



**Ministry of Agriculture
& Rural Development**

**United Nations De-
velopment Pro-
gramme**



**External Evaluation of the PAR Project in MARD
VIE/02/016**

Final Report

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List of Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CAFAW	Committee for Advancement of Women
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DOP	Department of Personnel
GoV	Government of Vietnam
HRM	Human Resources Management
IR	Inception Report
ISO	International Standard Organisation
IT	Information Technology
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
NAEC	National Agricultural Extension Centre
NAPA	National Academy of Public Administration
NPD	National Project Director
NPM	National Project Manager
OMARD	Office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
OSS	One Stop Shop
PAR	Public Administrative Reform
PD	Project Document
PMIS	Personnel Management Information System
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PSP	Public Service Provider
PSU	Project Support Unit
RTA	Resident Technical Adviser
TA	Technical Assistance
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WB	World Bank

Foreword

UNDP and MARD have decided to conduct an external end-of-project evaluation for the PAR in MARD project VIE/02/016. The task was allocated to an Evaluation Team comprising:

- Jens Brinch, External Consultant to UNDP and Team Leader;
- Nguyen Thi Minh Hai, National Consultant; and
- Nguyen Tu Siem, National Consultant (part time).

The team has been working from 24 May to 12 July 2006 in Hanoi and two provinces.

During the evaluation the Evaluation Team has received valuable support from UNDP, MARD and the PSU. We hereby express our gratitude for the support and the positive reception by all key informants.

The report represents the findings and recommendations of the Evaluation Team and is not binding neither for UNDP nor MARD.

Executive Summary

The Government of Vietnam (GoV) approved the national PAR Master Programme 2001 – 2010 on September 17, 2001. The master programme includes four strategic intervention areas: (i) institutional strengthening, (ii) organisational strengthening, (iii) human resources strengthening and (iv) improving financial management. The Master Programme is detailed into a PAR Master Plan for 2001 – 2005, under which line ministries and provincial authorities have prepared specific PAR action plans for the period.

MARD has successfully implemented its PAR Action Plan 2005. The action plan is considered a major achievement as this plan for the first time applied objective-oriented planning principles, setting out objectives and targets. Preparation of the action plan 2005 has been supported by UNDP under first phase support to PAR in MARD.

The MARD Action Plan 2005 comprised a total of 44 outputs within the four key intervention areas outlined in the national master programme. The UNDP project VIE/02/016, being implemented from June 2003 to December 2006 within a budget envelop at the level of approximately 2.6 MUSD, has been active within three out of four intervention areas, excluding the financial management aspects from the project¹. Of the 44 defined outputs the UNDP funded project has covered 16 outputs and thus constitutes a significant support to implementing the action plan.

Being integrated into the national programme implies that the UNDP project reflects national priorities, contributes to UNDP policies and also offers reasonable guarantee with respect to overall technical sustainability. Financial sustainability is not completely guaranteed under the prevailing national procedures for the recurrent budget, but due to the nature of the VIE/02/016 project we find only few issues regarding financial sustainability relative to selected project components, where technical supplies have been included.

The evaluation is an external end-of-project evaluation, aiming at assessing results achieved in comparison to original targets and identifying recommendations for the next PAR phase in MARD. The framework for the evaluation is the five dimensions defined by OECD/DAC: (i) relevance; (ii) effectiveness; (iii) efficiency; (iv) impact and (v) sustainability. Especially the impact or degree of change is difficult to assess as the project document is obviously weak with respect to specificity regarding baselines, outcomes, outputs and

¹ The major financial contribution to this project comes from Koninkrijk der Nederlanden. UNDP manages this on behalf of the Netherlands and implements the project under NEX Guidelines. We are for short only referring to UNDP and not UNDP & Koninkrijk der Nederlanden.

indicators. The Team has applied a methodology aiming to overcome these constraints, basing the evaluation to a large extent on perceived achievements and verifying these against documented results.

Given the framework for the project, the complexity of the PAR process and the limited budget envelop the Evaluation Team rates the project a success as our overall evaluation. We find the project relevance clearly demonstrated, although project basis in the formulated document is weak. The project is deemed sufficiently effective, attaining objectives as per project document. We can not fully assess project efficiency as the project has not been based on comparison of alternative approaches, but understands that least cost principles have been applied for project activities. Due to the weaknesses in the baselines we can not precisely assess impact or degree of change, but we do see early signs of impact in changed approaches, new routines, upgraded equipment and improved orientation towards farming households in Vietnam. And the final dimension sustainability is sufficiently ensured with some few exceptions.

The project is formulated around four key objectives, each reflected in a specific component:

- 1 Strengthen the capacity of the MARD to rationalise the organisational structure at central and local level to reflect public service delivery requirements of the sector;
- 2 Strengthen institutional and human resources capacities of key departments in the implementation of the Ministry PAR Action Plan 2005;
- 3 Support to the implementation of 'Information Technology Development and Application Strategy to Support State Administration Management' to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the sector; and
- 4 Contribute to the strengthening of PAR management capacity by sharing information on methods and tools to other key PAR agents.

Under objective one four outputs have been realised, comprising (i) implementation of Decree 86, revising structures and functions of organisational units within MARD; (ii) new work regulations have been piloted; (iii) a Legal Department has been established and staffing level increased, and project support has resulted in improved equipment and some legal training; (iv) the National Agricultural Extension Centre has been established with project support in the early phase. Unplanned results include (i) the Anti-corruption Action Plan for MARD; (ii) establishment of OSS for departments in MARD and (iii) avian flu study tour.

The planned outputs under objective one – the institutional component - have been realised. (i and ii) To implement Decree 86 23 legal documents have been prepared and promulgated and adjusted new work regulations have been piloted. At project end, MARD is still a huge ministry, comprising 114 organisational units, and there still are functional overlaps among some of these units. Implementing Decree 86 appears to have had only minor effects on provincial levels. (iii) The Legal Department is functioning and staff has increased substantially. However, the number of trained lawyers is still limited and capacity building activities under the project have been limited. (iv) Output attainment with respect to NAEC is relatively modest as tangible results with respect to capacity development and new funding mechanisms have not been observed. It is understood that capacity building will be intensified under an ADB project to support NAEC.

The value and importance of the three unplanned results is fully recognised by the Evaluation Team. We do, however, voice a mild concern as there is no provisions in the project document for this type of cross-cutting, new initiatives and although they have been approved during annual project reviews we find that they bear little document relation to the stated objective. It is our understanding that the NEX Guidelines require formal revisions of project documents to allow for inclusion of new outputs of this type.

The planned outputs under objective two – the HR component – have been realised, two with success and two on a more limited basis. (i) Capacity development for MARD and selected DARDs to implement the PAR Action Plan has been strengthened, mainly by undertaking a Training Needs Assessment, which has subsequently been developed into a training plan in September 2005. Implementation under this output has been protracted and consequently the project has not been able to offer actual training (capacity development) in significant volume. It is noted that the TNA is of limited value relative to functional training as it is oriented towards job classification structures rather than functional job requirements. We find that the TNA probably will not identify the performance related capacity building needs. (ii) The ISO 9001 system has been implemented as a pilot in OMARD. The task has been huge, but the implementation has been very successful and the ISO system has served as a tool for a complete reorganisation of a huge number of administrative processes. Implementing ISO is demanding but lessons learned from the pilot indicate that the ISO could eventually be used as a tool to streamline administrative processes in other departments and consequently enhance administrative effectiveness and efficiency. We do recommend that MARD assesses the relevance and the cost-benefit aspect of using the ISO system as a tool on a more comprehensive scale. (iii) DOP has been supported with the aim to improve the qualifications of the civil servants in MARD's sector. This part output has not been successfully realised as actual qualification improvement is insignificant. Under the project a PMIS has been installed, covering 8,900 out of 12,000 staff, and some initiatives have implemented to develop systematic job description comprising also a pro-gender approach. Both results are useful element in HRM systems. HRM systems may be regarded prerequisites for capacity building, but there still is several steps to be taken before the output is met. (iv) Final output under this objective relates to capacity strengthening of the CMARDs. Here the project has supported key initiatives to upgrade class room training approaches into becoming learner-centred as well as applying comprehensive training management systems. We do rate this output fully and successfully realised, but also point to the limitation regarding the TNA, implying that the CMARDs are hampered as a training service provider to MARD. We recommend MARD to consider the approach to TNA to fully realise the possible impact of the changes at CMARD. We understand that MARD is formulating a perspective to develop CMARDs into comprehensive Centres of Excellence and note that a good basis has been provided by the project.

The planned outputs under objective three – the IT component – have been realised successfully. This output is rated completely successful by the key informants. The project has supported strengthening the Informatics Division, IT upgrade of 38 DARDs combined with a comprehensive tailored training programme for different functional requirements as well as significant improvement of some administrative procedures (reporting and communication) as solid and significant results under this objective. The information sharing systems and establishment of networking IT-coordinators are considered creative and having significant impact. Finally the project is supporting a pilot to establish rural tele-

centers in 13 communes, which is being implemented at present and consequently can not be evaluated as of now.

The Evaluation team points to possible sustainability and impact issues under this component. We do find that one critical element for the rural telecenters is the technical and financial sustainability and understand that this aspect will be highlighted in the pilots. We are observing that the rural telecenters will provide information from the centre to the rural households. We recommend that the pilots be designed also to allow for systematic information flow from farmers to MARD to enhance participative approaches and to empower the rural beneficiaries to a higher degree.

And although we do observe impact for the IT upgrade for the 38 DARDs, we find sector wise impact for MARD reduced by the fact that all DARDs are not included. IT upgrade and capacity building for the remaining 26 DARDs is envisioned under national programme 112, which will be realised over the coming years. We are recommending that UNDP considers redesigning their approach to this type of investments, asking for beneficiaries' commitment to provide remaining investment as high priority. This agreement should be made when a pilot of this type starts and maybe even as a precondition for using UNDP funds, aiming at ensuring full rather than partial impact.

