

The meeting for exchanging lessons on the management of Village Development Fund between Xiengngeun and Phonxay districts



Starting from June 2012, the four target villages of PAREDD project in Xiengngeun district (Huaykhong, Nakha, Paktho and Huaykhot villages) have initiated, with the support from the project, the establishment of Village Development Fund (VDF) in each village.

Up to now, the VDF management unit in each village is able to make good progress as to release funds for villagers to implement the livelihood improvement activities through the fund revolving system. In the course of execution of their duties, the VDF management units have gained a lot of experiences on how to manage VDF.

And on 20 March 2014, with PAREDD support, a study tour was organized for the VDF management units of 5 target villages (Huaykhing, Sakuan, Phakbong, Huayha and Huaytho villages) in Phonxay district to visit and exchange the lessons on VDF with the VDF management units in Xiengngeun district. In the exchange meeting, the former management units have learned the lessons and experiences on how to efficiently manage the funds. They have also discussed about the issues and difficulties related to the management of VDF with a view to implement the activities related to VDF in a most efficient and sustainable way in Phonxay district.

A workshop open to suggestions on how to improve PAREDD approach

On 27th February 2014, a half-day meeting was organized and open to suggestions on how PAREDD approach, a method of mitigating the effects of deforestation and forest degradation in the northern of Lao PDR., might be improved.

Invited participants were from various relevant agricultural and forestry sectors under the Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office in Luang Prabang.

Comments and suggestions by attendees were made in a very constructive way, for which the manage of PAREDD project appreciated very much. PAREDD, a 5-year technical cooperation project between Laos and Japan, is drawing to a close and is now under preparation to finalize its guidelines and manuals on how to apply the PAREDD approach in the most effective way.

The gathering was satisfactorily concluded with a batch of valuable recommendations, reflecting the real concern about deforestation and forest degradation that are taking a heavy toll on the Lao forests in general and in the northern part of the country in particular.

In closing, all participants showed their willingness to join in the next workshop.



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The Participatory Land and Forest Management Project for Reducing Deforestation



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Ceremony for fund release in Paktho village, Xiengngeun district



(Photo: Handing over cash from Village Development Fund to new loan takers)

On March 21, 2014, in Paktho village, Xiengngeun district, Luang Prabang province, which is one of PAREDD target villages, a ceremony for handing over cash from Village Development Fund (VDF) with participation of all villagers.

This is the 2nd time of fund release for new loan takers. Before handing over the funds, the Paktho village authorities and the representative of VDF management unit have made a brief report on the fund related activities which have been implemented, and read out the VDF regulations in order for the new loan takers to strictly comply with the terms and conditions provided under the statute.

The amount of money released this time was 20,800,000 Kips for two activity groups as follows:

1. Goat raising – 6 households totaling 16,800,000 Kips
2. Pig raising – 2 households totaling 4,000,000 Kips

Ceremony for fund release in Huaykhong village, Xiengngeun district

On March 18, 2014, in Huaykhong village, Xiengngeun district, Luang Prabang province, a ceremony was held for fund release by the management unit of Village Development Fund (VDF), with participation of all villagers, particularly the village head, Mr. Khamly Soulideth, and Mr. Khamleck Phongphoukham, Deputy head of Xiengngeun District Agriculture and Forestry Office, were also present. The ceremony was to hand over cash from the VDF for 12 households to use for implementing the activities for improving their livelihoods.

Total amount of cash released was 22 million Kips for:

- Pig raising (7 households) – 14 million Kips
- Goat raising (3 households) – 6 million Kips
- Poultry raising (2 households) – 2 million Kips

In the future, when the 12 new loan takers are able to generate sufficient income from raising the livestock, and when it comes to the pay-back period they have to pay back to VDF the money that they borrowed, so that the reimbursed funds will then be released to other new households again.

In summary, the purpose of VDF is to create opportunity for all villagers to improve their livelihoods in a sustainable way.



Comment of Sakuan village head toward the implementation of PAREDD activities

Hello! My name is Onta KHAMMANY. I am the head of Sakuan village, Phonxay district, Luangprabang province. I am very pleased with the PAREDD project along with its various support to my village which included the funds, materials and equipment, techniques, knowledge and skills for implementing the 3 types of project assorted activities. Especially, the type 2 activities (livelihood improvement activity) that are related to the improvement of livelihood of villagers, making them able to increase their income.

In addition, the village development fund was established with the support from the project that can be accessed by all villagers for improving their livelihoods in an efficient, step-by-step and sustainable basis.

In closing, on behalf of all villagers, I would like to thank PAREDD project as well as all parties concerned who have ceaselessly supported our village in improving villagers' livelihood on a gradual basis.

