

SUMMARY SHEET

1. Outline of the Project			
Country: Lao People Democratic Republic		Project title: The Forest Conservation and Afforestation Project (FORCAP) Phase II	
Issue/Sector: Forestry/Forest Conservation		Cooperation scheme: Technical Cooperation Project	
Division in charge: Agriculture and Rural Development Sector, JICA Laos Office		Total Cost: 630 million yen	
Period of Cooperation	July 16, 1998 - July 15, 2003	Partner Country's Implementing Organization: National Agriculture and Forestry and Extension Service, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Vientiane Province	
		Supporting Organization in Japan: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Forestry Agency, Forestry and Forest Products Research Institute	
Related Cooperation: Vangvieng District Forest and Watershed Conservation Project (JICA Development Study), Northeastern Thailand Afforestation and Extension Project Phase (JICA Technical Cooperation Project)			
1-1. Background of the Project			
<p>The land area of Lao PDR is 23.68 million hectares, and 80% of the country areas are mountains and hills. Lao PDR is comparatively rich in natural forest. In 1940s, 70% of the land was covered with forests. However, the forest in the Lao PDR has been rapidly deteriorating. In 2002, the forest land was accounted to only 41.50%. The main reasons of these circumstances are shifting cultivation and inappropriate forest management. Consequently, the Government of Lao PDR requested the Japanese Government to provide technical cooperation to reduce shifting cultivation while improving the living standard of the people in Num Ngum Watershed area.</p>			
1-2. Project Overview			
<p>In order to realize its plan, the Government of Lao PDR requested project type technical cooperation to the Government of Japan in 1997 aiming at reducing the trend of forest degradation through administrative guidance of local government. The Forest Conservation and Afforestation Project II in Vientiane Province (hereinafter called the FORCAP or the Project) had been implemented from July 16, 1998 till the July 15, 2003 (5 year project) for the purpose of strengthening the capacity of the local administration for promotion of participatory forest management in order to reduce the trend of forest degradation in the fifteen targeted villages in Vientiane Province.</p>			
(1) Overall Goal			
The trend of forest degradation in the lower part of the Nam Ngum Dam watershed area and its vicinity is reduced.			
(2) Project Purpose			
The capacity of the local administration for promotion of participatory forest management is strengthened.			
(3) Outputs			
There were five expected outputs during the five years of technical cooperation between the Government of Laos and Japan are the following:			
(a) Village Forest Management Plans (VFMP) are prepared based on the review of Regulations of Land and Forest Utilization at the village level (RLFU).			
(b) Forest Management methods by the villagers are established using the technology developed by the project.			
(c) The income generation models introduced by the project are practiced by the villagers.			
(d) The recommendation report on village level forest management in terms of administrative, technical matters is prepared.			
(e) Skill and knowledge of the local administrative, especially the project counterparts, are improved.			
(4) Inputs			
Japanese side:			
Long-term Expert	11	Equipment	51,350,000 yen
Short-term Expert	20	Local Cost	127,880,000 yen
Lao Personnel Trained in Japan	18		
Lao side:			
Counterpart	32	Local Cost	5,964,000 yen
Land and Facilities	Agriculture and Forestry Training Center (AFTC), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry		

