

TERMINAL EVALUATION

of the UNDP-IBSA-Government of Lao PDR Project

*“SUPPORT TO INTEGRATED IRRIGATED AGRICULTURE IN 2 DISTRICTS IN BOLIKHAMXAY (SIRA)”*

(Project ID 00083482)

****

**Final Report**

(Output 3)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables ii

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms iii

Acknowledgements iv

1. Main Conclusions and Recommendations 1

1.1. Background - Introduction 1

1.2. Conclusions 2

1.3. Recommendations 6

1.4. Rating Table 7

2. CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT 9

3. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK 10

3.1. Objectives 10

3.2. Scope 10

3.3. Methodology 11

3.3.1. Overall Approach 11

3.3.2. Evaluation Instruments 12

3.4. Limitations and Constraints 13

4. EVALUATION FINDINGS 13

4.1. Project Design / Formulation 13

4.1.1. Analysis of Result and Resources Framework 13

4.1.2. Assumptions and Risks 15

4.1.3. Linkages Between the Project and Other Interventions within the Sector 16

4.1.4. Lessons from other Relevant Projects/Initiatives 17

4.1.5. Planned Stakeholder Participation 18

4.1.6. Planned Replication Approach 19

4.1.7. UNDP Comparative Advantage 20

4.1.8. IBSA Strategic Objectives 20

4.1.9. Management Arrangements 21

4.2. Project Implementation 22

4.2.1. Adaptive Management 22

4.2.2. Partnership Arrangements 23

4.2.3. Project Finance 24

4.2.4. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Approach 26

4.2.5. Contribution of UNDP and Implementing Partner 28

4.3. Project Results 29

4.3.1. Overall Achievements/Results 29

4.3.2. Attainment of Project Objective / Impact 34

4.3.3. Relevance 36

4.3.4. Efficiency 37

4.3.5. Country Ownership 38

4.3.6. Sustainability 38

4.3.7. Mainstreaming 40

4.3.8. Catalytic Role 40

5. LESSONS LEARNED 42

Annex 1: Terms of Reference 43

Annex 2: Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct and Agreement Form 58

Annex 3: Evaluation Matrix 59

Annex 4: List of Documents Reviewed 66

Annex 5: Interview Guide 69

Annex 6: Evaluation Mission Agenda 72

Annex 7: List of People Interviewed 73

Annex 8: Project Expected Results and Planned Activities 74

Annex 9: Summary of Field Data Collection in Vienthong and Bolikhan Districts 76

Annex 10: Report Clearance Form 80

# List of Tables

Table 1: Rating Table 7

Table 2: Steps Used to Conduct the Evaluation 12

Table 3: Project Logic Model 14

Table 4: List of Risks and Mitigation Measures Identified at the Formulation Phase 15

Table 5: List of Risks Logged in Atlas 15

Table 6: List of Stakeholders and their Anticipated Roles 18

Table 7: UNDP/IBSA Funds Disbursement Status (in USD) 24

Table 8: Co-financing Status 25

Table 9: List of Performance Indicators 27

Table 10: List of Delivered Results 30

# List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AWP Annual Work Plan

CO Country Office

DAFO District Agriculture and Forestry Office

DLF Departments of Livestock and Fisheries

DOI Department of Irrigation

DPI Provincial Departments of Planning and Investment

DRR Disaster Risk Reduction

FACE Funding Authorization and Certification of Expenditures

FMSC Fisheries Management Subcommittee

GEF Global Environment Facility

ha Hectare

HACT Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer

IBSA India, Brazil, South Africa (Fund)

IMT Irrigation Management Transfer

INGO International Non-Governmental Organization

Km Kilometer

LDC Least Developing Countries

LUP Land Use Plan

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

MAF Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

MDG Millennium Development Goals

MONRE Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

MPI Ministry of Planning and Investment

NGPES National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy

NIM National Implementation Modality

NRM Natural Resources Management

NSEDP National Socioeconomic Development Plan 2011-2015 (7th)

O&M Operation and Maintenance

PAFO Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office

PIS Provincial Irrigation Services

PM Project Manager

PNREO Provincial Natural Resources and Environment Office

RBM Results-Based Management

SIRA Support to Integrated Irrigated Agriculture in 2 Districts in Bolikhamxay Project

SMART Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound

SSC South-South Cooperation

TE Terminal Evaluation

TOR Terms of Reference

UN United Nations

UNDAF United Nations Development Assistance Framework

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNSSOC United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation

UNV United Nations Volunteer

USD United States Dollar

UXO Unexploded ordnance

WMC Watershed Management Committee

WUA Water User Association

WUG Water User Group

# Acknowledgements

|  |
| --- |
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**DISCLAIMER**

*This report is the work of independent consultants and does not necessarily represent the views, or policies, or intentions of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) or of the Government of Lao PDR.*

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# Main Conclusions and Recommendations[[1]](#footnote-1)

## 

## Background - Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Terminal Evaluation of the UNDP-IBSA-Government of Lao PDR “*Support to Integrated Irrigated Agriculture in 2 Districts in Bolikhamxay (SIRA)*”. This terminal evaluation was performed by an Evaluation Team composed of Mr. Jean-Joseph Bellamy and Dr. Saythong Vilayvong on behalf of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The National Socio-Economic Development Plan 2011-2015 (7th NSEDP) and other national policies identified household food insecurity as the most critical challenge to overcome in order to ensure the most basic level of security and sustainable livelihoods for the majority of the Lao rural population. Widespread food insecurity coupled with high levels of acute and chronic malnutrition impedes social, human and economic development and contributes significantly to poverty. Food insecurity is defined by inadequate availability, access, utilization and stability of food production. Shortfalls in these areas are commonplace and are most pronounced amongst farming households in rural areas. Many communities lack adequate coping strategies for food-deficits and associated health problems that persist amongst large sections of the population.

Since 2008 the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) has developed a new, more holistic approach to food production, including the need to recognize that irrigated agriculture is an economic activity undertaken by farmers and other private sector entrepreneurs, which necessitates infrastructure development and management. As a result, the Department of Irrigation (DOI) prepared a national strategy for the irrigated agriculture subsector for the period 2011-2020. The strategy was to develop a substantial rise in commodity production while maintaining food security as part of the National Socio-Economic Development Plan 2011-2015 (7th NSEDP) to support industrial development, create jobs and improve incomes in rural areas.

The project was designed to promote/demonstrate the focus of the Government of Lao PDR on the agricultural sector to achieve self-sufficiency in food production, promote crop diversification and expand irrigation development. This project aimed at improving the overall livelihoods and food security of local communities in the two poorest districts of Bolikhamxay Province by supporting the development of irrigated agriculture and the community-based management of watershed resources such as forests and fisheries. The selection of Bolikhamxay Province was due to the fact that it has major constraints in the area of irrigation service: (i) infrastructure systems are incomplete and damaged; (ii) uncertain and generally limited water availability during the dry season (gravity schemes); (iii) high cost of electricity and of repair of pumps (in pump-lift schemes); (iv) difficulty in organizing effective management of the scheme; and (v) the Irrigation Management Transfer concept could not be fully realized. The population of this province is mostly rural relying on agriculture for both food and income.

This project was supported by UNDP, IBSA Fund and the Government of Lao PDR. It was funded by a grant from IBSA of USD 1,323,000 and an in-kind contribution of USD 84,000 from the beneficiaries and a Government in-kind contribution estimated at 10% of the project or USD 132,300. It started in June 2012 and ended at the end of June 2015 (3 years). The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) has overall responsibility for the management of the project and its Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office of Bolikhamxay Province (PAFO) was the Project Implementing Partner. A project executive board is responsible for making management decisions for the project; it is chaired by the Vice Governor of Bolikhamxay Province.