Objective four – management strengthening and dissemination – is realised. Impact, however, is probably a bit more long-term. Dissemination of best practices either has been carried out or is foreseen in the work schedule, but this can not guarantee that best practice is applied by the recipients of information. Regarding the support to the PAR SC we realise the instrumental role of the SC in implementing this project successfully and share the recommendations made by the PAR Action Plan 2005 evaluation team that the PAR SC should be a high-level committee, chaired by the Minister with permanent representatives and a supporting secretariat. The continued PAR process will be demanding and complex and the chances of success will increase dramatically with a strong, permanent PAR SC.

Under cross-cutting issues support has been offered to gender mainstreaming to enhance the role of women in public administration. CFAW are in operation and the project has supported a number of gender sensitising initiatives including also gender sensitive job descriptions. At present in this relatively short-term perspective we observe no significant impact and note that it has been difficult for the project to realise the target figure for female participation in training activities.

Implementation structures under the NEX modality appear effective and well organised. The PSU and MARD have applied a Task Force approach to implement the different activities, which appears well functioning. The PSU has systematically applied well prepared TOR for assignments. The project has not been successful in developing a specific monitoring system and monitors progress mainly on activity level rather than result-oriented monitoring. This is considered a major drawback.

We recommend that the next PAR action plan and any future external support should:

- Be based on a programmatic approach and apply best international practice for objective-oriented programme and project design;

- Be focussed within selected key performance areas, for which proper baselines are prepared as well as specific targets to be realised;
- Include flexible elements formed as discretionary funds to be used in a rolling planning and prioritisation system to cater for new initiatives;
- Include an effective result-oriented monitoring system, easy to apply and at the same time offer better information about attainment of outputs and outcomes.

We are recommending UNDP to

- Consider improving the internal review approach to include external mid-term review to ensure high project quality;
- Assess the market price for high performing specialised consultants and eventually adjust UNDP fee rates to ensure access to the best available resources for PAR projects.

With respect to orientation of continuous PAR support we suggest:

- Stronger focus on impact on beneficiaries and incorporating this directly on output level in a new project;
- Focus on decentralisation and devolution of power to allocate decision-making to lowest appropriate level and consequently strengthening MARD as a policy formulating ministry.
- Include consequent activities to separate service provision from state management, including a time-bound plan for reorganising / externalising a suitable number of the 114 units and consequently strengthening MARD as policy formulation ministry, setting standards and quality requirements to service;
- Initiate a fast-track approach to pilot different service delivery models using for example co-operatives, enterprises, NGOs, mass organisations to identify most suitable model for the different key performance areas;
- Consider expanding the ISO system to other MARD departments as a means to ensure enhanced administrative efficiency;
- Ensure enhanced farmers' participation as a cross-cutting principle. Participative approaches aim at empowering the farmer households to become better decision-makers on issues relating to livelihood aspects. Rural telecenters is just one possible tool. MARD may consider using focus groups as a systematic feed-back tool around pertinent livelihood issues (land tenure, complaints, corruption, new agricultural processes etc) to provide cheap and effective feed-back on MARD initiatives;
- Capacity development for civil servants and cadres in the sector is imperative also in the next PAR phase. The CMARD has demonstrated ownership, commitment and effective utilisation of after all limited project support. The perspective of developing CMARD into Centres of Excellence deserves serious consideration, assuming that they can provide affordable services.

The remainder of the project should be utilised to complete outstanding activities and prepare to extent possible for continuous PAR support. We recommend that substantial resources are allocated to consolidate findings from the core studies (Farmer Needs Survey, Legal Impact Assessment, Public Service Providers) as inputs also to the new phase. The project should also allocate sufficient resources to ensure that relevant priorities seen from MARD's point of view are made available in a timely manner to the formulation team for continuous PAR support.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of evaluation is to make an *"assessment, as systematic and objective as possible, of an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, developmental efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors"*.²

The five dimensions relate to different levels in the logframe hierarchy:

- **Relevance**, understood as the extent to which the technical assistance is suited to the priorities of the target group recipient and donor. Relevance consequently relate to the level of long-term development objective
- **Effectiveness**, understood as the extent to which the project attains its objectives.
- **Efficiency**, measuring the outputs (quantitative and qualitative) in relation to inputs. It is in principle economic, signifying a least cost approach in technical assistance and normally requires comparison to alternative approaches.
- **Impact** (or in UNDP's Guidelines Degree of Change) signifies positive and negative changes, produced by the intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. Impact is consequently oriented towards outcomes.
- **Sustainability** is concerned with measuring whether benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funds have been withdrawn. Sustainability normally includes a technical, financial and environmental aspect.

In section 3.5 the Evaluation Team is summarising findings and observations along these five dimensions.

² OECD/DAC, 1998: Review of the DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance

1.2 Objective of the Evaluation

The VIE/02/016 project is according to the project document³ subject to standard annual reviews and in principle to two evaluations:

- First in-depth external evaluation shall assess overall performance, the outputs/outcomes produced against initial targets, the impact it has brought or is likely to bring about, its relevance to the national context and management efficiency. This evaluation will offer lessons learned and recommendations to improve project performance during the remainder of project life.
- An ex-post evaluation is strongly recommended in the project document to focus on assessing impact (long-term results) and sustainability and draw lessons for future programming and policy making.

The project is coming close to completion and consequently this evaluation is understood as an **end-of-project evaluation**. It incorporates according to the specific TOR two dimensions: (1) an assessment of what has been achieved, comparing results to initial targets, and (2) a forward-looking aspect, aiming at identifying issues and approaches to be incorporated into a possible new project phase.

The purposes are stated in the TOR as to:

- Assess the continued relevance, results and sustainability of the project
- Provide recommendations for a possible next phase of the project.

The TOR includes a number of specific issues, which shall be assessed during the evaluation:

- Review outputs/results against Project Document
- Effectiveness of strategy/approach to produce outputs
- Efficiency of management mechanism/steering of action plan
- Early signs of potential impact and sustainability including contribution to capacity development
- Assessment of impact within public service delivery to farmers
- Support to MARD leadership and PAR SC to direct PAR implementation
- Effectiveness in informing staff of MARD and DARD on progress to reduce resistance to reform.

Due to the nature and objectives of the project the Evaluation Team find an assessment of impact within public service delivery to farmers premature. The project comprises almost no interventions within public service delivery to farmers, which is in accordance with project objectives, and consequently we are not able to assess impact here. We do, however, present our findings and observations regarding outreach perspectives of the project in section 3.4.2.

³ Project Document p 45

1.3 Scope and Methodology

The basic idea in an evaluation is to assess how far the project has come in creating a new situation. So an evaluation basically shall compare project start to project end situation.

The project start situation is described as issues and problems – a negative state. This is something that a project or a programme shall change into positive achievements – a new situation, where old problems have been solved. The end-of-project situation is described as objectives, targets, outcomes – there are many terms for this new situation. Important is that the objectives or outcomes are situations, and to determine when they have been attained objectives are transformed into operational aspects via indicators.

Standard approach for an evaluation would imply comparing the start situation (problem analysis and baselines) to the end-of-project situation as defined operationally via indicators. This evaluation is faced by several serious limitations as we have (a) no problem analysis (only very few challenges are listed) and (b) above all we have no specific baseline which can be used as fix point for assessing changes; (c) we do in the IR find a number of indicators, but they are mostly indicative only, not specified and accurate. For stated outcomes the project has not developed indicators.

As neither start nor end situation is precisely defined the evaluation has to be based on a methodology overcoming these constraints.

We are applying a two-pronged approach:

- 1 We shall compare outputs / indicators to initial targets as defined in project documents as objectively as possible in the desk study by assessing project documentation especially in the Annual Reports.
- 2 We shall also apply a key informants' approach whereby we aim at identifying perceived progress, results, constraint etc. Here we will basically ask key informants in the project setting to (a) assess how far the project has come in realising each outputs; (b) assess major constraints and finally (c) recommended interventions based on lessons learned during this project phase. This second approach will be based on structured checklists where the evaluation team basically asks the same set of questions to all key informants.

1.4 Limitations of the Evaluation

By applying the two-pronged approach we aim at avoiding too many subjective statements. It shall, however, be noted that due to the weaknesses in the project document (low level of specificity regarding outcomes, objectives, outputs, indicators, cfr below) the evaluation reflects perceived achievements and challenges, which could raise doubt regarding the objectivity of the findings.

The Evaluation Team does, however, believe that the applied approach ensures reasonable objectivity as there has been relative consistency in the findings, which we have verified using normal triangulation principles as well as comparison to documentation.

UNDP, MARD and the PSU have had the opportunity to comment on earlier versions of the report and their comments and observations have been considered in this final draft version.

1.5 Structure of the Report

Following this chapter we present the development context in chapter two. Here we present some key aspects of international PAR approaches as a conceptual framework to 'benchmark' this project relative to some aspects of best international practice. We are using this mainly as an overall orientation framework for some of our recommendations. The chapter further describes the overall PAR process as well as PAR in MARD.

Chapter three present the main findings and thus constitutes the performance related part of the evaluation, comparing actual deliveries to projected deliveries in project documentation. In the last subsection we present a summary of our observations within the five international evaluation dimensions.

In chapter four we present the recommendations, primarily stemming from findings and observations, but also with a view to international practice. We are aware that UNDP has initiated the formulation of a programme to support the new PAR Action Plan 2006 – 2010, but due to the early stage of this we have not been able to fully reflect the ideas in this report.

2 Development context

2.1 Reforming the Public Sector

Reforming the public sector is a mammoth task and there is no generally agreed best practice or how-to-do. All international experience does, however, show that public sector reforms take time and skilful political navigation. It has in most countries been easier to agree on desirable goals for society and the public services, whereas managing the transition is hard.