2. Evaluation Team		
Member of Evaluation Team	1. Lao team: (1) Mr. Savanh Hanephome, Deputy Director General, Department of Planning; , (2) Mr. Buaphanh Konedavong, Deputy Director General of Vientiane PAFO, (3) Ms. Thongsawath Boupha, Deputy Director of Extension and Project Management Division, NAFES, (4) Mr. Khamsingh Kinnavong, Director of Administration Division, DOIn, (5) Mr. Lattana Phaxaysomboun, Deputy Director of AFTC, NAFES, (6) Mr. Khamphachanh Bounakeo, Technical Staff, Department of Forestry, (7) Mr. Phommy Inthichack, Programme Officer, DICl, Department of Planning (DOP), (8) Mr. Alounxay Onta, Technical Staff, Information Technology Center, DOP 2. Japanese team: (1) TAKEI Koichi, Deputy Resident Representative, JICA, (2) SASAKI Mitsugu, Assistant Resident Representative, JICA, (3) HATANO Makoto, Assistan Resident Representative, JICA, (4) ARAI, Yuki, Programme Officer, JICA, (5) NAGAOKA Akira, Advisor to PSO, MAF, (6) Mr. Viengsavanh SISOMBATH, Program Officer, JICA	
Period of Evaluation	October 31 to December 23, 2007	Type of Evaluation: Ex-post Evaluation
3. Results of Evaluation		
I. IMPACT		
1-1) Impacts on the Project's Overall Goal and Forest Conservation		
<p>The trend of the forest degradation is reduced compared to the situation before project intervention. Project's technology and methodology such as agro-forestry, watershed management combined with fisheries and other approaches were replicated in different villages. In addition, the study team found that the total areas of forest cover in two districts were increased compared to the project termination in 2003 and increased up to 36,681 ha (53.50% increase) in November 2007. In total, the total area of protected forest area increased from 9,469 ha to 23,672 ha (149.99%). As for shifting cultivation, in the target villages at Vangvieng district, its area decreased from 945.50 ha to 475.00 ha (only 39.55% remained). On the other hand, shifting cultivation in Hinheup district was also reduced from 2,449 ha to 100 ha since 2003 (source: Hinheup DAFEO). The total areas of forest plantation in both Vanvieng and Hinheup districts are increasing. The total areas of demonstrated forest plantation established by AFTC increased to 77 ha in 2007 (71ha in 2003) and about 2 ha had been planted each year for the purpose of watershed protection, and this achievement also contributed to the increase of forest cover in Vientiane Province.</p>		
1-2) Impacts on Income Generation		
<p>Major income generation activities introduced by FORCAP still exist. However, some activities such as Mulberry paper handicraft (Mulberry paper (Posa) weaving and paper making) were not extended to other villages due to (i) inappropriate raw material collection (ii) low quality of paper and weaving production, (iii) low demand for such product, (iv) tools and instruments for making posa paper is quite expensive. In addition, the villagers still earn income from other income generation activities such as (1) charcoal making, (2) agro-forestry and (3) methodology introduced by the FORCAP such as intercropping with seasonal and perennial crops such pineapple and other fruit tree. Agro-forestry intercropped with Rattan (<i>Sorte de rotin-Vay thoun</i>) was considered as the most successful case among the FORCAP introduced techniques. Up to date, villagers and agro-forestry plantation owners regularly earn income from fruit tree and rattan plantation. The study revealed that the total number of poorest households in two districts were reduced from 609 households in 2003 to 285 in 2007 (53.20% decrease). Meanwhile, the number of wealthy households had increased from 124 to 276 household (122.58% increase). Though there are other factors, we can say that some of the income was generated from FORCAP introduced techniques, such as agro-forestry and fisheries.</p>		
2. SUSTAINABILITY		
2-1) Technical Sustainability		
<p>After the project termination, Agriculture and Forestry Training Center (AFTC) under the National Agriculture and Forestry Extension Service (NAFES) became the training center that provides technical and managerial training related to agriculture and forestry to officers and villagers. They still play an important role on enhancing government staffs' knowledge, capacity and skills in terms of agriculture, forestry and other related subjects. FORCAP techniques were adopted and utilized. The technical manual for forest plantation and management, plantation mapping and layout techniques were utilized by the following project (1) Vientiane Upland Agriculture and Forestry Training Center, (2) NamNgum Watershed Management Project, (3) Forest Management and Community Support Project and (4) some projects in northern province such as Bokeo, Luang Namtha, Oudomxay provinces.</p>		
2-2) Institutional / Organizational Sustainability		
<p>After the project termination, AFTC runs under the management of central government (NAFES), this arrangement create the gap between central and local government. Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office (PAFO), and two District Agriculture and Forestry Office (DAFO) (Hinheup and Vangvieng) understood that maintaining the FORCAP outcomes is the responsibility of AFTC or NAFES and that the extension activity did not continue properly. After the FORCAP phase out, most of project staff was transferred to other offices. Meaning the all trained and experience staff moved out (except Deputy Director of AFTC) and replaced by new staff. Those staffs are not qualified in terms of technical skills, knowledge and experience; therefore, it is difficult for extending the project outcomes.</p>		
2-3) Financial Sustainability		
<p>Financial sufficiency is another factor of project sustainability. The outputs of FORCAP was not broader extended due to the insufficiency of financial availability, there were only little contribution from NAFES for continuing project activities since project termination (200 Million Kip annually).</p>		

3. FACTORS THAT HAVE PROMOTED AND INHIBITED PROJECT'S OUTCOMES

3-1) Factors that have promoted project's impact and sustainability

The Forest Strategy 2020 and the National Poverty Eradication Strategy conducted by the Lao Government, which aims to implement sustainable forest management and poverty reduction, has propelled the impact and sustainability of the project.