The overall objective of the project was **to contribute to sustainable livelihoods improvement and food security through the development of irrigated agriculture and the promotion of more sustainable management of corresponding watershed resources in the selected communities of Bolikhan and Viengthong Districts in the Bolikhamxay Province**. This objective was to be achieved through six outcomes:

1. A watershed management plan for Nampou project is developed and implemented
2. Water supply in both seasons for irrigating command area of Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District is available
3. Irrigation projects are co-managed by government authorities and Water Users' Association with women participation
4. Agriculture production increased and diversified in Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District
5. Improved Fisheries in Nampou reservoir through establishment of fisheries co-management
6. Technical and managerial capacity of provincial and district level government staff enhanced

This terminal evaluation report documents the achievements of the project and includes five chapters. Chapter 1 presents the main conclusions and recommendations; chapter 2 presents an overview of the project; chapter 3 briefly describes the objective, scope, methodology, evaluation users and limitations of the evaluation; chapter 4 presents the findings of the evaluation. Lessons learned are presented in Chapters 5 and relevant annexes are found at the back end of the report.

## Conclusions

***Project Design / Formulation***

**a) The project was highly relevant in the context of the 7th NSEDP, the government initiative to implement its irrigated agriculture programme and also its “3 Builds” initiative.**

Since 2008, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) has been developing a more holistic approach to food production to address food insecurity and sustainable livelihoods for rural communities, including the need to recognize that irrigated agriculture is an economic activity undertaken by farmers and other private sector entrepreneurs, which necessitates infrastructure development and management. It includes the drafting of an Agriculture Master Plan, an Agricultural Investment Plan, an Agriculture Development Strategy and an Irrigation Agriculture Strategy. The latter was prepared by the Department of Irrigation (DOI) for the period 2011-2020. It sets ambitious targets for increasing irrigated areas in 10 Provinces to a total of at least 463,500ha for both rainy and dry seasons. The goal of this strategy was to develop a substantial rise in commodity production while maintaining food security as part of the National Socio-Economic Development Plan 2011-2015 (7th NSEDP) to support industrial development, create jobs and improve incomes in rural areas.

In addition, this project has also been implemented in the context of the Sam Sang initiative also called the “3 Builds” initiative. This initiative was proclaimed by the Prime Minister Order 16/2012 with the objective to improve the delivery of public services. It involves the further transfer of responsibilities, functions and resources from central ministries to the provinces and onwards to the districts. Its aim is to improve transparency and accountability in the delivery of public services, including the clarification of roles and responsibilities at each level of government.

This project offered a good opportunity to support the government in testing and demonstrating the feasibility of community-based management of irrigated agriculture schemes and of watershed to protect water resources. In the meantime, it was also a demonstration project implemented by the Provincial Authorities with the involvement of district services of Viengthong and Bolikhan; hence it was part of testing and demonstrating the “transfer of responsibilities, functions and resources from central ministries to the provinces and onwards to the districts” in the context of the Sam Sang initiative.

**b) The project had a logical chain of results but a more comprehensive design would have allowed the project to be fully in line with IBSA strategic objectives.**

The *Result and Resources Framework* identified during the design phase of this project presents a logical “chain of results”: Activities ⇒Outcomes ⇒Objective. There was an inherent logic within its 6 outcomes. The project strategy was to support the formulation of a Watershed Management Plan for Nampou in Bolikhan District and related activities to land use and natural resources (forest, fisheries) management to preserve water resources upstream. Then, downstream the project was to support the rehabilitation of gravity irrigation schemes (canals and head work) in Bolikhan and Viengthong Districts of Bolikhamxay province to improve water supply systems for agriculture production to beneficiary communities. Then, with more available water, the project was to support the development of agriculture production during both rainy and dry seasons, which - by extension - was to increase food security of beneficiary communities and increase community livelihoods through higher yields and irrigated cash-crops.

However, the project strategy (chain of expected results) did not integrate all IBSA strategic objectives; particularly the objectives referring to the promotion of engagement of Southern experts and institutions; the promotion of knowledge sharing in the spirit of South-South cooperation; and to stress project sustainability with detailed strategy for future disengagement. These objectives were not really “embedded” in the project design; particularly in the project strategy (expected outcomes) and the management arrangements, despite the fact that these objectives are excellent objectives for any development projects. The last objective (stress project sustainability) is also a good project management practice but the strategy for disengagement (end of project) was rather weak in the project document.

**c) There is limited baseline technical information in the project document to justify the project.**

The project is well justified in the context of government policies; however, there is limited technical information in the project document justifying the project. An initial survey at the beginning of the project was to be conducted among beneficiaries at both community and government levels to establish the project monitoring baseline, but this survey was not carried out. One particular information area that is missing in the document is technical information related to irrigation infrastructures. A rather large investment was made to improve irrigation infrastructures (2/3 of the IBSA grant) but it is not clear how much water is available for each site, how many hectares can be irrigated in both rainy and dry seasons, was the choice of investing in cemented channels the best value for money, etc. This information was may be known at the formulation stage but was not integrated in the project document.

***Project Implementation***

**d) The project was implemented at the provincial level using the UNDP National Implementation Modality (NIM) approach. It demonstrated that it can be done at this level; closer to beneficiaries and supporting the Sam Sang Policy for de-centralization.**

The Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office (PAFO) in Bolikhamxay Province was the Project Implementing Partner. In keeping with standard procedures of the Government of Lao PDR, a government staff member was nominated to be the Project Manager. This was a PAFO Senior Officer. The cost of this position was fully funded by PAFO. This arrangement provided a good collaboration between government services and the project as well as with the targeted communities in the Vienthong and Bolikhan Districts. It provided the project with a good “conduit” to communicate with government services.

Despite some difficulties with administrative procedures and delays in processing project requests, particularly for procuring goods and services, these management arrangements were adequate for the implementation of the project. It was the first project for UNDP to be implemented by Provincial Authorities using the UNDP National Implementation Modality (NIM) and it demonstrated the feasibility of this approach at this level of government. These arrangements provided the project with clear roles and responsibilities as well as clear reporting lines of authority. The good functioning of the Executive Board – well chaired - provided an effective way to communicate and keep stakeholders engaged, contributing to a good national ownership of project achievements. Overall, the process worked well; it reinforced the national ownership of the project by being closer to project beneficiaries and demonstrated that the NIM approach can be used at the Provincial level.

**e) The overall Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) approach was marginally satisfactory due to a limited focus on monitoring the development impact of the project.**

The M&E plan – including its set of 8 indicators and 16 targets - provided the project with an adequate framework to measure its progress/performance. Quarterly and annual progress reports were produced timely and provided good information on the progress made in implementing planned activities. However, it is a case of a project monitoring approach that was too focus on “*monitoring the trees but not the forest*”. In other words, monitoring activities focused on the progress of specific activities and tasks and not enough on how well the project was progressing in achieving its outcomes and particularly its objective. No indicators were identified to measure the performance of the project at the objective level. As a result, progress reports did not focus on how well the project was progressing in increasing food security and community livelihoods. Furthermore, being at the end of the project, we don’t really know the potential impacts of the project on these two critical elements. This issue is also compounded by the fact that a delay in the rehabilitation of irrigation schemes prevented other project activities to benefit from at least a one-year agriculture cycle and to be able to provide data on the impact on agriculture production and fisheries from better irrigation water supplies.

***Project Results***

**f) Delays in implementing the construction work to rehabilitate irrigation infrastructures in both districts (outcome 2) impacted the performance of the entire project.**

The project delivered most of its planned activities within a tight timeline. However, delays in implementing the main outcome of this project – the rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructures representing 2/3 of the IBSA grant – affected the implementation of other outcomes and particularly the time needed to acknowledge the benefits of capacity development activities. For instance, capacity development activities under outcome 4 were implemented to increase agriculture production through crop yield increase and extension of irrigated areas during the dry season. However, due to the fact that the improvement of the irrigated water supply systems were only functional early this year (2015), villagers have not yet completed a full agricultural cycle - rainy and dry seasons - using the increased availability of water during the dry season and using their new knowledge acquired through project activities. As a result of these delays, it is too early to measure accurately these benefits. A minimum of one year is necessary before any valid measurements can be made.

However, observations, meetings and the review of project documents conducted during this evaluation lead to state that the project will have a positive impact on these communities in term of food security and more sustainable livelihoods. Anecdotal information collected during the project site visits indicates that potential improvements in term of food security and sustainable livelihoods should be seen when using their new knowledge and the improved irrigated water supply systems.

**g) The project and its achievements have a good country ownership.**

The project was designed on the basis of responding to a government priority to increase agriculture production and by extension food security and also to improve sustainable livelihoods of rural communities. It became *de facto* a priority programme for the Bolikhamxay Province overseen by the Vice Governor of the Province and implemented by key government departments responsible for irrigation, agriculture extension, fisheries, and watershed management. It was implemented by PAFO to address issues of poor rural communities in the Province.