Public services are provided, financed, regulated and monitored by governments. In many cases governments has assumed responsibility for all four functions and established quasi-monopoly structures. Historically this has been connected to a classic public administration modality, which is characterised by standardise, rule-based and predicable administration and life-long employment of sometimes huge contingents of civil servants. Drawbacks of this are weak incentives, weak performance orientation, low level of responsibility and weak adaptation to changes. It has been said that under this system there is a risk that the 'Civil Servant' behaves as the Master, not the Servant.

Although there is no universally agreed single best model for public sector reforms, increased accountability appears as main road to establish better performing public services in the interest and service for the poor / population.

Increased accountability implies separation of the policymaker from the provider. Public sector reforms normally struggle to implement this separation, which is considered necessary to enhance service performance and sustain economic growth.

International lessons learned for successful public sector reforms include:

- Full separation of service provision from policy making in sectors according to political priorities
- Introduce market or quasi-market mechanisms relations between public sector entities and their 'customers' which will establish competitive pressure on public sector agencies.
- Increase professionalism in public sector management
- Set clear targets and performance standards.

- Enhance the role of end-users and customer / client orientation in the public sector combined with
- Enhancing participation and/or the role of the population as 'customers' for example by empowerment
- Enhance effectiveness and efficiency ('Deliver More For Less') by downsizing.

The Evaluation Team is using this overall framework as orientation benchmark to inform on how far MARD has come as a result of this project and as a pointer towards future interventions.

2.2 PAR Process

Incremental changes in a PAR perspective have been implemented by the GoV since 1986. For several years the process comprised stand-alone activities. Following a comprehensive review the GoV realised that the slow pace within the administrative reform could hamper and jeopardise the solid economic growth, and as a consequence a comprehensive PAR Master Programme was formulated.

At national level the GoV approved the PAR Master Programme for the period 2001 to 2010 on September 17, 2001. The Master Programme aims at gradually adapting subsidised and centralised management practices with new mechanisms, suitable for a socialist oriented market economy. The Master Programme is based on four mutually linked strategies: (i) institutional strengthening promoting the rule of law and enhancing efficiency of public service; (ii) organisational strengthening establishing rational structures with clear distribution of responsibilities; (iii) human resources strengthening, streamlining staff structures and enhancing effective personnel management, motivation and incentives; and finally (iv) financial strengthening decentralising financial management and budget functions.

The Master Programme 2001 – 2010 is detailed in a PAR Master Plan for 2001 – 2005 which has operated through seven sub-programmes comprising legal reform, organisational restructuring, human resources development as well as financial and administrative reforms. Under the Master Plan each ministry and provincial administration has developed a specific action plan for their sector for 2001 - 2005.

A PAR Master Plan for the second half of the 10-year period, covering 2006 – 2010, has been prepared, orienting PAR more directly towards the socio-economic development targets, set out in the Socio-Economic Development Plan 2006 – 2010, aiming at establishing continued high economic growth and significant poverty reduction.

The second phase of the Master Programme will continue the legal and financial reform and operate through a number of sub-programmes covering PAR leadership and guidance, reform of public sector agencies, modernise public administration and develop cadres and civil servants.

The national agenda includes a number of cross-cutting issues, concerted with but not directly part of the PAR Master Plan 2006 – 2010 like anti-corruption and strengthening grassroots democracy.

2.3 PAR in MARD

The MARD PAR Action Plan 2005 is formulated around selected intervention areas:

- Organisational Issues: rationalising MARD's organisational structures, reducing overlapping functions and developing capacity enabling further decentralisation (in the subsequent phase);
- Human Resources Issues: Developing human resources management systems and initiating capacity development to build a strong civil service;
- Institutional Issues: strengthening state management functions, which here mainly rests on application of ICT in management and on drafting new regulations based on ISO principles;
- Financial management

This Action Plan 2005 was formulated with support from first phase UNDP PAR project. It is considered a major achievement as it represents the first attempt to apply objective-oriented planning and design approaches, setting out more clearly formulated objectives than before and focussing interest more on a ministry as public service provider to end-users or beneficiaries. The Action Plan 2005 included 44 outputs.

The UNDP project is active within three of the four intervention areas listed above. Financial strengthening is not included as intervention area under the UNDP project.

Aiming at improving public service delivery to farmers in MARD's sectors, the project formulates its core outcome as 'Effective and Efficient MARD Administration'. Key performance areas under this outcome include⁴

- Improved co-ordination and co-operation among agencies;
- Improved decision-making;
- Standardised reporting mechanisms;
- Improved policy-making process;
- Improved civil service performance;
- Citizen satisfaction;
- Improved quality services;
- Improved accountability;
- Greater accessibility and gender equity;
- Reduced red tape;
- Increased transparency; and
- Greater cost effectiveness.

These key performance areas are being addressed though three project components dealing with (i) institutional strengthening, (ii) organisational strengthening, (iii) human re-

⁴ Cfr PD July 2003

sources strengthening and as per the IR a fourth component was added, dealing with PAR management and information sharing and dissemination.

From project start, the project had four objectives:

- 1 Strengthen the capacity of the MARD to rationalise the organisational structure at central and local level to reflect public service delivery requirements of the sector;
- 2 Strengthen institutional and human resources capacities of key departments in the implementation of the Ministry PAR Action Plan 2005;
- 3 Support to the implementation of 'Information Technology Development and Application Strategy to Support State Administration Management' to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the sector; and
- 4 Contribute to the strengthening of PAR management capacity by sharing information on methods and tools to other key PAR agents.

In summary the UNDP project supports 16 outputs out of the 44 identified in the PAR Action Plan 2005 and thus constitutes a significant factor in the PAR process in MARD.

2.4 Stakeholders and Partners

Stakeholders and partners are defined in IR. Here three levels of beneficiaries are identified:

- Immediate target beneficiaries are senior and middle management staff of MARD, male as well as female;
- Indirect beneficiaries are civil servants working in DARDs, male and female;
- Indirect, but ultimate beneficiaries are rural households with emphasis on male as well as female.

A number of departments and units within MARD have consequently been project partners (and beneficiaries) for longer or shorter periods, depending on the scope and nature of the intervention. The project has focussed support to these direct partners and beneficiaries and has in some cases had outreach perspectives toward selected provincial DARDs and here mainly contributed to capacity development.⁵

⁵ For example more than 1,000 DARD staff have been trained under this project.

3 Major Findings

3.1 Major Achievements

This section contains the major findings. Firstly, we present the overall assessment by the Evaluation Team and subsequently we present more details for each of the four main objectives under the project.

3.1.1 Overall

The MARD PAR Action Plan 2005 attempts to address weaknesses of previous PAR initiatives including unclear direction, low level of awareness of PAR among MARD employees and unclear allocation of responsibilities. The Action Plan 2005 is considered a significant achievement and a major step forward as the first of its kind within a Government institution in Vietnam. For the first time objective-oriented planning approaches were applied, and the plan has clearly set out the direction for the reforms and at the same time made a first attempt to define outputs with indicators and a more clear definition of responsibilities.

Recognising the MARD PAR Action Plan 2005 as a significant achievement, it shall be noted that compared to best practice within objective-oriented project or programme design the specific project document for the UNDP support contains several drawbacks. It is a project without comprehensive issue or problem-analysis; precise baselines from which to assess changes are not established⁶; outcomes and outputs are unspecific; indicators are purely developed just to mention some of the constraints in the basis project document. This has consequences for implementation, monitoring, reporting, ability to assess achievements, initiate corrective actions etc.

The project is formulated as support to specific outputs within the overall MARD PAR Action Plan 2005. As such, the project is fully integrated into MARD's own internal plans and priorities. This relation is further strengthened by the national execution modality, ensuring that project priorities reflect MARD priorities. Relevance and ownership is consequently ensured. Basic sustainability appears satisfactory and in general, we find very few significant sustainability issues for this project.

⁶ The IR includes an Annex providing a situation analysis, which could serve as basis for developing a specific and precise baseline assessment.

Within this framework the Evaluation Team recognises in the overall assessment the UNDP PAR in MARD project as a success. The SC and the PSU has succeeded in ensuring high performance level of the project within a complicated area with many vested interests and a number of organisational and institutional constraints.

This overall positive assessment shall be kept in mind when the Evaluation Team in the following sections summarises achievements as well as areas where we find the project less efficient and with limited impact only.

3.2 Planned and Realised Outputs

3.2.1 Objective 1: To assist MARD to rationalize the organizational structure at central and local levels and to reflect public service delivery requirements of the sector

Under objective one four outputs were planned:

Table 3-1: Outputs under objective 1 - Organisational development

Objective 1:	Strengthening the capacity of MARD to rationalise organisational structure at central and local level to reflect public service delivery requirement of the sector
1.1	Complete implementation of Decree 86; required capacity of key staff is strengthened for this purpose
1.2	New work regulations are issued and piloted in support of Decree 86 replacing Decree 73
1.3	Support to setting up of new Legal Department
1.4	Capacity of the National Agricultural Extension Agency is improved with the orientation of public services delivery and be used as model for improving public service orientation for other agencies in MARD

Major achievements:

- Decree 86 has been implemented. MARD has completed and issued 23 legal documents and hereby demonstrated strong commitment to the reorganisation entailed in Decree 86. The legal documents revise and define functions and responsibilities within a revised organisation structure and chains of command.
- Implementing the Decree and the project support under this output indicates a better understanding within MARD with respect to the necessity of improving public service delivery to serve the farming households of Vietnam. This is demonstrated by initiating and completing several studies. First and foremost the Farmers Needs Survey, of which an extended survey is now in preparation. Secondly by the study of Public Service Providers; this has been presented in a draft version. Final version will be finished before end of project. Thirdly a Legal Impact Assessment is anticipated to contribute to develop practical and understandable regulatory systems.
- The completion of an Anti-corruption Action Plan by MARD's Inspectorate is regarded as another significant achievement, although marginal in relation to the stated objec-

tive. The Evaluation Team recognised the significance of this and presents our observations below.

