

## Simplified Ex-Post Evaluation for Grant Aid Project

Evaluator, Affiliation	Miho Kawahatsu Waseda Research Institute Corporation (WRI)	Duration of Evaluation Study
Project Name	The Project for Construction of Primary Schools in Lao People's Democratic Republic	January 2010 – December 2010

### I Project Outline

Country Name	The Lao People's Democratic Republic																									
Project Period	(I/II) August 2003-February 2005 (II/II) June 2004-November 2005																									
Executing agency	Provincial Education Service of Vientiane Municipality and Vientiane Province																									
Project Cost	Grant Limit: 758 million yen	Actual Grant Amount: 747 million yen																								
Main Contractors	Sampo International																									
Main Consultants	System Science Consultants Inc,																									
Basic Design	February 2003																									
Related Projects (if any)	N.A																									
Project Background	<p>The Educational Strategic Planning of Laos has addressed the issue of school construction as a means of increasing the net enrollment ratio in primary education, which could positively link to the adult literacy rate. Further, the Five-year Development Plan for Education (2001-2005) focuses and gives priority to "equal access to education." This policy implies overwhelming needs and demands for construction of new school buildings in Laos. At the same time, primary schools in the Vientiane area, with relatively high enrollment ratios, could not be properly maintained, and face structural safety issues. Therefore, with such urgent needs, the government of Laos requested Japan to help construct and rehabilitate primary school facilities in the Vientiane area.</p>																									
Project Objective	To construct facilities and procure classroom furniture for targeted primary schools in order to improve the general learning environment at school and to assure better access to education.																									
Output[s] (Japanese Side)	<p>1. Reconstruction and/or expansion of school facilities at primary schools located in the Vientiane area:            I/II 31 Schools (143 Classrooms, 23 Teachers' rooms, 8 Toilet buildings)            II/II 35 Schools (191 Classrooms, 23 Teachers' rooms, 23 Toilet Buildings)            (Total of project terms (I. II) 66 Schools (334 Classrooms, 46 Teachers' rooms, 31 Toilet buildings)</p> <p>2. Provision of school furniture and equipment</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">Per classroom</td> <td>(10 set desks &amp; chairs for pupils</td> <td>334 Classrooms x 10 sets)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(Teachers' desk &amp; chair</td> <td>334 Classrooms x 1 set )</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(Shelves</td> <td>334x 1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(Blackboards</td> <td>334x 1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-top: 10px;">Per Teachers' room</td> <td>(3 set desks &amp; chairs for teachers</td> <td>46x 3 sets)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(1 table and 6 chairs for a meeting room,</td> <td>46x 1 and 46 x6)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(5 Shelves</td> <td>46 x 5)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(Blackboards</td> <td>46x 1)</td> </tr> </table>		Per classroom	(10 set desks & chairs for pupils	334 Classrooms x 10 sets)		(Teachers' desk & chair	334 Classrooms x 1 set )		(Shelves	334x 1)		(Blackboards	334x 1)	Per Teachers' room	(3 set desks & chairs for teachers	46x 3 sets)		(1 table and 6 chairs for a meeting room,	46x 1 and 46 x6)		(5 Shelves	46 x 5)		(Blackboards	46x 1)
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### II Result of the Evaluation

Summary of the evaluation
<p>Regarding the efficacy of this project, while it is difficult because of data constraints to show in quantitative terms the effects, the new 66 schools with the total of 334 classrooms may have improved the general learning environment of the maximum of 12,024 pupils in total, in accordance with the specification that each one classroom has a capacity of 36 pupils. Also as indirect effects note is to be taken of spillover effects such as the implementation of adult literacy education – assigned high importance in Laos – and greater social activity through participation in community activities. From the viewpoint of sustainability, however, while it cannot be said of all of the 66 schools, there are some where in the absence of adequate contributions from the local community problems of operation and management have arisen.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">In light of the above, this project is evaluated to be highly satisfactory.</p> <p>&lt;Recommendations&gt;</p> <p>As recommendations to the executing agency, mention must be made of issues related to sustainability of operations and maintenance (O&amp;M) at some of the schools in this project. Because contributions from the community and donation of labor by villagers are indispensable for O&amp;M of school facilities, it is desirable that prior to project implementation that community residents be made fully aware of the necessity for appropriate sharing of responsibilities by beneficiaries and for the collection of contributions to facilitate the supply of services by the facilities in question</p> <p>Further, it is desirable that, from the viewpoint of sustainability of community activities, and with the intention of increasing activities in the villages on behalf of community contributions, to support the formulation of an activity action program intended to</p>

promote the participation of a large number of villagers as needed for success in effective adult literacy education efforts. In this country in particular, in order to improve the literacy rate of village schoolchildren – an objective of this project – it is thought to be extremely effective to establish “model schools” with which large numbers of community residents have a relationship.