The timing of the project was also good. It provided the Government of Lao PDR with resources to demonstrate the implementation of a series of measures to increase food security and improve rural community livelihoods that are part of the objectives of the National Socioeconomic Development Plan 2011-2015 (7th NSEDP) and also part of the objectives of the agriculture development policy framework of MAF, including the government arrangements for operating and maintaining irrigation infrastructures. It was also a project implemented by the Provincial Authorities with the involvement of district services of Viengthong and Bolikhan and villages; hence it was part of testing and demonstrating the “*transfer of responsibilities, functions and resources from central ministries to the provinces and onwards to the districts*” in the context of the Sam Sang initiative. As a result, the country ownership is good and it should contribute to the sustainability of project achievements.

**h) The prospect for the long-term sustainability of project achievements is good.**

Despite a poor sustainability strategy developed in the project document, the prospect for the long-term sustainability of project achievements is good. The project was a direct response to the government irrigated agriculture policy, including the development of a community-based watershed management plan and the use of WUGs to co-manage these irrigation infrastructures. It is anticipated that the government will continue to implement this sectoral policy in the foreseeable future and, therefore, these project achievements should be sustained in the medium-term and used as demonstrations to be replicated in other districts.

Furthermore, project achievements are mostly benefiting poor rural communities in the Vienthong and Bolikhan Districts in the Bolikhamxay Province. These benefits – irrigation infrastructures, co-management approaches to manage irrigated water and watershed, and improved agriculture and fishery techniques – can be considered as basic needs to these communities. Their livelihoods depend on irrigated water for their food security and increased agriculture production should have a direct impact on their own livelihoods. Project achievements are part of their sustainable livelihoods and the targeted communities “own” these achievements; it was implemented for them and it is anticipated that they will sustain these achievements as part of sustaining their own livelihoods.

However, there is a certain financial risk for the sustainability of some project achievements, particularly the O&M of the irrigation infrastructures. The project invested in irrigation infrastructures for communities in 2 poor Districts in Bolikhamxay Province. Despite the fact that the investments have been completed, these infrastructures need to be operated and maintained and communities are asking for more of these infrastructures such as cemented channels in the Viengthong District. Community-based WUGs have been established and agreements for setting water fees found, however, for obvious reasons (raising fees from poor communities) these funds will be limited to undertake only basic operation and maintenance of these infrastructures. Who will provide the financing for more O&M and possibly for further investment in infrastructures?

**i) Mainstreaming and replicating project achievements may be limited due mostly to the fact that it was not part of the project strategy.**

A replication approach was not really developed during the project formulation phase and by extension the planning of mainstreaming project achievements in the Province and nation wide. It was mostly anticipated that through the participation of central level agencies in the project through the Executive Board, it will contribute to the “*improvement and the further development of the corresponding policy and legal frameworks*”.

In the meantime, this project was highly relevant for the Government of Lao PDR and also for UNDP and IBSA Fund. The project was one response to the national priority that is to achieve self-sufficiency in food production, promoting crop diversification and expanding irrigation infrastructure in some of the poorest Districts in Lao PDR. The project provided resources to demonstrate how to improve the overall livelihoods and food security of local communities in two poor Districts of Bolikhamxay Province; mostly by supporting the development of irrigated agriculture and the community-based management of watershed resources such as forests and fisheries.

However, mainstreaming and replicating project achievements were not part of the project strategy; no activities were planned. As a result, no specific project activities took place to identify lessons learned and best practices and to disseminate these results to related government services in Lao PDR and possibly in the region. Nevertheless, despite that the project has ended, it is hoped that due to the good country ownership, these achievements will not be abandoned and that the Provincial Authorities will use the project accumulated knowledge in their respective policy and development frameworks.

**j) The project should have a catalytic role over the medium term.**

Using a definition of the catalytic role of projects used by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) that is to consider the extent to which the project has demonstrated: a) production of a public good, b) demonstration, c) replication, and d) scaling up, the SIRA project has had a limited catalytic role so far. The project produced public goods with the provision of better irrigation infrastructures and demonstrated co-management mechanisms for O&M of these infrastructures and the management of natural resources, including fisheries. However, when it comes to replication and scaling-up, there has been little emphasis on these aspects so far.

Nevertheless, the same government priorities justifying this project are still current, the need for better irrigation water supply systems is still a high priority for rural communities – particularly for poor rural communities, and the need to secure food production is also a high priority for these communities as well as the need to enhance their livelihoods. Once the results of this project will be confirmed, the project could still play a significant catalytic role through mainstreaming and replicating the project achievements using the “conduit” through the Provincial Authorities. There are clear needs for more resources in this area, including a larger project building on the achievements of the SIRA project and covering other Districts in the Bolikhamxay Province.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this terminal evaluation, the following recommendations are suggested.

**Recommendation 1: It is recommended to conduct an extensive survey next year after a full rainy and dry season to measure project results/benefits.**

***Issue to Address***

The project delivered most of its planned activities within a tight timeline. However, delays in implementing the main outcome of this project – the rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructures representing 2/3 of the IBSA grant – affected the implementation of other outcomes and particularly the time needed to acknowledge the benefits of capacity development activities. Due to the fact that the improvement of the irrigated water supply systems were only functional early this year (2015), villagers have not yet completed a full agricultural cycle - rainy and dry seasons - using the increased availability of water during the dry season and using their new knowledge acquired through project activities. As a result of these delays, it was too early to measure accurately these benefits during this final evaluation.

A minimum of one year is necessary before any valid measurements can be made to estimate how many additional hectares of irrigated land can be used during the rainy and particularly the dry season, how much agriculture production has increased (yield per ha) and what are the socio-economic impacts on villages due to increased cash-crops and increased cultivated land and yield. It is recommended to conduct this survey after a full rainy and dry season by mid-2016.

**Recommendation 2: It is recommended to conduct a water engineering study to assess water availability during both seasons, including water flows and volumes.**

***Issue to Address***

A rather large investment was made by this project to improve irrigation infrastructures (2/3 of the IBSA grant). However, it is not clear how much water is available for each site, how many hectares can be irrigated in both rainy and dry seasons, and was the choice of investing in cemented channels the best value for money, etc. This information would be critical for any follow up activities in the same sites. As it stands currently, without this technical information, it would be difficult to assess the potential of these farming communities in term of how many hectares they can irrigate in both rainy and dry season; and by extension how much investment should be made to develop further irrigation infrastructures. This information could also be useful for the development of projects in other similar areas.

**Recommendation 3: It is recommended that project results be disseminated in Lao PDR and in the region through participation to workshops, seminars, and conferences.**

***Issue to Address***

Once it will be possible to better ascertain the project results (mid-2016), lessons learned and best practices should be clearly identified, documented and disseminated through related government services throughout Lao PDR. There is a good potential for learning from this experience and contributing further to the national priority that is to achieve self-sufficiency in food production, promoting crop diversification and expanding irrigation infrastructure in some of the poorest Districts in Lao PDR. The project was a response to this national priority. It provided resources to demonstrate how possible it is to improve the overall livelihoods and food security of local communities in 2 poor Districts of Bolikhamxay Province by supporting the development of irrigated agriculture and the community-based management of watershed resources such as forests and fisheries.

It is recommended that, once the survey to measure project results/benefits will be completed, to disseminate these results through government services including through the National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI) service of MAF.

**Recommendation 4: It is recommended that the government services monitor the sustainability of the O&M of irrigation infrastructures by the WUGs, including the financial sustainability of financing O&M.**

***Issue to Address***

There is a certain financial risk for the sustainability of some project achievements, particularly the O&M of irrigation infrastructures. The project invested in irrigation infrastructures for communities in 2 poor Districts in Bolikhamxay Province. Despite that the investments have been completed, these infrastructures need to be operated and maintained and communities in the Viengthong District are asking for more infrastructures such as cemented channels. Community-based WUGs have been established and agreements for setting water fees found, however, for obvious reasons (raising fees from poor communities) these funds will be limited to undertake only basic operation and maintenance of these infrastructures.