3-2) Factors that have inhibited project's impact and sustainability

Inappropriate human resource management is one of the factors that inhibited project impact and sustainability. After the FORCAP termination, most of project staff was transferred to other offices and replaced by only new unqualified staff. Most of new staffs are not qualified in terms of technical skills, knowledge and experience; therefore, it is difficult for extending the project outcomes. Recently the Governor of Vientiane province announced two districts (Hinheup and Vanvieng district) to be the growing territory for industrial and commercial tree plantation. The local government gives the concession of large land areas to private companies to make industrial and commercial plantation without careful plantation management planning could lead to negative impact to the environment and ecological degradation. Inadequate financial support from central government, it is very difficult for AFTC to continue support and monitor all projects' outcome regularly.

4. CONCLUSION

Forest management and afforestation techniques introduced by FORCAP certainly had a positive impact on forest conservation in Lao PDR, although there were some areas where natural conditions did not fit FORCAP techniques. We also conclude that the income generation activities introduced by FORCAP particularly agro-forestry and fisheries also contributed to reduction of poverty and shifting cultivation. However, lack of extension mechanism, individual plantations and community forest are unfortunately not extended to other villages. It is possible to expand the project achievement if more economic incentive is created. The Joint Evaluation Team recommends following items to the parties concerned.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendation is made for four different levels as follows:

- 5-1) Central government (NAFES) should allocate appropriate fund for AFTC to maintain the FORCAP's outcomes.
- 5-2) AFTC should improve and develop all the technical manual such as teaching syllabus for future extension and promotion; some part of revenue from training service should be allocated for forest plantation and curriculum development; coordination with local authorities such as PAFO and DAFO should be improved; the AFTC should also maximize the effectiveness of the existing facilities; and find out the alternative income generation for running and operating its activities, and consider the cost reduction and appropriate management approaches for AFTC.
- 5-3) Vientiane PAFO/Vangvieng and Hinheup DAFOs should improve its coordination mechanism with AFTC better extension activity; DAFO should regularly follow up and monitor community forests and individual plantation operations by villagers; since 15 years contract with individual plantation is too long, it is advised DAFO to revise it.
- 5-4) Target village authority should regularly follow up all individual household plantation and do not allow villagers to clear their own trees and replaced with other new species unless they get permission from the district and concerned authorities.
- 5-5) In order to reduce forest degradation from industrial tree plantation, the provincial authority should (i) check the process of land concession, (ii) examine the company personnel's qualification when industrial tree plantation is requested, (iii) discuss with local village authorities prior to providing land concession.

6. LESSONS LEARNT

In order to sustain community forest management, we should consider the following lesson learnt:

- 6-1) The objective of forest plantation should be clear and agreed within the entire community.
- 6-2) Selection of tree species is very important. Native tree species such as *Pterocarpus Macrocarpus* and *Afxelia Xylocarpa* would take 50 to 100 years until villagers can gain profit. Agro-forestry is recommended because it provides continuous and short term benefit to villagers, which enhances their incentive toward participating in sustainable forest management.
- 6-3) Conducting awareness campaign regarding forest law is important. It is necessary to inform villagers that earlier logging of hardwood such as the above-mentioned native tree species are against the Lao PDR's Forest Law.
- 6-4) *Acacia Mangium* should be replaced by other species such as *Tectona grandis* or eucalyptus so that villagers can generate income easier.
- 6-5) Individual plantation that planted native species such as *Pterocarpus Macrocarpus* and *Afxelia Xylocarpa* using profit sharing system (PSS) with 15 years contract was not very appropriate, since villagers prefer short term income, and they are not willing to share their profit with DAFO. Therefore PSS contract between DAFO and individual owners should be revised.