- The project enabled MARD to become the first ministry to pilot One Stop Shops (OSS) at ministry level and although work load and customer demand varies very much, the pilot appears as a positive achievement for the six main departments. Recognising the benefits of the OSS to simplify administrative procedures, the Evaluation Team formulates some reservations below.
- The contribution by the DOP, which has headed the Task Force and the Legal Department in drafting and issuing 23 supporting legal documents to implement Decree 86/2003, is recognised as a positive achievement in spite of the limited assistance by the project.
- The capacity development within CMARD especially regarding new learner-centred teaching approaches is recognised as a major achievement. We understand that a large number of civil servants have participated in training activities, although only few under project funding. Real impact of training is, however, not documented at present as MARD (DOP, CMARD) does not apply training impact assessment studies.

In summary the Evaluation Team concludes that all four outputs under this objective have been attained but with some variations:

- Under output 1.1 we note that decree 86 has been implemented and the study on the needs of the Public Service Providers has been almost completed. The PSP study report will be available before project end. It is noteworthy that a number of unplanned results have been obtained under this output including anti-corruption initiatives and avian flu study tours.
- Under output 1.2 new work regulations have been issued including also establishment of One Stop Shops as pilots in a number of departments.
- Under output 1.3 the Legal Department has been established, office facilities (computers) have been provided and 2 short-duration training workshops on legal drafting have been conducted. Staffing level of the Legal Department has expanded from some 7-8 staff to 16 as a consequence of Decree 86/2003, of which 3 only have a formal legal background. The project has primarily supplied IT equipment. Seen from a formal point of view the output has been attained, but we raise doubts regarding the learning impact under this objective. We do believe – as does the Legal Department - that short-duration workshops do not really qualify as capacity development compared to the demand and needs. Given also the importance of a well functioning professional Legal Department – also seen in relation to the fight against corruption – we do believe that here is scope for improvement. The Evaluation Team recognises that provision of basic legal degree-based education is outside the scope of the project.
- Under output 1.4 we note that the National Agricultural Extension Centre has been established supported by the project. We do, however, find very few tangible results documented regarding capacity development, new funding mechanisms and development / piloting new models for agricultural production. And we do not find signifi-

cant initiatives within these areas in the work plan for the remainder project period. It has for example not been possible to establish consensus regarding the new production models to be piloted. All in all, we find output attainment under the project relatively modest⁷.

General observations and constraints:

The findings and observations of the Evaluation Team relates to outcomes, scope and constraints regarding the organisational project component.

- At project end MARD is still a huge ministry with a very large number of unit (departments, centres etc). The figure is 114. We note that initiatives were taken to re-organise and merge a number of research units into one broader structure, but the organisational restructuring process has only just started during this project with respect to rationalising and trimming the organisational set-up.
- The establishment of NAEC is understood as an example of the necessary separation between management and service delivery functions.⁸ A modern ministry does not deliver services. But it organises, determines quality, monitors and contracts service deliver to units, which are autonomous and outside the macro ministry. All in all, we find that too little progress has been made on this aspect although realising that MARD of course can not move further or faster than decided e.g. in Decree 86. It has been mentioned that Decree 43 and 130 might offer options to move further in the direction proposed here.
- The Public Service Providers needs survey aims at identifying areas where service delivery can be improved, and does not include any considerations on new models for service delivery (separating service delivery from management), which could be seen as a missed opportunity.
- Under the component we have observed three unplanned results, seen by the project as main successes as the project was able to exploit openings and changes in policies. They are understood as cross-cutting initiatives, for which the project document has no provisions.
 - The first of these is the support to the Anti-corruption Action Plan. Here the project supported MARD's Inspectorate, enabling MARD to be the first ministry to develop an anti-corruption action plan.
 - This is a laudable initiative of high political relevance and very highly profiled also in relation to the donor community.

⁷ The NAEC is beneficiary under a major ADB project aiming at improving extension services, and the long-term capacity development rests with this project. It can not be documented that the UNDP project has served as incubator for the big ADB project. When the ABD project came into force it was decided not to continue supporting NAEC under the UNDP project.

⁸ Another possible example - but outside the remit of the UNDP project – is the separation between irrigation and water resource management.

- The programmatic relation between PAR initiatives and anti-corruption, however, remains questionable. Seen from a formal point of view, anti-corruption has no place under the organisational objective in UNDP's project. Incorporating anti-corruption under this objective very evidently does not tally with the project logic and as an activity does not support attainment of the objective.
 - PAR and anti-corruption are separated into two distinct spheres in the outlines of the new PAR Action Plan 2006 – 2010. The approved '64 Task' programme does not include anti-corruption.
 - We do not question the legality of the support. We understand that it has been added as per management guidelines during the Annual Project Review sessions. But we do question the appropriateness in relation to project structure.⁹
- Secondly, the project has supported establishment of One Stop Shops (OSS) in six professional departments and one functional department. This is another unplanned result, where the flexibility of the project has been utilised to respond when the Minister of MARD issued the decision to pilot OSS establishment at ministry level. The intervention is internally rated very positive and mentioned as a positive result.
- The Evaluation Team fully recognises the value of the initiative. We do, however, consider this more as an output than an activity. The output could be formulated as '6 OSS established and in operation' which tallies with the perceptions among key informants when referring to the initiative.
 - However, the NEX guidelines have some requirements to procedures if and when an implementing unit wishes to add outputs. This does as a matter of principle require a revised project document or at least an addendum, updating the logframe. This is not the case if activities are added under existing outputs; consequently there could be a natural interest in the project to not engage into cumbersome administrative procedures for something, which anyway would be approved.
 - We do express a mild concern here against the flexible application of the procedures. The system of check-and-balance in the NEX guidelines is effectively made void if new ideas simply can be rated activities and incorporated without defining outputs, outcomes, indicators etc – all of which form part of best international practice for integrated project cycle management.

⁹ We regard a project document as a legally binding document – a contract between a funding agency and a beneficiary / implementing agency. As such the project document entails a number of mandatory, agreed deliveries which should be regarded as first and foremost obligation of an implementing unit.

- Thirdly, the project has been able to respond swiftly in relation to the bird flu / avian flu situation, supporting study tours to neighbouring countries to compare experiences and lessons learned. As such the initiative deserves praise.
 - We do, however, not find the relation to the output sufficiently clear. The relation to implementation of Decree 86 is not – and maybe cannot be – well elaborated and as such the otherwise laudable initiative represents a deviation from attaining the output.
- The three observations here all relate to the missing specificity of the outputs. It is nowhere precisely defined what implementation of Decree 86 implies and when the output has been attained. Consequently, it could be argued that the project implementation is somewhat too flexible. Apparently outputs are interpreted largely as a framework rather than firm and agreed delivery obligations. During the three year implementation it appears as if focus and resources are directed gradually more towards unplanned than planned outputs.
- The general orientation of the component is to use a reorganisation process to better serve the ultimate beneficiaries. And to serve these the PSP survey was undertaken for nine units in MARD, providing public services. Additional information stems from the Farmer Needs Survey. The important question is: How can we make services work for the farmer, for the poor people? International practice indicates that participation and empowerment of the target groups could be the strongest change agents, raising demands regarding quality, price, relevance, timeliness etc of public services.¹⁰ These perspectives are not reflected in the project. It is recommended to assess the relevance of participatory and empowerment approaches for any possible future PAR interventions within MARD.

3.2.2 Objective 2: To strengthen institutional and human resource capacities to carry out the tasks of PAR in MARD

Under objective two four outputs were planned:¹¹

Table 3-2: Outputs under objective 2 – Human Resources

Objective 2:	Strengthen institutional and Human Resource capacities of key departments in the implementation of the Ministry's PAR Action Plan 2005
2.1	The capacity to implement PAR Action Plan 2005 is strengthened in MARD and selected DARDs
2.2	A quality control system (ISO 9001/2000) is established and piloted in OMARD
2.3	To support DOP to improve the qualification of MARD's civil servants
2.4	The capacity of MARD Agriculture Management Schools is strengthened in critical administrative reform related and competence based training

¹⁰ World Development Report 2004: Making Services Work for Poor People, The World Bank

¹¹ With the exception of output 2.2 the outputs under this objective also have limited specificity. Output 2.3 'To support DOP...' is methodologically seen impossible to manage as it is not formulated as a specific result, but rather as a never ending activity.

Major achievements:

- Capacity development to implement the PAR Action Plan 2005 has been initiated, mainly by preparing a Training Needs Assessment (TNA). This has formed the basis for a Five Year Training Plan, finalised in September 2005.
- Significant improvement of the College of Management for Agricultural and Rural Development (CMARD), aiming at fast-track application of improved adult learning principles and long-term regional co-operation has been realised.
- OMARD has demonstrated impressive commitment to obtain an ISO certification. During the process OMARD has reviewed all its working procedures and related documents in order to standardize, pilot and finally obtain ISO certification for 17 working procedures. As a consequence administrative procedures have been standardised and according to information from the ISO Task Force Manager less time consuming and complicated. The ISO has been piloted by OMARD since May 2005 up to present and on 15 of August 2005, the Minister of MARD has allowed OMARD to implement the 17 piloted working procedures and OMARD has by now been ISO certified.¹²
- A personnel management information system (PMIS) has been successfully installed and is in operation. The PMIS is an information system with a unified database, developed by MoHA, which after full scale implementation will be applied in all ministries, ministry level agencies as well as agencies under the GOV and provincial administration. In the PMIS provisions are made to store and utilise extended personnel information via CVs. The PMIS represent a significant step towards using IT applications for personnel management and offers easy access to other staff information than payroll data.
- The use of job descriptions has been introduced as another step towards enhancing personnel management systems. The process has started in some departments in MARD and may later be expanded also to the DARDs.