<Constraints of this evaluation study>

Because this project encompasses the large number of 66 schools, there is an absence of tabulated data on the situation regarding the number of children attending school which is one measure of project effectiveness, and regarding sustainability it is thought there to be wide variation of the conditions of O&M of facilities by the communities where the schools are located, it is difficult to obtain quantitative data and a detailed understanding of actual conditions

Therefore it is necessary to evaluate this project solely on the basis of whether there has been an increase in school enrollment, whether adult literacy education has been carried out, and whether contributions have been made to the communities in question. Regarding judgment of sustainability, in accordance with the situation as described by the executing agency, the judgment is not applicable to all of the schools.

1 Relevance

(1) Relevance with the Development Plan of Laos  
Announcement of this project is included in the Laotian government’s Social and Economic Development Strategy for 2020 and 2010, where it is included as a development topic related to the expansion of primary, vocational, secondary, and informal education as strategy for the education sector.

Special importance has been assigned in the Five-year Development Plan for Education (2001-2005) to raising the primary school enrollment rate to 86 in 2005, and expansion of equal access to education, improvement of the quality and the content of education, and strengthening of capacity for education administration as three means of raising the adult literacy rate to 78%. Further, as medium- to long-term objectives, the Educational Strategic Planning (2001-2020, 2001-2010) calls for raising the primary school enrollment rate to 90% in 2010 and then to 98% in 2020, and for raising the adult literacy rate to 83% in 2010 and then to 90% in 2020. In this program increased investment in school construction is identified as an important policy and its relevance to this project is high.

(2) Relevance with the Development Needs of Laos  
While gradual progress was being made towards improvement of access to primary education at the time this project was planned, it was calculated that the number of new schools required to realize the enrollment rate targets for the nation was about 6,000. Thus, there was a severe shortage of primary school facilities. At the time of the ex-post evaluation, moreover, many schools in the nation had buildings that were structurally unsafe, and there were many classrooms that were temporary structures lacking the ability to withstand strong forces of nature; thus, the problem of insufficiently safe and hygienic school facilities was a continuing problem, and a high level of need was evident for the improvement of the environment for learning.

(3) Relevance with Japan’s ODA Policy  
When the project was planned, through policy discussions with Laotian officials and in keeping with the concepts and guidelines for Japanese ODA, four areas were identified as suitable for emphasis in assistance from Japan, namely development of human resources, basic human needs (BHN), agriculture & forestry, and infrastructure improvement. As assistance related to BHN, appropriate areas for assistance were identified as primary education (school construction and repair, supply of equipment, etc.), health and medical care (improvement of facilities particularly at major hospitals, supply of equipment, child health), and protection of the environment (afforestation, etc.).

This project has been highly relevant with Laos’s development plan, development needs, as well as Japan’s ODA policy, therefore its relevance is high.

2 Efficiency

(1) Project Outputs  
The output on the Japanese side was revised as follows. The major reason for the revision was elimination from initial plans of 11 schools in the northern part of Vientiane province as this was judged to be a dangerous area. Further, appreciation of the yen resulted in a smaller sum becoming available in Laotian currency and this required that new classroom construction had to be reduced.

Phase I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change of the location of #31 school (with no change in classroom components’ scale or nature, or of monetary amounts)</li> <li>• Change of the dimensions of supplementary framing for the front exterior of buildings at all #31 sites (use of reinforced concrete blocks)</li> </ul>
Phase II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As Vientiane province was judged to be a dangerous area, at the time of the basic study 11 schools (sites 75-80, 95 and 97-100) were eliminated from the plan (A reduction in Phase II from 46 to 35 schools)</li> <li>• Change in the location of new school construction at sites 70 and 93 (relocated in connection with the location of power lines)</li> <li>• Change in the number of new-construction classrooms (revision of project budget in keeping with impact of change in forex rates; at sit 69 the number of classrooms was reduced from 17 to 13.</li> </ul>

(2) Project Period (Project Inputs)  
The project period was planned in two phases, from August 2003 (signing of E/N) to February 2006 (30 months) but in actuality became from August 2003 (E/N signing) to November 2005 (27 months). The project ended three month earlier than had been

planned.

(3) Project Cost (Project Inputs)

Actual project cost was 747 million yen and the E/N was 758 million yen, so costs were 11 million yen less than had been planned.

