPs has been continuously secured in order to continue the AC promotion activities. The budget resources have been as follows; i) MAFF: under the program of “Cambodia Agriculture Transition”, the grant has been funded directly to ACs for promoting AC business activities (ACs contribute 60% and the project contribute 40%), ii) PDAFFs: the Program Budget, a kind of government budget, has been allocated to conduct training for ACs, iii) DPs: under the loan programs of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank (WB), the budget has been allocated through MAFF-PDAFFs for developing AC managerial capacity and promoting AC business implementation. Also, under the government’s “Priority Policy Program for Development of Modern Agricultural Cooperatives” (2023-2028), Agricultural Cooperative Development Fund (ACDF) is going to established to support and develop modern ACs for providing finance assistance to ACs or AC unions to provide capital for their business operations. As of January 2025, a Sub-decree was approved and Prakas (the ministerial order) at responsible ministries (Ministry of Economic and finance and MAFF) are being drafted. It will be continuously ensured for sustaining the AC promotion activities introduced by the project.

<Environmental and Social Aspect>

No issue on environmental and social aspect has been observed, and it has not been necessary to take any countermeasures.

<Evaluation Result>

In light of the above, no problem has been observed in terms of the policy, institutional/organizational, technical, financial/ environmental and social aspects. Therefore, the sustainability of the project effects is ④.

5 Summary of the Evaluation

The project achieved the Project Purpose to establish the Business Oriented AC models in the target areas and the Overall Goal to disseminate the AC models in the target and the non-target areas in Cambodia.

Considering all of the above points, this project is evaluated to be highly satisfactory.

III. Non-score Items

Adaption and Contribution:

- To supervise appropriately at the project completion, JICA arranged one Japanese consultant to support the project’s endline survey. The project completion report could be well prepared through gathering necessary information and analyzing on the evaluation based on the JICA Project Evaluation Guideline, which required the specific skill for giving evaluations.
- By conducting weekly meetings of DACP C/Ps and JICA experts, close communications and technical transfer were firmly sustained. Each DACP C/P, having their own responsibility to follow up the pilot AC business activity and prepare the document (case study, etc.), reported the own work progress every week. In case of any challenges or issues, solutions were also discussed in a timely manner.

IV. Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Recommendations for Implementing Agency:

[ACs or AC unions nationwide]

By 2028, it is recommended that ACs or AC unions expand the AC business activities nationwide under the government’s Priority Policy Program for Development of Modern Agricultural Cooperatives (2023-2028). The new financial assistance system of ACDF, shall be functionalized as soon as possible, so that the necessary initial investment for AC business operations can be provided in a sustainable way.

Lessons Learned for JICA:

Even after the project's completion, JICA continued to introduce the pilot ACs to the Embassy of Japan, Japanese companies, and other development partners, which led to the expansion of sales channels for agricultural products produced by the ACs and the development of facilities for business operations. As a result, the knowledge and experience gained from the pilot ACs spread through networks of ACs interested in business, resulting in dissemination to non-target areas of the project. JICA should proactively consider the sustainability of the project outcomes, as well as the encouragement of ownership of Implementing Agency for the produced outcomes.



AC member with her vegetable farm, harvesting 1.5 tons per month to sell them through AC's market business in 2023  
(Kampong Speu Province)

Fertilizer supply business going well by making the AC network together with other 2 ACs located next each other  
(Svay Rieng Province)