General observations and constraints:

The findings and observations of the Evaluation Team relates to outcomes, scope and constraints regarding the HR project component. The Evaluation Team notes that attainment and possible impact varies a lot among the outputs under this objective.

- Output 2.1 relates to capacity development for MARD and DARD staff to implement the MARD PAR Action Plan 2005. Core activity under this output is the Training Needs Assessment, which is understood as the prerequisite for actual training plans and programmes. Given the delays to complete the TNA, preparation of the training plan as well as actual training delivered under the output has been limited. As mentioned the Five Year Training Plan was not completed until September 2005.
 - The TNA has been undertaken, using a very traditional approach focusing on determining the qualification gap relative to formal requirements in the position classification system (senior expert, principal expert and expert) rather than us-

¹² 2005 Annual Report. Project Management p. 14.

ing functional requirements (manager, planner, operator, supervisor or similar). Consequently the TNA may easily miss the performance enhancing training needs.¹³

- Due to the approach the TNA offers only limited guidance to CMARD, which is a main project partner under this objective.
- Output 2.2 is understood as a quality system developed and in operation within OMARD. ISO 9001/2000 was selected and implemented for 17 processes within OMARD's mandate and the ISO certification has been given. The process has been time and resource consuming, but results so far appear promising. We consider attainment of this output very successful.
 - In OMARD, implementation of the ISO system has served as a useful tool to enhance administrative effectiveness and efficiency. A more complete impact assessment has been deferred to 2006 and results are not known by the Evaluation Team.
 - The Evaluation Team recommends that the usefulness of implementing an ISO system as a broader tool to performance enhancement be precisely evaluated, and if positive, wider application of ISO systems in MARD could be considered for a possible new project phase. MARD has already submitted a proposal to the Ministry for Science and Technology recommending that ISO be widely implemented, which is by now waiting for a decision by the Prime Minister.
 - Replication of the pilot widely within MARD may however face a number of challenges: (i) Reviewing duties and responsibilities of divisions as well as personnel is time and resource consuming; (ii) recurrent budget for training is limited; (iii) staff qualifications do not tally fully with revised procedures; according to the ISO Task Force Manager the biggest constraint is (iv) the working attitude and behaviour of civil servants. Overcoming constraints require very strong commitment from MARD leadership.
- Output 2.3 comprises support to DOP to improve the qualifications of MARD's civil servants. Under the output activities are directed mainly to support DOP; we find absolutely insignificant improvement of qualification of MARD's civil servants. Key result under this output is implementation of a personnel management system, the PMIS, developed by MOHA. The PMIS comprises CV information for approximately 8,900 staff of a total at 12,000. Other initiatives under this component include preparation of job descriptions which have been introduced via a workshop. On a limited basis, job descriptions are gradually being practiced in some departments. According to the DOP job descriptions are not used as possible tools to determine functional performance gaps and training needs. Relating to qualification improvement we find almost no signs of early impact under this output.

¹³ A comprehensive TNA for civil servants at all administrative levels from commune to ministry, based on functional requirements, was made under the Danida-supported NAPA project in 2004.

- The PMIS is used for different types of staff allocation, for example when staff is selected for training or to participate in task forces. According to general organisational practice comprehensive personnel management information systems find best use and are most effective in organisations, based on matrix principles. This is not the case in MARD, which is a line organisation, implying that staff resources are less flexible allocated and consequently a comprehensive PMIS will have less impact.
- Output 2.4 aims at strengthening the capacity of the two CMARDs to deliver competence based training within areas critical to the success of the administrative reform. MARD will in future strive to develop CMARD into Centres of Excellence, starting from the three essential achievements being attained under this output:
 - Introduction of learner-based training approaches, which according to information provided by CMARD I in Hanoi is applied for a majority of training activities now;
 - Introduction of improved training management approaches, whereby we understand applying a modern training cycle approach, which includes three major steps: (i) functional training needs assessment to determine and prioritise training activities; (ii) application of performance enhancing, learner-centred adult learning principles in actual training; and (iii) follow-up and feed-back using impact assessment of training to establish what was actually learned rather than monitoring only on participation and presence during training.
 - Preparation and signing a MoU with Singapore Civil Servants College, which may eventually in a longer term perspective enable sharing of teaching materials, cases etc and further sustain capacity enhancement for the CMARDs.
- Regarding output 2.4 it is our impression that significant progress has been made to modernise the class room training. We do, however, note that the CMARD is not fully capacitated to apply full training cycle management approaches as weaknesses are observed with respect to the TNA, which in the actual approaches is of extremely limited use for the CMARD. The TNA should in principle be provided by DOP, which is responsible for staff development. The CMARD is neither mandated nor have funds allocated to conduct TNAs within MARD. Further, systematic impact assessments are not carried out and a more in-depth assessment of learning effect of training is consequently not possible.
- Recurrent budgets for training are limited and insufficient compared to the needs under rapidly changing administrative structures. It could be considered to support the CMARDs in developing new and/or improved income generating activities to overcome some of the budget constraints. It is understood that the option is possible within the legal stipulations for the CMARDs. It has been mentioned that tuition fees for training are way beyond the recurrent budgets and consequently provinces for example can only send staff for training under externally funded projects. If this is a general trend the possible success of the CMARDs as future Centres of Excellence could be seriously jeopardised.

- Enhanced co-operation with different MARD stakeholders and with DOP is essential for the CMARD. In this, the working principles should be DOP as a client (not a master) and CMARD as a service provider, offering competitive training packages of relevance.

In conclusion for objective two we find output 2.2 (ISO) very well implemented, enabling also a lessons learnt transformation and expansion to other departments and maybe into new projects. Output 2.4 regarding capacity development for the CMARD is understood as a success, although representing only the first initial steps of a long term modernisation process.

We are voicing some concerns regarding the elements under this objective relating to DOP. So far we find limited impact of the implemented activities and produced results. Under the objective we note that some initial steps have been taken regarding development and possible use of job descriptions, but it is not fully evident for what purpose.

Our conclusion is consequently that the project has assisted in producing the very first stepping stones towards a comprehensive, modern HRM system. The elements or steps are not linked and the HRM system at best exists in an embryonic form with limited impact.

We have no precise information on the causes for this missing linkage. It may be that the project had limited ambitions here or it may relate to factors within DOP. Comprehensive administrative changes in HRM approaches and systems do according to international experience require strong and consequent change agents to be successful. We are not able to assess to which extent DOP has served or can in future serve as a visionary change agent; consequently we do recommend that an assessment of change management / change agent capacities be undertaken as a prerequisite for further assistance to develop HRM systems in future project phases.

3.2.3 Objective 3: Support to the implementation of the 'Information Technology Development and Application Strategy to Support State Administration Management' to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the sector

The objective is structured with five planned outputs:

Table 3-3: Outputs under objective 3 - IT component

Objective 3	Support to the implementation of the 'Information Technology Development and Application Strategy to Support State Administration Management' to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the sector
3.1	An Informatics Division for public administration management under OMARD is strengthened and operated with the support of the project
3.2	IT resources for extended pilot to all MARD departments and DARDs implementation are developed
3.3	IT related administrative processes and work procedures are redesigned and piloted following MARD PAR Action Plan 2005

3.4	The state administration management information communication with local levels via intranet, internet and email is standardized
3.5	Support to the development of rural pilot telecenters for farming households

Major Achievements:

- A strategy of “Information Technology Development and Application” has been developed and being implemented, creating a stepping stone for modernising public administration management in MARD headquarter, its institutions and the pilot DARDs. Implementation of this strategy is coordinated by an IT Development Task Force and operated by a strengthened Informatics and Statistics Centre with collaboration of IT coordinators and in accordance with the organisational regulation. An interactive forum for information exchange among IT coordinators has been set up.
- Improved technical infrastructure and capacity building for IT development have been significant results for the pilot MARD departments and certain DARDs. Based on training need assessment, different groups of IT users have been trained. As a result, web-based information flow has significantly increased thanks to wider use of e-mail, e-reporting system, and some e-meeting and strengthened capacity of pilot key users and end-users.
- Redesigned and piloted administration procedures show early signs of impacts on enhancing administration efficiency due to installation of a general reporting software package facilitating standardized reporting system (e-office software), document database updating and speeding up the reporting flow.

General observations and constraints:

The findings and observations of the Evaluation Team relates to outcomes, scope and constraints regarding the IT project component. The Evaluation Team notes that attainment and possible impact appear systematically positive for the outputs under this objective.

Of the five outputs 3.1 to 3.4 have been fully attained and output 3.5 (Rural telecenters) is in progress, which is in accordance with plans and schedules.

- Output 3.1 has strengthened the IT division under OMARD. The output has been attained and has also introduced creative structures to support best practice and knowledge using an ICT practice network, which is open to IT co-ordinators at ministry and province level.
- Output 3.2 has developed IT resources for extended pilots to all MARD departments and DARDs. Under this output key deliveries comprise (i) IT equipment for 38 DARDs; (ii) TNA for 54 DARDs; and (iii) a large number of training courses for different functional levels, requiring different levels of IT proficiency, which are by now coming close to completion. It is reported that more than 1,000 DARD staff have received training under this output.