As of the time of this evaluation, it is not known if these funds will be sufficient and, moreover, some community members already mentioned the difficulties to pay these fees during the field visits of the Evaluation Team. There is a risk that these funds will not be sufficient for O&M of these irrigation infrastructures. It requires an attention from government services to ensure the sustainability of these infrastructures.

**Recommendation 5: It is recommended to include all strategies, objectives in the strategy of a project to ensure their implementation.**

***Issue to Address***

Based on the experience of this project where some SSC strategic objectives were not integrated in the project design, particularly in the project strategy (expected outcomes) and the management arrangements, it is a good project management practice to incorporate all critical objectives, strategies and principles in the design of a project (as expected results or part of management arrangements) to ensure – and facilitate – its implementation, including its monitoring.

**Recommendation 6: It is recommended to develop a concept paper on a new project scaling-up project achievements in the Bolikhamxay Province and/or in other Provinces.**

***Issue to Address***

The government has still the same priorities that justified this project. The need for better irrigation water supply systems is still a high priority for rural communities – particularly for poor rural communities, and the need to secure food production is a high priority for these communities as well as the need to enhance their livelihoods. There are clear needs for more resources in this area, including a larger project building on the achievements of the SIRA project and covering other districts in the Bolikhamxay Province and/or in other Provinces. A new project is needed and could be formulated along the SSC agenda, including the lessons learned and best practices from this project.

## Rating Table

Below is the rating table as requested in the TORs. It includes all the required performance criteria rated as per the rating scales presented in the TORs. Supportive information is provided throughout this report in the respective sections.

Table 1: Rating Table

| **Evaluation Ratings:** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. Monitoring and Evaluation** | ***Rating*** | **2. IA& EA Execution** | ***Rating*** |
| M&E design at entry | MS | Quality of UNDP Implementation | S |
| M&E Plan Implementation | S | Quality of Execution - Executing Agency | S |
| Overall quality of M&E | MS | Overall quality of Implementation / Execution | S |
| **3. Assessment of Outcomes** | **Rating** | **4. Sustainability** | **Rating** |
| Relevance | R | Financial resources: | ML |
| Effectiveness | MS | Socio-political: | L |
| Efficiency | MS | Institutional framework and governance: | L |
| Overall Project Outcome Rating | MS | Environmental: | L |
|  |  | Overall likelihood of sustainability: | L |

***Rating Scales***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, I&E Execution ratings:*** | ***Sustainability ratings:*** |
| Highly Satisfactory (HS): no shortcomings  Satisfactory (S): minor shortcomings  Moderately Satisfactory (MS)  Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): significant shortcomings  Unsatisfactory (U): major problems  Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): severe problems | Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability  Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks  Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks  Unlikely (U): severe risks |
| ***Relevance ratings:*** | ***Impact Ratings:*** |
| Relevant (R)  Not relevant (NR) | Significant (S)  Minimal (M)  Negligible (N) |

# CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

1. The National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES) and other national policies identified household food insecurity as the most critical challenge to overcome in order to ensure the most basic level of security and sustainable livelihoods for the majority of the Lao rural population. Widespread food insecurity coupled with high levels of acute and chronic malnutrition impedes social, human and economic development and contributes significantly to poverty. Food insecurity is defined by inadequate availability, access, utilization and stability of food production. Shortfalls in these areas are commonplace and are most pronounced amongst farming households in rural areas. Many communities lack adequate coping strategies for food-deficits and associated health problems that persist amongst large sections of the population.
2. In 2008 the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) developed a new, more holistic approach to food production, including the need to recognize that irrigated agriculture is an economic activity undertaken by farmers and other private sector entrepreneurs, which necessitates infrastructure development and management. As a result, the Department of Irrigation (DOI) prepared a national strategy for the irrigated agriculture subsector for the period 2011-2020. The strategy was to develop a substantial rise in commodity production while maintaining food security as part of the National Socioeconomic Development Plan 2011-2015 (7th NSEDP) to support industrial development, create jobs and improve incomes in rural areas.
3. The project was designed to promote/demonstrate the focus of the Government of Lao PDR I the agricultural sector to achieve self-sufficiency in food production, promote crop diversification and expand irrigation development. This project aimed at improving the overall livelihoods and food security of local communities in the 2 of the poorest districts of Bolikhamxay Province by supporting the development of irrigated agriculture and the community-based management of watershed resources such as forests and fisheries. The selection of Bolikhamxay Province was due to the fact that it has major constraints in the area of irrigation service: (i) infrastructure systems are incomplete and damaged; (ii) uncertain and generally limited water availability during the dry season (gravity schemes); (iii) high cost of electricity and of repair of pumps (in pump-lift schemes); (iv) difficulty in organizing effective management of the scheme; and (v) the Irrigation Management Transfer concept could not be fully realized. The population of this Province is mostly rural relying on agriculture for both food and income.
4. The project strategy was to support the formulation of a Watershed Management Plan and implement its components including irrigated agriculture through rehabilitation of irrigation canals and head works for selected irrigation schemes in Bolikhan and Viengthong Districts of Bolikhamxay province. Watershed management plan for Nampou in Bolikhan District was to be prepared and activities related to Land Use and natural resources (forest, fisheries) management was to be implemented with the support of the project. The project strategy was also to rehabilitate 3 irrigation (gravity flow systems) projects in 2 districts: 1 project in Bolikhan District covering 150ha before the project and expected to cover about 500ha with the project support; and 2 in Viengthong District covering only 25ha during the dry season before the project and expected to cover about 320ha both during the dry and wet seasons.
5. This project is supported by UNDP, IBSA[[2]](#footnote-2) and the Government of Lao PDR. It is funded by a grant from IBSA of USD 1,323,000 and an in-kind contribution of USD 84,000 from the Beneficiaries and a Government in-kind contribution estimated at 10% of the project or USD 132,300. It started in June 2012 and will end at the end of June 2015 (3 years). The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) has overall responsibility for the management of the project and its Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office of Bolikhamxay Province (PAFO) was the Project Implementing Partner. A project executive board was responsible for making management decisions for the project; it was chaired by the Vice Governor of Bolikhamxay Province.
6. The overall objective of the project was to contribute to sustainable livelihoods improvement and food security through the development of irrigated agriculture and the promotion of more sustainable management of corresponding watershed resources in the selected communities of Bolikhan and Viengthong Districts in the Bolikhamxay Province. This objective was to be achieved through six outcomes; they were:

* ***Outcome 1***: A watershed management plan for Nampou project is developed and implemented;
* ***Outcome 2***: Water supply in both seasons for irrigating command area of Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District is available;
* ***Outcome 3***: Irrigation projects are co-managed by government authorities and Water Users' Association with women’s participation;
* ***Outcome 4***: Agriculture production increased and diversified in Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District;
* ***Outcome 5***: Improved Fisheries in Nampou reservoir through establishment of fisheries co-management;
* ***Outcome 6***: Technical and managerial capacity of provincial and district level government staff enhanced.

# EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

1. This terminal evaluation - a requirement of UNDP & IBSA procedures - has been initiated by UNDP Lao PDR as the UN Implementing Agency. This evaluation provides an in-depth assessment of project achievements and recommendations for other similar UNDP-IBSA supported projects in the region and worldwide.

## Objectives

1. The objective of the evaluation is to assess the achievement of project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP, IBSA and government of Lao PDR programming. More specifically, the evaluation will:

* Assess the overall performance against the project objective and outcomes as set out in the project document including the project’s *Result and Resources Framework* and other related documents;
* Assess the national leadership and ownership;
* Assess the efficiency of the project, including the equality and horizontality such as maximizing the use of local capacities;
* Analyze critically the implementation and management arrangements of the project, including the non-conditionality of IBSA fund granted to this project;
* Assess the progress to date towards achievement of the outcomes;
* Review planned strategies and plans for achieving the overall objective of the project within the timeframe;
* Assess the sustainability of project’s interventions, including the potential for replication and scaling up of project achievements;
* Assess the mutual benefits between Lao PDR and the IBSA countries;
* Assess project relevance to national priorities (including achieving gender equality goals);
* List and document lessons concerning project design, implementation and management;
* Provide guidance for closing project activities.

