

Current State of Support – Under Restriction of COVID-19

The Project had been implementing several activities for this dry season's cultivation since November 2019, which included trainings, study tours and so on, up until Mid-March. After that, counterparts' activities at site have been temporally suspended under the Government Notices on COVID-19 issued on 30 March. Even under such circumstances, the Project is keeping on providing technical advices on farmers' production through the remote communication such as phone contact. In this volume, we will report on the present situation after such effort and struggle.

1. Marketing Field

① Farmers Supporting Food Demands at Local



Despite the restriction of people's moving for protecting infection of COVID-19, it is reported that the Project-supported farmers are playing important role in vegetable supply within Savannakhet Province and at local.

Now, these farmers are catching regular customers who are willing to visit their farm for buying vegetables. Specially, the farmers in Phonsim and Xesalalong Sites have been implementing market-oriented production, managing production schedule and expansion of production land. Those efforts are making their activities in production and sales promotion going steadily.



[Top] Dry season's veggie production using irrigated water (Xesalalong Site)

[Bottom] Direct sales at farmers' store (Phonsim Site)

② Rainy Season's Cultivation in Preparation

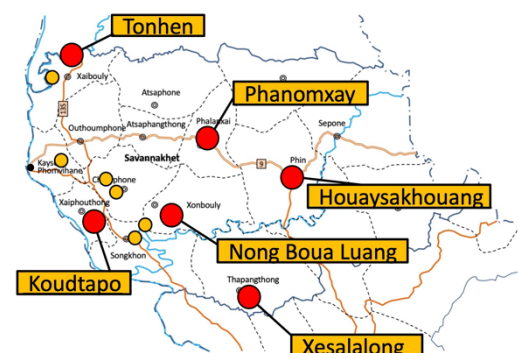
Even under the suspension of many activities, the Project-supporting farmers were preparing for rainy season's production. Although the Project started preparation for supporting roofing cultivation since February, no one could visit sites under restriction in April. However, farmers themselves are currently setting up the wooden framework of roofing so that plastic sheets for roof will be distributed in May as scheduled. Cultivation area in this rainy season will be increased because the farmers have got regular customer last season which is a big encouragement to farmers for further production.



Last year's trial & errors finally turned into cash income!

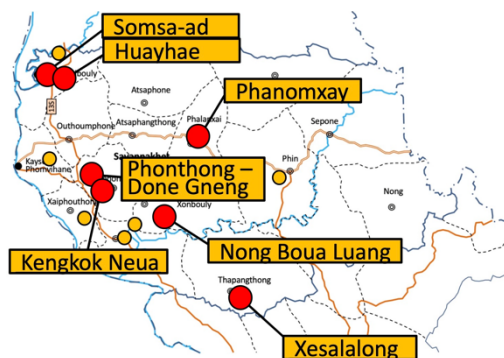


For starting roofing cultivation at new sites, training was also conducted by advanced farmers.



2. Extension Field (Rice Cultivation)

The Project is conducting the program of lending rice seed and fertilizer for the expansion of rice cultivation techniques. In this dry season (Dec/2019-Mar/2020), there are totally 324 households in 7 sites of 5 Districts participated to the program. Although 4 technical trainings should be conducted during cultivation period, which are 1) how to use cultivation calendar, 2) seed selection, 3) seedling & transplanting, and 4) harvesting & post-harvest treatment, all those trainings could be successfully done before the restriction against COVID-19 was activated. From the end of March, farmers started harvesting and we expect that the yield will increase considerably.



Rice growing constantly



Expecting a good harvest

3. Irrigation Field

With the supports from PAFO/DAFO staffs, Water Users' Groups have taken all necessary actions for water management, such as systematic water distribution plan, appropriate facility and water management.



Somsa-ad, Xaibouly Dist.



Nong Boua Luang, Xonnabouly Dist.

All those were done before the restriction under COVID-19 was announced at the end of March so that there were not much negative influences in irrigation and water management. As such actions were cooperated closely with rice and vegetable cultivation, irrigated areas in the Project sites have been expanded, such as 191ha (in 2019) increased to 260ha at Somsa-ad Site, 59ha (in 2019) to 100ha at Nong Boua Luang Site.

Savan PAD's counterparts keep on supporting farmers despite hardship under COVID-19

Marketing activities are being carried out in collaboration of Provincial Agriculture & Forestry Office (PAFO) and Department of Industry of Commerce (DOIC) for supporting farmers in Savannakhet.



Ms. Phonekeo/PAFO (Left)



Ms. Chalernphone/DOIC (Left)



Mr. Sengchanh/DOIC (Right)

Next Volume: This volume was special number due to novel coronavirus issue. Next will be regarding monitoring & evaluation activities.