- All information points in the same direction: output is attained and attained very successfully.
- The output is formulated as an 'extended pilot'. A 'pilot' would in most cases signify an approach to test alternatives – different models, approaches or similar. In this output 'pilot' signifies a downsized investment project, comprising procuring and installing IT and LAN systems as well as training managers, specialists, and operators in using the equipment.
 - We are voicing a concern regarding impact. We do believe that for the DARDs, which were included into the pilot, significant impact relating to communication, sharing information, reporting etc probably could be fully documented. But at the same time full impact for the ministry and the sector is limited as 26 DARDs are still excluded from using the new tools.
 - We understand that MARD is considering expanding the system to all DARDs. This is recognised as an obligation for the GoV and the Evaluation Team has been informed that the expansion is included in Programme 112, which, however, still does not include budget allocations for full scale implementation.
 - Consequently, we recommend that UNDP considers adjusting the approach to this type of pilots (downsized investment project). To enhance impact, a beneficiary should enter into firm commitments – including budgets and implementation plans – for up-scaling to full implementation if the pilot is successful. And this should be done already when a pilot is launched, maybe even as a precondition. By establishing binding committing agreements between donor and beneficiary, based on defined and agreed success criteria for the pilot and a procedure for evaluation these, better impact in relation to effectiveness and efficiency of the public administration may be ensured.
- Output 3.3 covers redesign of some administrative procedures to take advantage of the IT system. Some reporting systems have been redesigned under this output; reporting software has been installed. According to key informants' information early signs of impact on quality and pace in administrative routines can be observed; as there is no baseline assessment, documentation is not possible.
- Output 3.4 covers internal and external IT communication and main and key deliverable here is the MARD website, including support to editorial board and secretariat. A web Steering Committee has been formed and an application for equipment for the SC is in progress.
- Output 3.5 comprises support to the development of 13 rural telecenters as a pilot, serving farmer households in communes. The output has not been realised yet, which is accordance with plans and schedules. MARD and MPI have approved the pilot project as subcomponent under the PAR in MARD and cost sharing agreements have been signed with UNDP. An implementation plan has been prepared and approved for the pilots.

- Consequently it is premature to enter into any form of evaluation. We do, however, draw the attention to probably the most critical aspect of this sub-component: the sustainability of rural telecenters, understood as technical and financial sustainability. The Evaluation Team has noted that there is awareness of the sustainability issue and that the project will test different models.
- The idea behind the rural telecenters is to make information regarding rural production etc available for the rural households. It is designed as a tool for transmitting information from the centre to the individual households. As the Evaluation Team has been informed considerations on how to use the telecenters as means for participation and empowerment - giving the farmers a voice as part of decision making – has not been integrated into the pilots.

In conclusion the Evaluation Team finds the objective of the component realised. The results are highly appreciated by stakeholders and the component could be rated as the most successful. Up-scaling the LAN and IT systems to all DARDs and developing the rural telecenters pilot project to include participation and empowerment would offer even more benefits and impact.

3.2.4 Objective 4: Contribute to the strengthening of PAR management capacity in MARD and sharing information on results and tools to other PAR projects, MoHA, NAPA and donors

The objective is structured in three planned outputs:

Table 3-4: Outputs under objective 4 - PAR management

Objective 4:	Contribute to the strengthening of PAR management capacity in MARD and sharing information on results and tools to other PAR projects, MoHA, NAPA and donors
4.1	A M&E mechanism for the management of PAR activities in MARD is established in support of the PAR Steering Committee and its secretariat
4.2	Systematic dissemination of experiences in PAR activities and PAR tools and methodologies to PAR focal ministries and public agencies in co-operation with MoHA
4.3	Systematic dissemination of project management tools to PAR focal ministries and public agencies in co-operation with MoHA

Major Achievements:

- External review of the MARD PAR Action Plan 2005 has been completed, providing recommendations also for the next 5 year action plan.
- PAR Best Practice Notes for national level has been produced and Practice Note for MARD is in progress.
- Co-ordinated by MoHA MARD has participated together with the PAR project in Ho Chi Minh City in workshop and other information sharing activities.
- Support to the PAR SC enabling successful national execution of the project.

General observations and constraints:

This project component has not made big progress and demonstrates very few tangible results. This is partly due to the fact that several activities under the outputs will take place near project end, but is also due to limited project performance especially under output 4.1 – monitoring and evaluation.

In general we find the objective so vague ('contribute to strengthening capacity....') that it will always be attained even without any tangible results.

- The monitoring and evaluation mechanism, which is output 4.1, is a critical tangible result, which has not been delivered. We consider this a major draw-back in project performance. Section 3.3 on project management presents the findings and conclusions regarding M&E under this project.
- Output 4.2 relates to dissemination of information regarding lessons learnt, PAR approaches as well as awareness enhancing activities. We note that most of the planned activities under this output have been completed; however, tracking impact and even early signs of impact is not possible as impact is not exclusively determined by MARD and the project but primarily by the co-operating institutions for example NAPA.
- Output 4.3 relates to systematic dissemination of PAR management tools. All activities have been deferred to 2006 and consequently we are not able to evaluate. However, the Evaluation Team notes that according to the Annual Work Plan the activities will be completed before project end.

3.3 Project Management and Implementation

3.3.1 Project Management Structure

Project management structure and responsibilities of key staff are described in the NEX guidelines¹⁴.

The project is under national execution (NEX) and as such executed by MARD. The National Project Director (NPD) is on behalf of MARD fully responsible for implementation. MARD has established a Project Support Unit (PSU), headed by a National Project Manager (NPM), being responsible for day-to-day implementation. The PSU is staffed by deputed MARD staff and recruited staff. The PSU is funded by MARD and donor contributions to the project.

3.3.2 Implementation arrangements

A Task Force approach is applied to implement project activities under the different component. Task Forces are formed by MARD and in general chaired by Directors of the relevant departments. Task Forces may be assisted by international and/or national consultants, funded by the project.

¹⁴ Title, October 2005

The project has established well functioning daily management routines, using TOR for to specify activities. If relevant, TOR include requirements to internal reporting / dissemination of results. If technical assistance is required, consultants are recruited using open, competitive procurement mechanisms.

The implementation mechanisms appear relevant, effective and efficient.

3.3.3 Strategic management

It has been reported that there has been very strong leadership commitment to this project, especially from the Minister and other high level leaders. There have been some instances where Heads of Department have been a bit more hesitant.

It appears as if the PSU has focussed more on activities and attainment of outputs than on strategic management. It is natural for a unit, responsible for daily management to direct focus in this way. As a consequence project implementation tends to become front-loaded with many activities taking place at the same time and also with limited consideration for strategic management and prioritisation. We have not investigated this issue in detail but voice a concern and recommend the PAR SC, which of course is the formal structure to provide strategic direction for the PSU, to offer guidance and corrections if and when too much focus is given to hierarchically lower priorities.

3.3.4 Use of consultants

The project has made extensive use of consultant, mostly national, recruited in open procedures, based on specific TOR for each assignment. The project applies an ex-post evaluation of performance, which is rated with five as maximum value. In most cases the result is 3 or 4.

The national resource base is limited as qualification requirements often combine sector knowledge with PAR experience, and this combination is in short supply. It is also noted that UNDP salaries are at the lower end of the market prices in Vietnam today for highly skilled and well qualified short-term consultants.

It could be argued that in niche markets with short supply, fee rates below average can only result in reduced quality and performance. Consequently, we suggest UNDP to consider bringing fee rates in harmony with prevailing market prices for this type of consultants.

3.3.5 International experience

International experience and best practice has been brought to the project under two modalities: (i) by recruiting international consultants and (ii) by study tours, mostly to regional countries.

International consultants have been used to fill the position as Resident Technical Adviser, which has been a long-term position, and by allocating short-term consultants within specialist areas like analysing extension services, gender analysis and evaluations.

PAR is a nationally owned and managed process. Within this framework international consultants may offer effective value added approaches and here most notably within topics, breaking new grounds for the PAR process. Like for example outsourcing, decentralisation, and downsizing to mention just some few examples. A somewhat more extended use of international consultants could be anticipated in the future.

Study tours have been used to compile international / regional experience for new, important areas. A good example is the study tour to India and China in 2005 to study the application of ICT in state management and poverty reduction in rural areas. The study tour appears well planned and executed; reporting including summaries of lessons learned and recommendations is well structured and as such sound value for money principles have been applied in this case.¹⁵

3.3.6 Quality, quantity and timeliness of deliveries

Based on document review the Evaluation Team concludes that

- The quality of deliveries (reports, notes, studies) is fully sufficient. Technical deliveries (e.g. computer configurations and LAN) have not been assessed under this evaluation.
- The project has been active within a broad range of issues. Activities have taken place under many project elements at the same time (a front-loaded approach). The PSU has managed to ensure activity completion for a huge number of activities, and as we understand on budget and on schedule.
- There have been some delays during project implementation, and some of these have impeded progress towards attainment of outputs. All in all, delays in this project appear modest and in most cases not critical. The annual work plan for remainder of the project indicates that all activities will finish as per time schedule.

Given the quality of the original project document, which in many cases has offered limited guidance to the PSU, the Evaluation Team concludes that the PSU has demonstrated high performance level regarding quantity, quality and timeliness of deliveries and in general performed well.

3.3.7 Monitoring

Monitoring is an internal management responsibility to keep track of how the project is progressing in terms of expenditure, resource use, and implementation of activities, delivery of outputs and the management of risks. Monitoring consequently comprises two elements: checking (i) physical progress and (ii) financial progress.

Results are reported in Quarterly Progress Reports as well as the Annual Report, which additionally includes the results of the internal management review of progress.

¹⁵ The same applies for the study tour to Thailand on avian flue as it is documented in the draft report.

In international development work the tendency is to lift monitoring from simple input and activity registration to monitor achievement of results. This is also reflected in UNDP's latest guidelines.

Given the fact that project design is weak, indicators poorly formulated and monitoring of indicators completely abandoned from 2005 we have to conclude that the monitoring system for this project is sub-standard. It enables monitoring of activities and inputs only: has activity [xx] taken place and at what cost?