## Scope

1. Below is a summary of the elements that will be covered by this evaluation. Each element will be assessed and those marked with an “\*” will be rated as per the TOR (*see Annex 1*). These elements are:

* ***Project Formulation***
  + Analysis of the *Result and Resources Framework* including the intended outputs and their corresponding targets and planned activities)
  + Assumptions and Risks
  + Planned stakeholder participation
  + Replication approach
  + UNDP and IBSA comparative advantage
  + Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
  + Management arrangements
* ***Project implementation***
  + Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
  + Partnership arrangements (with relevant stakeholders involved in the country/region)
  + Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management
  + Project Finance and co-financing
  + Monitoring and evaluation: design at entry and implementation (\*)
  + Contribution of quality of project execution/implementation by UN Agency (\*)
* ***Project results (outputs, outcomes and objectives)***
  + Overall results (attainment of objectives) (\*)
  + Relevance (\*)
  + Effectiveness & Efficiency (\*)
  + Country ownership
  + Mainstreaming
  + Sustainability: financial resources, socio-political, institutional framework and governance and environmental (\*)
  + Impact

## Methodology

1. The methodology used to conduct this terminal evaluation complied with international criteria and professional norms and standards; including the norms and standards adopted by the UN Evaluation Group and the IBSA guidelines for assessing south-south cooperation principles at the project level.

### *Overall Approach*

1. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and IBSA as reflected in the “*UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-support Projects*” and in the IBSA Guidelines “*Analytical Framework IBSA Fund South-South Cooperation Principles Assessment at Project level*”. The evaluation was undertaken in-line with principles such as: *independence, impartiality, transparency, disclosure, ethical, partnership, competencies/capacities, credibility* and *utility*. The process will promote accountability for the achievement of project objectives and promote learning, feedback and knowledge sharing on results and lessons learned among the project’s partners and beyond.
2. The Evaluation Team developed evaluation tools in accordance with the UNDP and IBSA policies and guidelines to ensure an effective project evaluation. The evaluation was conducted and the findings were structured around five key evaluation criteria; which are also the five internationally accepted evaluation criteria set out by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. There are:

* *Relevance* relates to an overall assessment of whether the project was in keeping with donors and partner policies, with national and local needs and priorities as well as with its design.
* *Effectiveness* is a measure of the extent to which formally agreed expected project results (outcomes) have been achieved, or can be expected to be achieved.
* *Efficiency* is a measure of the productivity of the project intervention process, i.e. to what degree the outcomes achieved derive from efficient use of financial, human and material resources. In principle, it means comparing outcomes and outputs against inputs.
* *Impacts* are the long-term results of the project and include both positive and negative consequences, whether these are foreseen and expected, or not.
* *Sustainability* is an indication of whether the outcomes (end of project results) and the positive impacts (long term results) are likely to continue after the project ends.

1. In addition to the UNDP and IBSA guidance for project evaluation, the Evaluation Team applied to this mandate their knowledge of evaluation methodologies and approaches and their expertise in agriculture and environmental issues. They also applied several methodological principles such as (i) *Validity of information*: multiple measures and sources will be sought out to ensure that the results are accurate and valid; (ii) *Integrity*: Any issue with respect to conflict of interest, lack of professional conduct or misrepresentation was immediately referred to the client if and when needed; and (iii) R*espect and anonymity*: All participants had the right to provide information in confidence.
2. The evaluation was conducted following a set of steps presented in the table below:

Table 2: Steps Used to Conduct the Evaluation

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **I. Review Documents and Prepare Mission**   * Start-up teleconference/finalize assignment work plan * Collect and review project documents * Elaborate and submit **Inception Report** * Prepare mission: agenda and logistic | **III. Analyze Information**   * In-depth analysis and interpretation of data collected * Follow-up interviews (if necessary) * Elaborate and submit **draft evaluation report** |
| **II. Mission / Collect Information**   * Mission to Lao PDR for the Team Leader * Interview key Stakeholders and conduct field visits * Further collect project related documents * Mission debriefings | **IV. Finalize Evaluation Report**   * Circulate draft report to UNDP/relevant stakeholders * Integrate comments and submit **final report** |

1. Finally, the Evaluation Team signed and applied the “*Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct and Agreement Form*” (*see Annex 2*). The Evaluation Team conducted evaluation activities, which were independent, impartial and rigorous. This terminal evaluation contributed to learning and accountability and the Evaluation Team has personal and professional integrity and was guided by propriety in the conduct of his business.

### *Evaluation Instruments*

1. The evaluation provided evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The findings were triangulated through the concept of “*multiple lines of evidence*” using several evaluation tools and gathering information from different types of stakeholders and different levels of management. To conduct this evaluation the following evaluation instruments were used:

***Evaluation Matrix***: An evaluation matrix was developed based on the evaluation scope presented in the TOR, the project *Result and Resources Framework* and the review of key project documents (*see Annex 3*). This matrix is structured along the five evaluation criteria and includes all evaluation questions; including the scope presented in the guidance. The matrix provided overall directions for the evaluation and was used as a basis for interviewing people and reviewing project documents.

***Documentation Review***: The Evaluation Team conducted a documentation review in Lao PDR and in Canada (*see Annex 4*). In addition to being a main source of information, documents were also used as preparation for the mission of the Team Leader in Lao PDR. A list of documents was identified during the start-up phase and further searches were done through the web and contacts. The list of documents was completed during the mission.

***Interview Guide***: Based on the evaluation matrix, an interview guide was developed (*see Annex 5*) to solicit information from stakeholders. As part of the participatory approach, the Evaluation Team ensured that all parties view this tool as balanced, unbiased, and structured.

***Mission Agenda***: An agenda for the mission of the Team Leader to Lao PDR was developed during the preparatory phase (*see Annex 6*). The list of Stakeholders to be interviewed was reviewed, ensuring it represents all project Stakeholders. Then, interviews were planned in advance of the mission with the objective to have a well-organized and planned mission to ensure a broad scan of Stakeholders’ views during the limited time allocated to the mission.

***Interviews***: Stakeholders were interviewed (*see Annex 7*). The semi-structured interviews were conducted using the interview guide adapted for each interview. All interviews were conducted in person with some follow up using emails when needed. Confidentiality was guaranteed to the interviewees and the findings were incorporated in the final report. A stakeholder workshop/debriefing on initial findings was held in Paksane on Tuesday June 23, 2015.

***Field Visits***: As per the TORs, field visits were conducted during the mission of the Team Leader in Lao PDR; it ensured that the Evaluation Team had direct primary sources of information from the field and project end-users (beneficiaries). It gave opportunities to the Evaluation Team to observe project achievements and obtain views from beneficiaries.

***Achievement Rating***: The Evaluation Team rated project achievements according to the guidance provided in the TORs and consisting of four specific rating scales for rating (1) Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E and Execution; (2) Sustainability; (3) Relevance; and (4) Impact.

## Limitations and Constraints

1. The approach for this terminal evaluation is based on a planned level of effort of 24 days for each Evaluator. It comprises a twelve-day mission to Lao PDR for the Team Leader to interview key stakeholders, collect evaluative evidence and a five-day visit to the Bolikhan and Viengthong Districts of Bolikhamxay province. Within the context of these resources, the independent Evaluation Team was able to conduct a detailed assessment of actual results against expected results.
2. However, due to a delay in the rehabilitation of irrigation schemes supported by the project, which was finished only in early 2015, project beneficiaries were not able to benefit from a minimum of a full year cycle. As a result, the Evaluation Team collected anecdotal evidence but was not able to particularly assess how large irrigated areas can be during the dry season and how much agriculture production in these areas will be increased. Therefore, the independent Evaluation Team was not able to ascertain whether the project met its main objective - as laid down in the project document - and whether the project initiatives are, or are likely to be, sustainable after completion of the project. Information collected during the fact-finding mission indicates that the objective may be met but it needs at least another year to confirm the actual results for the beneficiaries.
3. Within this context, the Evaluation Team made a few recommendations that may help to ascertain whether the project met its main objective and that may be useful to reinforce the long-term sustainability of project achievements. Finally, the report will also contained lessons learned, which could be further taken into consideration during the development and implementation of other similar projects in Lao PDR, in the region and elsewhere in the world.