Both project period and project cost were largely within the plan, therefore efficiency of the project is high.

### 3 Effectiveness / Impact

(1) Quantitative Effects

Regarding the effectiveness of this project, note first of all as stated in (1) Output above the number of schools was reduced from 77 by 11. The numbers shown in the table below therefore must be adjusted accordingly. However, because the basis for improvement of the enrollment rate in primary education to be accomplished by the construction work of the project was the total number of pupils enrolled, it is thought that by enrollment at schools newly constructed by this project the level will at least exceed the 2002 benchmark. Concerning the education sector in 2008, according to the “Evaluation of Japan’s Assistance to the Education Sector in Laos (Third Party Evaluation: Joint Evaluation with NGOs), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, March 2009,” enrollment in primary education in the entire nation rose from 828,000 in 2000 to 892,000 in 2005 and 900,000 in 2007, and, moreover, as of 2007 data for provinces indicates that in Vientiane Municipality and Vientiane Province all together, the enrollment was above 95%.

Without actual values from the executing agency, it is not quite possible to quantitatively evaluate the effect of the project. However, the new 66 schools with the total of 334 classrooms may have at least improved the general learning environment of the maximum of 12,024 pupils in total, in accordance with the specification that each one classroom has a capacity of 36 pupils.

【Table 1】 Potential Number of Pupils for Enrollment Under this Project

Indicator (unit)	Benchmark (2002)	Target (2006)	Realized (2006)
No. of pupils with access to permanent classrooms (no. enrolled)	4,600	19,059	n.a.
No. of pupils with access to usable toilets	10,079	19,059	n.a.

Source: Basic Design Study Report on the Project for Construction of Primary Schools in Lao People’s Democratic Republic

(2) Impacts (Impacts on the Natural Environment, Land Acquisition and Resettlement, Unintended Positive/Negative Impact)

Implementation of informal education for adults, and community activities, both using project facilities, were considered to be indirect effects of the project. The Provincial Education Service of Vientiane Municipality and Vientiane Province implements adult literacy classes for groups of 20 or more once a year and regarding community activities the response was received that there had been participation by 50-100 persons at every school. Further, responses to our questionnaire to the executing agency indicate that there have been indirect effects in the form of increases in contributions from the communities to their schools, and through higher levels of understanding regarding responsibility and obligations of community members to undertake the operation and maintenance at their schools.

There were no reports concerning issues related to the environment, relocation of residents or acquisition of land. Also, there were no reports of serious adverse impacts.

This project has largely achieved its objectives and therefore its effectiveness is high.

### 4 Sustainability

(1) Structural Aspects of Operation Maintenance

According to the response to our questionnaire, there is an ongoing trend for activities by community members to increase their proactive behavior and ownerships related to the schools. O&M including repair work and the like of primary school facilities in the nation is basically performed with the cooperation of village heads, educators and parents’ associations, and no special arrangements or change were made for O&M of the project schools.

(2) Technical Aspects of Operation Maintenance

The same as is the case for existing primary school facilities, in the case of this project the requirements for maintaining functionality of toilets and maintaining hygienic conditions the O&M involved consists of cleaning and routine care, repair of furniture, and painting of the interior and exterior, tasks that do not require a high level of technical ability on the part of villagers. However, according to the response from the executing agency, problems of facilities O&M that could not be resolved by the villagers occurred at some schools. It is thought that the reason O&M of facilities could not be done in these cases is the absence of a suitable technician.

(3) Financial Aspects of Operation Maintenance

The system in Laos is such that each primary school, in principle, is the property of its village, and, fundamentally, the use of the buildings and facilities as well as their O&M are the responsibility of the villagers and school-related persons. O&M expenses necessary for buildings covered by this project would be for cleaning the water tank once in two years, constructing a new infiltration tanks every four years, painting, repairs of desks and chairs, cleaning implements, water supply for toilets during the dry season. Expenses for these are properly borne by the villagers. Some labor is required for these tasks but if it can be obtained the financial burden of the villagers would be low. However, according to the executing agency, it is difficult to undertake O&M because of shortfalls in the collection of money from community residents to pay for repairs, and it is thought that in some villages it has not been possible to collect sufficient funds from residents to ensure adequate O&M.

(4) Current Status of Operation Maintenance

The equipment and facilities acquired under this project are being fully utilized but according to the executing agency at some schools it has not been possible to obtain sufficient funds and voluntary labor from the community residents, making O&M difficult to

accomplish. It is thought that because of this at some facilities there is now need for repairs.

Some problems have been observed in terms of technical and financial aspects of operation and maintenance, therefore sustainability of the project effects is fair.