The UNDP project VIE/01/024 in MOHA was expected to develop a national monitoring system for PAR performance. This has not materialised yet and consequently the PAR project in MARD has received limited substantial support regarding national PAR monitoring.

If a national monitoring framework and system does not exist, it would be expected that a project develops its own monitoring system. This was foreseen as output 4.1 but has not been the case for this project. Consequently the project has only limited possibilities to assess the extent to which outputs / outcomes are attained. This also prevents corrective measures to be initiated - if necessary. Necessity can however not be determined.

There is no output monitoring based on indicators. The Annual Report for 2003 and 2004 included an attempt to monitor indicators – or at least indicators were listed for each output. In 2005 reporting formats for project performance changed and considerations with respect to indicators have completely disappeared.

Additionally, the 2005 Annual Report shifts the performance reporting from outcomes, which were still existing in AR 2004 and 2003, downwards in the hierarchy to reporting in the form of simple implementation status registration, predominantly as activity reporting.

The practical monitoring and reporting is quite far from the principles described in the latest version of the NEX Guideline (October 2005).

Reporting

The reporting system comprises quarterly progress reports, submitted for physical progress of activities and financial progress according to budgets. The Evaluation Team has not verified any of these reports. We have used the Annual Report, which summarises activities from the QPR. Financial information in the Annual Report is extremely summary.

Evaluation and audit

Evaluation is organised as an internal and an external evaluation.

The internal evaluation is carried out as an Annual Project Review, conducted during the fourth quarter of each year. It is a policy level meeting of parties directly involved in the project. The Annual Project Review meeting will agree on next year's work plan and budget as well any other actions deemed necessary. The evaluation results are included as a section on project performance in the annual report. As project does not apply indicators for success and results obtained, it is evident that the Annual Project Review does not reveal any need for corrective actions or redesign, reformulation or similar. The Annual Project Review provides input to the work plan for next year and here most notably incorporation of new topics.

The external evaluation is organised as this end-of-project evaluation. The timing excludes substantive incorporation of significant findings / corrections / amendments into the ongoing project.

Overall, the Evaluation Team finds the reliance on internal corrective abilities too excessive and recommends that future projects should include an external mid-term review. This is a strong recommendation, given the fact that NEX projects do not apply external appraisals after formulation.

Audit

Project accounts are audited annually by an external audit company. KMPG and STT have been used and the Evaluation Team has been informed that project has received a 'clean' audit report each year.

3.4 Cross Cutting Issues

3.4.1 Gender

Following an ADB-funded Gender Mainstreaming project a gender strategy has been developed and incorporated into the project starting from the inception phase. The gender strategy aims at improving the gender balance in MARD. There are relatively few women in management positions in MARD and consequently the strategy has been extensively based on sensitizing initiatives to enhance awareness, combined with training and support to improved practice for example within job descriptions (gender sensitive) and support has also been directed to the CFAWs.

Many efforts have been initiated to ensure proper female representation during project-funded training activities. An arbitrary target of at least 30% percent female participants has not always been achieved.

The Evaluation Team realises that establishing gender equality in MARD must be regarded as an uphill battle. It requires very strong leadership commitment and can only be realised in a long-term perspective. This is not unique for MARD.

Although tangible results of this project with respect to gender equality are very difficult to identify, we do find positive achievements in the mere fact that gender equality principles have been incorporated in the project's work plans and activities. It is realistic to assume that gender responsiveness has increased as a consequence of the project activities.

3.4.2 Impact within public service delivery to farmers

The TOR request the Evaluation team to assess impact within public service delivery to farmers. This aspect should more correctly form part of the ex-post evaluation, if this is initiated, as impact is long-term effect and this project has not come to an end yet. Furthermore, the project has focused strongly on the immediate beneficiaries – managers and senior staff in MARD with some outreach towards the DARDs. Farmers are as such ultimate, but indirect beneficiaries in the project.

The strong focus on direct beneficiaries implies that the project has limited outreach perspectives. Implementation of Decree 86 has for example had only limited effect in the DARDs visited by the Evaluation team, and provincial staff has participated only on limited basis in CMARD training, funded by the project. The IT component is rated extremely positive.

The project has initiated three important studies, which may in future exert great influence on public service delivery to farmers:

- The Farmers Needs Survey
- The Public Service Providers Survey, and
- The Legal Impact Study.

We regard these studies as indices of changed perceptions and a broader understanding of farmers as ultimate beneficiaries for all MARD activities. The Evaluation team finds this extremely valuable and positive and at the same time notes that changing attitudes and perceptions are slow processes and tangible results have so far not materialised fully.

3.5 Conclusion

In conclusion we present the Evaluation Team's consolidated evaluation of the project as per the evaluation criteria applied by the international donor community (formulated by OECD/DAC) and UNDP.

Within the five main dimensions (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability) we define a number of parameters and offer a score, reflecting the consolidated observations of the Evaluation Team. The results shall be seen as a summary and not as a scientific exercise.

Relevance

Under relevance we include the relevance to UNDP's mandate, to national priorities and to beneficiaries' needs. Here the project scores high. Objectives for the project are still valid also three years down the line.

Other parameters under relevance include quality and logic of project design. Here the project scores low. On consistency of activities of activities and outputs with intended impact we would rate the project average and a similar score would cover consistency of activities.

Effectiveness

Effectiveness of the project, understood as the extent to which objectives were achieved, is rated medium. We are rating the achievement medium as it impossible to fully assess the extent to which objectives have been met due to the vagueness and unspecific formulation of the stated objectives. We have noted that unplanned outputs, however relevant as stand-alone results, bear limited relation to objective attainment.

Efficiency

Under efficiency is normally specified into three aspects: Were activities cost efficient, were outputs / objectives achieved on time and was project implemented in the most effi-

cient way compared to alternatives? We note that the project has by and large delivered in accordance with schedules and also has been sufficiently cost efficient. We can not assess project efficiency relative to alternatives as this issue has not formed part of the project approach. All in all, based on partial information, we would rate cost effectiveness fully acceptable for projects of this type and volume.

Impact or degree of change

Understanding impact as changes resulting from project activities the project would score high. Decree 86 has implied organisational and institutional changes – comprehensive and of incremental nature. ISO in OMARD also represents significant change as does the IT upgrade. Understanding impact as the extent to which the project has created a real difference to beneficiaries, we would give an average score as we see elements with extensive real changes (OMARD for example) and others with limited real change (capacity development for civil servants for example).

We do find early signs of impact in critical areas like administrative quality and efficiency. Impact for a unit like MARD could be defined as reduced processing time for decisions, improved quality of decisions and documents, reduced number of complaints, enhanced citizens' satisfaction etc. We have not assessed impact along this type of criteria, but do find early signs of impact especially within the areas where IT is now being utilised resulting in improved communication and probably also reduced processing time.

Sustainability

A project is considered sustainable if benefits of the project will continue after project end. Sustainability assessment includes three aspects: (i) financial, (ii) technical and (iii) environmental sustainability. Environmental sustainability is not a relevant aspect for this project, which has insignificant environmental consequences.

Technical sustainability is satisfactory. The results produced by the project include institutional and organisational elements, which are structurally fully integrated into MARD and consequently deemed technically sustainable. We have not observed technical results or solutions requesting outside technical support after project end.

Financial sustainability is rated medium and acceptable. Operational expenses regarding ISO, PMIS and most of the institutional results will be financed under the recurrent budget and we have not observed excessive additional costs after project end for this type of project results. We have voiced concern regarding the DARD IT upgrade, and understand that recurrent costs will be covered by the provincial authorities and provincial budgets. We have voiced concern regarding the rural telecenters, and understand that sustainability is one of the aspects to be better illustrated and tested during the 13 commune pilot.

Sustainability is influenced also by the degree of local ownership. Local ownership appears satisfactory as demonstrated by the incidents where MARD has been able to become 'first among equals' with respect to PAR activities. Not all units within MARD demonstrate same level of ownership and there could be some resentment towards the PAR changes. The project has here supported awareness raising activities as well as IEC activities in a satisfactory manner.

4 Recommendations

4.1 Lessons Learned

- 1 PAR is clearly of political nature. Strong leadership commitment from top leadership in MARD has undoubtedly contributed to the relative success of this project. We share the impression¹⁶ that a well functioning, strong and stable PAR steering mechanism (PAR SC), chaired by the Minister, is necessary to bring the PAR process forward. The PAR SC should have continuous membership over the full period and be supported by a well functioning PAR Secretariat.
- 2 During two UNDP PAR projects, several critical reform areas have been addressed and many good results have been obtained. It can be said, however, that focus to a large extent has been on activities and outputs rather than on strategic results.¹⁷ The next plan should move MARD forward by focussing on a limited number of strategic interventions focussed more on beneficiaries and how this can be translated to processes in MARD – for example developing monitoring systems to ensure enhanced deliveries to beneficiaries, improving quality of legal documents and developing participatory approaches to reflect farmers' needs more consequently within MARD.
- 3 Interventions should be formulated in programme or projects, applying best international practice, ensuring that the SC, the PSU and the funding agencies all have a precise and shared perspective on where to go. The ongoing project has been very broad and with limited specificity. We believe that a continued PAR process is sufficiently complicated to deserve a solid project basis, formulated around selected key performance areas for which proper baseline studies are developed, specific targets identified and proper result monitoring systems developed.
- 4 Best results and most far-reaching achievements appear obtained with units where project support fully matches perceived needs and where beneficiaries demonstrate high degree of ownership, commitment and ability to initiate a change process. According to our impressions this seems to be the case for OMARD and the CMARD. Consequently, the issue of ownership and ability and willingness to function as change agents should be incorporated in any future support.

¹⁶ Evaluation of the Implementation of the PAR Action Plan for MARD 2005, Final Report, February 2006 p. 27

¹⁷ The Anti-Corruption Action Plan could be seen as an exception to this general observation.