# EVALUATION FINDINGS

1. This section presents the findings of this terminal evaluation adhering to the basic structure proposed in the TOR and as reflected in the UNDP and IBSA evaluation guidance.

## Project Design / Formulation

1. This section discusses the assessment of the formulation of the project – including its relevance - and its overall design.

### *Analysis of Result and Resources Framework*

1. The Result and Resources Framework identified during the design phase of this project presents a set of expected results. No changes were made during the inception phase. The review of the objective and outcomes indicates a satisfactory and logical “*chain of results*” – Activities Outcomes Objective. Project resources were used to implement activities to reach a set of expected outcomes (6), which together should contribute to achieve the overall objective of the project. This Result and Resources Framework was used as a “*blueprint*” on a day-to-day basis by the implementation team. It was used as a guide all along the implementation.
2. Furthermore, there was an inherent logic within its 6 outcomes. The project strategy was to support the formulation of a Watershed Management Plan for Nampou in Bolikhan District and related activities to land use and natural resources (forest, fisheries) management to preserve water resources upstream. Then, the project was to support the rehabilitation of gravity irrigation schemes (canals and head work) in Bolikhan and Viengthong Districts of Bolikhamxay province to improve water supply systems for agriculture production to beneficiary communities. Then, with more available water, the project was to support the development of agriculture production during both rainy and dry seasons, which - by extension - was to increase food security of beneficiary communities and increase community livelihoods through higher yields and irrigated cash-crops.
3. The logic model of the project presented in the *Result and Resources Framework* is summarized in table 3 below. It includes one objective and six outcomes. For each expected outcome, yearly output targets and indicative activities were identified.

Table 3: Project Logic Model

|  |
| --- |
| **PROJECT OBJECTIVE**  To contribute to sustainable livelihoods improvement and food security through the development of irrigated agriculture and the promotion of more sustainable management of corresponding watershed resources in the selected communities of Bolikhan and Viengthong Districts in the Bolikhamxay Province. |
| **Outcome 1:** A watershed management plan for Nampou project is developed and implemented:   * ***Target 1.1 (2013):*** Watershed Management plan developed and Watershed Management Committee in Place * ***Target 1.2 (2014):*** Community based forest management plans developed and corresponding committees in place * ***Target 1.3 (2015):*** Forest management plans, including improvement of slash-and-burn agriculture, implemented. |
| **Outcome 2:** Water supply in both seasons for irrigating command area of Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District is available;   * ***Target 2.1 (2012):*** Feasibility for rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure conducted * ***Target 2.1 (2013):*** Completion of rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure |
| **Outcome 3:** Irrigation projects are co-managed by government authorities and Water Users' Association with women’s participation;   * ***Target 3.1 (2012):*** WUA established * ***Target 3.2 (2013):*** WUA capacity developed * ***Target 3.3 (2014):*** WUA able to co-manage irrigation projects in cooperation of provincial and district government authorities |
| **Outcome 4:** Agriculture production increased and diversified in Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District;   * ***Target 4.1 (2013):*** Crop yield increased * ***Target 4.1 (2013):*** Two season cultivation in at least 25% of irrigated area (205 ha) with crops other than rice in dry season * ***Target 4.1 (2014):*** Two season cultivation in additional next 25% (410 ha) with crops other than rice in dry season |
| **Outcome 5:** Improved Fisheries in Nampou reservoir through establishment of fisheries co-management;   * ***Target 5.1 (2012):*** Fisheries Management Subcommittee (FMSC) under the WMC established and capacity developed * ***Target 5.1 (2013):*** Fisheries co-management plan developed. * ***Target 5.1 (2015):*** Fisheries co-management plan implemented |
| **Outcome 6:** Technical and managerial capacity of provincial and district level government staff enhanced.   * ***Target 6.1 (2012):*** Capacity assessment * ***Target 6.1 (2013):*** Project team capable to manage all aspects of the project implementation |

1. It was a coherent model that was developed to “*contribute to sustainable livelihoods improvement and food security through the development of irrigated agriculture and the promotion of more sustainable management of corresponding watershed resources in the selected communities of Bolikhan and Viengthong Districts in the Bolikhamxay Province*”. A more detailed list of outcomes and their respective targets and indicative activities is presented in Annex 8.
2. However, one aspect that was poorly planned was the timeline for the execution of this project. In addition to the entire duration of the project of 3 years, the only given timeline to execute the project was given in the table *Multi-Annual Project Work Plan and Budget* at the back of the project document and to some extent through the yearly targets provided in the *Result and Resources Framework*. However, the review of this information indicates that there was no “*critical path(s)*” identified for executing the project nor any analysis on the importance to start the rehabilitation of irrigation schemes as soon as possible to provide enough time for the other outcomes to be implemented more fully; particularly for beneficiaries to have a chance to use the new irrigation schemes and assess the benefits of this additional water supply. The project was to be implemented in 3 years and the irrigation infrastructure work should have been the first priority and be completed during the first year of implementation.

### *Assumptions and Risks*

1. Risks and assumptions were identified at the formulation stage. It recognized that the main investment of the project will be in irrigation and that there are “*very common risks associated with the development of irrigation projects*”. It identified three principal project risks (*see table below*); it also identified crosscutting concerns such as the level of motivation and capacity of beneficiary communities, staff availability and capacity of implementing partners to support the project as per responsibilities attributed. It included also the level of engagement, capacity and commitment from beneficiaries and government in relation to community based natural resources management (fisheries and forest resources in concerned watersheds), which were also recognized as crucial to achieve lasting impact in this area.
2. The list of risks and mitigation measures identified at the outset of the project is presented in the table below.

Table 4: List of Risks and Mitigation Measures Identified at the Formulation Phase

| **Project Risks** | **Mitigation Measures** |
| --- | --- |
| **(i) Implementation** | * Ensure in depth technical assessment of the proposed irrigation schemes to be rehabilitated, improved and developed; * Seek community approval of proposed investments and consult beneficiaries (community audits) at different stages of the construction work; * Ensure poorest households and women in target communities are consulted; * Ensure in-kind contributions from beneficiaries to the rehabilitation, improvement and development of irrigation schemes; * Ensure all project activities are owned and eventually taken over by local committees (watershed management, forestry, Water User Associations, fisheries co-management); * Ensure the integrated nature of the project is well understood and supported by all stakeholders and that activities are conducted in a sequenced and integrated manner; * Conduct a capacity assessment survey at all levels and develop/implement the necessary training activities. |
| **(ii) Realization of Benefits** |
| **(iii) Sustainability** |

*Source: Project Document*

1. In addition to these risks, the project formulation team also identified 3 specific risks that were entered into the UNDP-Atlas system as *operational* risks at that time. There are presented in the table below:

Table 5: List of Risks Logged in Atlas

| **Risks** | **Type** | **Countermeasures / Management Response** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Lacking technical and managerial capacity among the government responsible parties and communities for irrigation rehabilitation work, watershed management and fisheries management | Operational & Programmatic | Ensure in depth technical and managerial assessment of the proposed activities to be undertaken at all levels and develop and implement the necessary training activities |
| 1. Multi-stakeholder partnership with a variety of interest | Operational | Identification of clear roles and responsibilities of each involves agencies and effective communication policy should take into the consideration throughout the project life.  Seek agreement of the proposed investment and consults beneficiaries including poor households and women a different stages of the project implementation |
| 1. Delay for producing planned outputs/outcomes | Operational | Conduct regular monitoring activities and update/adjust work plan a deemed necessary.  Ensure the project is well understood and supported by all stakeholders. |

*Source: Project Document*

1. The review conducted for this terminal evaluation reveals that during the implementation of the project the project management team did not focus much on this list of risks; progress reports did not monitor these risks. Instead, annual reports focus more on the timing of each target (achieved, on-track or off-track) and contained a short section on the main challenges faced by the project. There was no risk analysis per se conducted through the monitoring of the project using a tool such as the UNDP-Atlas risk log.
2. One particular risk that would have helped the implementation team was the tight timeline to deliver the outcomes of the project. As discussed in the previous section, this aspect was poorly planned from the outset of the project, despite the existence of a risky “*critical path*” to implement the planned activities. Due to a short timeline (3 years), it was critical that the rehabilitation of irrigation schemes be implemented as soon as possible to provide enough time for the other outcomes to be implemented more fully; particularly for beneficiaries to have a chance to use the new irrigation schemes and assess the benefits of this additional water supply such as increased agriculture production and increase revenue from cash-crops. Monitoring this “critical path” more closely would have helped the implementation team to focus more on the timing when implementing the project and possibly to have shortened the time it took to rehabilitate the irrigation schemes.

### *Linkages Between the Project and Other Interventions within the Sector*

1. This project was conceptualized on the basis of a contextual analysis that is summarized in Section I in the project document. As presented in Section 2 above, food insecurity was identified as the most critical challenge to overcome in order to ensure the most basic level of secure and sustainable livelihoods for the majority of the Lao rural population. This challenge was identified in the National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES) and other national policies. Furthermore, it was recognized that food insecurity is due to inadequate availability, access, utilization and stability of food production and that many communities lack adequate coping strategies for food-deficits and associated health problems that persist amongst large sections of the population; particularly in rural areas.
2. In order to address this critical challenge, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) developed in 2008 a new, more holistic approach to food production, including the need to recognize that irrigated agriculture is an economic activity undertaken by farmers and other private sector entrepreneurs, which necessitates infrastructure development and management. As a result, the Department of Irrigation (DOI) prepared a national strategy for the irrigated agriculture subsector for the period 2011-2020. It sets ambitious targets for increasing irrigated areas in 10 Provinces to a total of at least 463,500ha for both rainy and dry seasons. The goal of this strategy was to develop a substantial rise in commodity production while maintaining food security as part of the National Socioeconomic Development Plan 2011-2015 (7th NSEDP) to support industrial development, create jobs and improve incomes in rural areas.
3. In addition, to this strategy it is also important to consider the arrangements for operating and maintaining (O&M) these irrigation infrastructures, including the water fee collection to sustain O&M. The responsibilities of DOI and the Provincial Irrigation Services (PIS) under the MAF are limited to the conceptual planning, survey and design, and supervising construction/rehabilitation work. Then, due to insufficient government resources to sustain adequate water provision to farmers, the Irrigation Management Transfer (IMT) – a government policy for irrigation services – is used to develop co-management arrangements between the government and communities through Water User Associations (WUAs). These WUAs were set up by the government Decree no. 0156 of 1997 and they define a WUA as a legal entity established for grouping all water users together under the control and supervision of the Provincial Authority.
4. The selection of Bolikhamxay Province was due to the fact that it has major constraints in the area of irrigation service: (i) infrastructure systems are incomplete and damaged; (ii) uncertain and generally limited water availability during the dry season (gravity schemes); (iii) high cost of electricity and of repair of pumps (in pump-lift schemes); (iv) difficulty in organizing effective management of the scheme; and (v) the Irrigation Management Transfer concept could not be fully realized. The population of this Province is mostly rural relying on agriculture for both food and income.
5. The project was designed as a response to contribute to the national need that is to achieve self-sufficiency in food production, promoting crop diversification and expanding irrigation infrastructure in some of the poorest Districts in Lao PDR. Its aim was to improve the overall livelihoods and food security of local communities in 2 Districts of Bolikhamxay Province by supporting the development of irrigated agriculture and the community-based management of watershed resources such as forests and fisheries. It was implemented by the government as a pilot project to test and demonstrate the implementation of the irrigated agriculture policy, including the development of a community-based watershed management plan and the use of WUAs to co-manage these irrigation infrastructures.

### *Lessons from other Relevant Projects/Initiatives*

1. Limited lessons from other relevant projects seem to have been taken into account in the design of the project. The concept of this project was mainly to support the government initiative to implement its irrigated agriculture programme. A detailed strategy for the development of the agricultural sector has been under development for the last few years in Lao PDR with the main dual objectives of ensuring food security and income security, particularly for rural communities. It includes the drafting of an Agriculture Master Plan, an Agricultural Investment Plan, an Agriculture Development Strategy and an Irrigation Agriculture Strategy.
2. Despite that there was no summary in the project document of an initial phase (feasibility phase?) that took place prior to this project, studies took place in 2010-2011 to develop a large irrigation project for the Bolikhamxay province. This project was to expand rice paddy areas by flooding new areas, needed a budget of a minimum $15 to 17M and would have taken 7 years to be completed. It was a response to implement the agriculture strategy – including the irrigation plan - promoted by the government to expand irrigated agriculture. In parallel to this process, IBSA funds were used to explore the feasibility of a project in the same area but smaller in size. The Evaluation Team was not able to obtain documents from this period; however, it is assumed that lessons from these feasibility studies have been incorporated in the design of this project.
3. In addition, it was also noted by the Evaluation Team that this project has also been implemented in the context of the Sam Sang initiative also called the “3 Builds” initiative[[3]](#footnote-3). This initiative was proclaimed by the Prime Minister Order 16/2012 with the objective to improve the delivery of public services. It covers all provinces, 51 pilot districts, 109 villages, and 15 ministries of the Government. The Sam Sang initiative involves the further transfer of responsibilities, functions and resources from central ministries to the provinces and onwards to the districts. Once the pilot will be completed, it is expected to inform the development of an overarching regulatory framework on delegation of powers to the various levels of subnational administrations. Its aim is to improve transparency and accountability in the delivery of public services, including the clarification of roles and responsibilities at each level of government. Complementing the Sam Sang pilot, the Government has been systematically developing the capacity of district administrations to deliver local public services under the District Development Fund (DDF) since 2006. The DDF provides both capacity development and direct budget support (capital and operational expenditure grants) to Districts.
4. This project was set up as a pilot to support the government in testing and demonstrating the feasibility of community-based management of irrigated agriculture schemes and of watershed to protect water resources. In the meantime, it was also a demonstration project implemented by the Provincial Authorities with the involvement of district services of Viengthong and Bolikhan; hence it was part of testing and demonstrating the “*transfer of responsibilities, functions and resources from central ministries to the provinces and onwards to the districts*” in the context of the Sam Sang initiative.

### *Planned Stakeholder Participation*

1. A stakeholder analysis was conducted during the formulation phase to identify key stakeholders and their anticipated roles/involvement in the implementation of the project. A particular emphasis was put on the analysis of government entities at the Provincial and District levels, due mostly to the fact that the project has been implemented at these levels and not at the National level.
2. The analysis identified the following list of key stakeholders:

Table 6: List of Stakeholders and their Anticipated Roles

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Stakeholders** | **Anticipated Role with the Project** |
| *Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)* is the country’s central agency for public management of irrigated agriculture. It includes the following Departments:   * 1. *Department of Irrigation (DOI)* is responsible for irrigation agriculture at the national level.      1. *Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Offices (PAFO)* are agencies in charge of public management of irrigation services in their respective Provinces. Under these Provincial Agencies, there are the Provincial Irrigation Services (PIS); Cultivation Services; Agriculture Extension Services; and the Forestry Service.      2. *District Agriculture and Forestry Offices (DAFO)* are agencies in charge of public management of irrigation services in their respective Districts.   2. *Departments of Livestock and Fisheries (DLF)* is in charge of livestock and fisheries development – both capture fisheries and aquaculture - at the national level. | * DOI will provide technical guidance with regard to the development of irrigated agriculture. * Both PAFO and DAFO offices were identified as the project implementing partners in the Bolikhamxay Province and Vienthong and Bolikhan Districts. * DLF will provide technical guidance with regard to the development of Fisheries co-management. |
| *Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI)* is responsible for the elaboration of 5-year NSEDP. It is responsible to coordinate with ministries, other sectors and local authorities the monitoring of socio-economic development in Lao PdR and the preparation of periodic reports including the NSEDP and the Public Investment Programs.   * 1. *Provincial Departments of Planning and Investment (DPI*) is a Provincial entity representing the ministry at this level. | * DPI will assist with the overall coordination of different government agencies at the provincial level and will facilitate support and guidance from central level agencies |
| *Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)* is responsible for the protection of (watershed) forests and conservation forests.   * 1. *Provincial Natural Resources and Environment Offices (PNREO*) play a coordinating role in watershed and water resources management. | * MONRE will provide the corresponding technical guidance. * PNREO will be in charge of coordinating and implementing watershed and forest management activities in the corresponding forest types including conservation forests and protection forests. |
| *IBSA Trust Fund* | * IBSA will provide the necessary funding to the project and its local representative will be a member of the Project’s Executive Board |
| *UNDP Lao PDR* | * UNDP Lao PDR Senior Management will be a member of the project’s Executive Board and the UNDP Environment Unit will provide project assurance or oversight. |
| *SSC UNDP NY* | * The SSC will facilitate the administrative management of IBSA funds and project external evaluations. |
| *Lao/021 Project* (Lux Development) | * Collaboration at project level. |