- 5 Although Decree 86 has improved the situation functional overlaps still exist among the large number of organisational units within MARD. A continuous effort to reduce functional overlaps and to reduce the number of units should come high on the PAR agenda. This should ideally be combined with a process to fully separate service delivery functions from state management and to decentralise decision-making and financial powers to most appropriate level.
- 6 The PAR project has to some extent established links to other national and international projects. It might be worthwhile to explore the possibilities to establish better linkages and improved synergy to other technical assistance programmes (REFAS from GTZ, ASPS from Danida for example). PAR projects could possibly be seen as key elements in broader SWAp approaches and thus push the sector fast forward.

4.2 Recommendations

4.2.1 Relating to UNDP

- 1 The appraisal and internal review procedures stipulated in the NEX Guidelines have in this case not fully ensured the quality of the project document, and UNDP might consider including an external mid-term review for projects with three or more years duration.
- 2 To ensure that complex and politically sensitive areas like PAR have access to best available resources UNDP might investigate and - if needed – consider bringing the fee level more in line with prevailing market prices.

4.2.2 Directions for continuous support

Continuous donor support to PAR from 2006 to 2010 is anticipated to be offered in a programmatic manner within an overall support programme under which specific interventions will be formulated. The overall support programme will set priorities and it is understood that specific projects like the present, being implemented under NEX modality, will not be feasible under the new programmatic approach.

MARD has till now been one of the core partners for UNDP and the donor group. MoHA and Ho Chi Minh City have also been core partners in UNDP's PAR support portfolio.

Given that continuous PAR support will be allocated to MARD the following focal issues should be considered:

- 1 In general focus should be shifted more towards impact on beneficiaries. Farmers and farmers' needs should have higher priority and the impact on beneficiaries might be used as the principle to prioritise approaches and interventions.
- 2 Decentralisation, understood as devolution or allocating decision-making power to lowest appropriate level, should come clearly into focus. The process could entail (i) an assessment of what types of decisions can be allocated downwards, followed by (ii) a decision on priorities, (iii) organisational review of giving and receiving units to determine legal, financial and capability gaps and (iv) a time-bound implementation

plan ensuring the necessary revision of legal regulations, organisational redesign (mandate, responsibilities and job descriptions) and capacity development initiatives.

- 3 MARD should as a ministry organise service delivery to farmers and provide a favourable legal environment to facilitate this socialisation process. This would imply more consequent separation of service delivery functions from state management functions, reserving state management for MARD. The steps might include (i) an organisational review of MARD to establish proper baselines and identify what can and should be socialised; (ii) decision on priorities and a time-schedule ensuring that the number of units within MARD is significantly reduced over the next project period; (iii) technical assistance to units to be socialised using for example business planning approaches, business process reengineering approaches or strategic planning approaches ensuring that units formulate vision and mission statements, develop relevant organisational structures, define responsibilities and job descriptions for units and key staff and, analyse demand and service prices and finally develop financial assessments. Separating service delivery from state management implies that new units will be more autonomous, also financially, and as a target may become financially self sustaining over time; (iv) develop and decide on appropriate financial models to regulate the relation to MARD for example using performance based contract systems where MARD is the 'client' and the unit is providing services to MARD's 'customers', the farmers.
- 4 In relation to the separation between service delivery and state management MARD should initiate pilots on how to develop quality standards for services. MARD should as the organiser of service delivery, design clear, precise and unambiguous quality standards identifying not only what service shall be delivered but more importantly to what quality level. This has been core factor in all outsourcing models in the developed countries.
- 5 The ISO pilot has proven successful and ISO could serve as one possible approach to streamline MARD's deliveries and could form an entry point when setting quality standards also for service provision. It is recommended that this aspect be further considered for continuous support.
- 6 Develop and initiate a fast-track approach to pilot different organisational forms for agricultural service delivery to farmers. What can and what should be delivered by for example co-operatives, enterprises (public or private), NGOs and mass organisations and what should remain in the public sector? There are some indications that the co-operative model, which has been used to provide major agricultural services like fertiliser, seeds, seedlings, veterinary medicine etc has been fairly successful which may form an input here.
- 7 Working principles for continuous support should include farmers' participation and empowerment. This could indicate a preference for example for co-operative models for service provision as voluntary co-operatives (user groups) are managed by the farmers and consequently include participatory and empowerment dimensions. Other models may offer similar benefits.
- 8 Empowerment and participation should be integrated also in the rural telecenters pilots. So far the rural telecenters are mostly understood as offering information to

farmers, but they could include an information flow from the farmers to MARD on pertinent issues for farming households: land tenure issues, denunciations and complaints, mismanagement, corruption and abuse of power and general performance feed back regarding MARD's and MARD organised services. MARD may consider establishing focus groups for pertinent issues regarding public service providers, legal documents, new services etc to give farmers' a say and enable MARD to make informed decisions in a cost effective manner.

- 9 Capacity development should be in clear focus also in the next PAR plan for MARD. This should include further support to CMARD, aiming at developing CMARD into Centres of Excellence with respect to teaching methods and subject matter issues of relevance for the sector. CMARD has demonstrated the necessary ownership and commitment and consequently is seen as a possible change agent for capacity development. Financial mechanisms ensuring that training is affordable under limited recurrent budgets should be developed.
- 10 Above all we recommend applying a significantly improved programmatic approach, based on best international practice also for components under the overall programme. This includes assessment of possible SWAp elements, improved project design, identification of limited number of key performance areas, establishment of specific baselines, targets and a state-of-the-art monitoring system, enabling result monitoring and evaluation. Applying this principle should include allocation of discretionary funds for upcoming initiatives to be allocated in a flexible manner on a need basis. Discretionary funds may include a small project support facility, offering support after decision by a PAR SC to sub-projects of high importance and of high quality.

For the remainder project period we recommend (i) to allocate sufficient resources to consolidate findings from the three important studies (Farmer Needs Survey, Legal Impact Assessment and Public Service Provider Study), aiming at identifying cross-cutting issues, which may serve as an input or a baseline for continuous support; and (ii) to allocate sufficient resources ensuring that relevant priorities seen from MARD's point of view are reflected timely and properly in the programme document for the new programmatic support.

Annex 01: TOR

Annex 02: Persons met

In addition to regular meetings with UNDP staff and PSU staff the Evaluation team has met the following key informants:

Date	Organisation	Interviewee	Position
Mon June 5	10:00-11:00 Center of Informatics & Statistics	Mr Trinh Duc Huy	Director cum Dty Chairman, MARD IT Steering Committee
	13:30-14:15 Dep't of Inspection	Mr Pham Van Hien Le Tien Thuc Mr Hoang Dong Anh	Director Dty Director staff
	14:30-15:15 National Agricultural Extension Center	Mr Tong Khiem	Director
Tue June 6	08:00-09:00 MARD Office	Mr Nguyen Quang Minh	Chief cum PAR Director
	10:00-11:15 Dep't of Cooperatives & Rural Development	Mr La Van Ly	Director , Ex PAR Director
	13:00-13:45 MARD Leader	Dr Bui Ba Bong	Vice Minister
	15:00-16:00 School of Agricultural Management	Mr Tran Le Hung Le Ba Thang Mr Cach	Rector Dty Rector Head, Training
Wed June 7	08:00-08:45 MARD Leader	Mr Nguyen Ngoc Thuat	Vice Minister
	09:30-10:15 SDC 10:30 SIDA	Mr Dao Minh Chau Mr Ngoc	
	13:30-14:30 Legal Department	Mr Nguyen Van Tu Mr Ma Chan Loi	Director Staff
	15:00-15:45 Dep't of Organization & Personnel	Mr Dang Dinh Hai Mr Vu Xuan Thuy Mr Lam Quang Du	Dty Director Dty Director Staff
Thu June 8	09:30-10:15	Mr Nguyen Van Lang, Ex-ISO Task Force. Mr Nguyen Van Tien	Ex-Dty Director OMARD Staff of OMARD
	10:30-11:15 PAR-MP MoHA No 100, Tue Tinh street	Mr Mel Blunt	
	14:00-14:45 The Netherlands Embassy. No 360, Kim Ma street	Mr Hans Peter Verhoeff Ms Hoang Viet Phuong	First Secretary Economic Assistant
	15:00-16:00 MARD VIE/02/016 PAR Office	Mr Nguyen Duc Son & Ms D.T. Thu Hien	Director Manager
18 June	Travel to Bac Giang		
19 June	DARD & PAR Coordinator	Mr Vuong Van Nam Mr Pham Duc Khoai,	DARD Dty Director Office Chief

		Mr Hoang Van Tinh, Nguyen Van Sung,	Office staff LAN Operator
	Extension Center	Mr Thanh,	PAEC Director
	Luc Ngan District	Mr Chu Van Bao, Mr Dung, Mr Dinh Van Duy,	Economic Division Head Head of Extension Sta- tion and staff of Exten- sion Station
	Phuong Son commune	Mr Pham Xuan Mui, Mr Le Ba Kim, Ms Nguyen Thi Huong	CPC Chairman Commune extensionist in charge of Commune Statistics
	Poor farmer household	Ms Truong Thi Gai	Poor farmer
	farmer household	Mr Bang	Better-off farmer
20 June	Studying reports DARD	Mr Pham Duc Khoai,	Office Chief
21 June	Travel to Ha Nam		
22 June	DARD & PAR Coordinator	Mr Nguyen Manh Hung, Mr Tran Nhu Vinh, Mr Dang Phan Son, Mr Nguyen Van Tam	DARD Dty Director Chief, Admin. Office staff IT, LAN Operator
	Extension Center	Ms Doan Thi Bich	PAEC Director
June 23, 2006	Phu Ly Town, Agriculture Division	Ms Tran Thi Yen, Ms Quyen t. Tuyet Le, Mr Tam,	Division Dty Head staff LAN coordinator