1. The review conducted by the Evaluation Team reveals that these Stakeholders fulfilled their anticipated roles. They played key roles in the implementation of the project; particularly PAFO and DAFO in the respective Districts, which were responsible for rehabilitating the irrigation schemes in Vienthong and Bolikhan Districts.
2. One Stakeholder identified in this list and that its anticipated collaboration with the project did not happen is the Lao/021 Project. The “*Bolikhamxay Livelihood Improvement and Governance Programme (Lao/021)*”, is a rural development project funded by the Government of Luxembourg and implemented by the Provincial Department of Planning and Investment (DPI). It has been supporting governance strengthening in Bolikhamxay Province, as well as rural development in the 60 poorest villages of the three poorest districts of the province (Xaychamphone, Viengthong and Khamkeut). Despite that it was anticipated to collaborate with this project, this collaboration did not happen and the Evaluation Team was not able to established a contact with this project; despite multiple attempts during the mission in Lao PDR.
3. The Evaluation Team also noted that during the formulation phase, project beneficiaries were clearly identified. They consist mostly of 1,207 households (7,670 people) living in the 2 targeted Districts: Vienthong and Bolikhan. They own 820ha of land to cultivate rice and are composed of 50% of poor households and 49% are female. Furthermore, another group of beneficiaries is the staff at the Provincial and District levels that benefited from various capacity development activities to increase their skills and knowledge.

### *Planned Replication Approach*

1. A replication approach was not really addressed during the project formulation phase. The only related element in the project document was to state that the “*exposure and engagement of central level agencies (in the project) will contribute to the further improvement of the policy and legal framework related to a more integrated approach to irrigation development*”. It was anticipated that through the participation of central level agencies in the project through the Executive Board, it will contribute to the “*improvement and the further development of the corresponding policy and legal frameworks*”.
2. The review of the project document indicates that there was little emphasis on replicating the best practices and lessons learned from this project in other parts of the same Province and in other Provinces in Lao PDR. Replication was not really part of the project design; the project was very focus on establishing a community-based watershed management plan, rehabilitating irrigation schemes, establishing and developing the capacity of WUAs, increasing agriculture production through extension services, improving fisheries production and their co-management and increasing the capacity of provincial and district staff to oversee this type of activities in their respective areas. As a result, the project design did not include specific outcomes/activities focusing on the need to identify lessons learned, best practices and replicate these lessons and best practices throughout Lao PDR.
3. Despite that it was not part of the project to deliver best practices, the project did demonstrate the feasibility of a co-management approach involving local communities in managing their watershed and their water resources. Lessons and best practices exist and should be identified and disseminated.

### *UNDP Comparative Advantage*

1. UNDP has played an important lead role among development partners as co-chair of the Round Table Process with the Government of Lao PDR to ensure that international development assistance is aligned to national development priorities. This role has enabled UNDP to leverage its limited resources well beyond its core programme in key areas including assistance to the development of the MDG-based 7th NSEDP. In follow-up to the highly successful Round Table Process and building on many years of trust and the provision of impartial advice and timely assistance in critical areas, UNDP has had the responsibility to help the government and the broader development community to achieve the valuable goals of the 7th NSEDP, especially the MDGs; help mobilize and manage needed resources; achieve the MDGs in line with the MDG Acceleration Framework; and help Lao PDR graduate from the LDC status.
2. The UNDP Country Programme 2012-2015 has been developed in close consultation with the Government and all development partners in parallel with the finalization of the UNDAF Action Plan. It has focused its support on fewer and more strategic initiatives with more direct impact on poverty reduction and MDG achievement, as well as on deepening upstream policy advisory services.
3. The following four programme priorities derive from the UNDAF Action Plan 2012-2015, which is also fully aligned with the NSEDP:
4. Achieving Inclusive and Sustainable Growth and the MDGs, particularly through the Round Table Process;
5. Effective Governance;
6. Ensuring Sustainable Natural Resource and Environmental Management, and Adaptation to Climate Change;
7. Reducing UXO Impact[[4]](#footnote-4).
8. Under the third programme “*Ensuring Sustainable Natural Resource and Environmental Management, and Adaptation to Climate Change*” UNDP has been assisting Lao PDR in strengthening capacities to formulate and implement strategies, policies and plans related to natural resource management, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change. Furthermore, the Country Programme has been supporting pilots on participatory forest, agro-biodiversity and water resources management models, as well as local climate change adaptation/mitigation approaches. It also supports DRR preparedness and response, including climate change adaptation, through national and sub-national capacity development activities.
9. The project has been directly aligned with the UNDP Country Programme 2012-2015 and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2012-2015. It has been contributing to the following Indicative Country Programme Outputs: (a) Capacities of national and sub-national authorities enhanced for better environment management as per Forestry and Fishery Laws; and (b) Communities' engagement in Natural Resources Management (NRM) strengthened.

### *IBSA Strategic Objectives*

1. The project was formulated inline with the IBSA strategic objectives, which were documented in the project document:
2. *Combat Poverty and Hunger*: The project’s objective was to increase the productivity of existing agricultural systems and to ensure the sustainable management of natural resources that these systems and the communities depend on. It was anticipated that project activities should result in overall poverty reduction and improved food security.
3. *Provide development impact attributable to IBSA’s cooperation*: Credit was to be given to IBSA partners during public engagements by the project, particularly in interactions with the media, public and academic appearances and presentations, relations with the local community, the government of Lao PDR, project visitors and other institutions.
4. *Develop capacity and a sense of ownership in the beneficiary communities*: The project was to use participatory approaches in the development of all project activities, including seeking in-kind contributions from communities for the construction of irrigation infrastructure to ensure communities are in agreement with the proposed design.
5. *Promote and engage Southern experts and institutions*: The engagement of IBSA or regional (South-south) experts and institutions in this project was to be favored.
6. *Promote knowledge sharing in the spirit of South-South cooperation*: IBSA’s funded projects seek to advance knowledge sharing for development among developing countries. This knowledge sharing has started during the formulation of this project by involving experts from Nepal, Brazil and Thailand.
7. *Stress project sustainability with detailed strategy for future disengagement*: It was anticipated that groups would be formed and trained to eventually take over the long-term management of irrigation schemes, watershed forests and fisheries resources. Additionally, capacities of provincial and district level staff was to be strengthened to ensure the long-term government support to communities and hopefully lead to the replication of similar integrated approaches.
8. The formulation of the project attempted to align the design of the project with these IBSA strategic objectives. However, the review conducted for this evaluation indicates that these objectives were not all followed. Considering the goal and objective of this project, it has been definitely aligned with (a), (b) and (c). Regarding the objectives (d), (e) and (f), the alignment between the project and these objectives was less obvious. A UN Volunteer (UNV) from Brazil worked on the project for a year but neither other Southern Experts nor institutions has been involved in the implementation of the project. Knowledge produced by the project has not been shared among developing countries and the strategy to sustain the project achievements was rather weakly defined during the formulation phase.
9. The Evaluation Team also noted that these strategic objectives were not really “embedded” in the project design; particularly the project strategy (expected outcomes) and the management arrangements. Despite the fact that these objectives are excellent objectives for any development projects, the current project design is such that the project could be implemented without focusing on these objectives. The project was aligned with the first 3 objectives, as these are fundamentally good principles for any development projects. However, the next 2 objectives would require specific management requirements - such as the need to recruit Southern Experts – and specific planned activities – such as South-South workshops/seminars - to be part of the overall project strategy in order to be aligned with these 2 objectives. Finally, the last objective is also a good project management practice but as it is discussed in other part of this report, the project design is rather weak when it comes to have a proper sustainability strategy.

### *Management Arrangements*

1. The management arrangements planned at the onset of the project included:

* The *Project Executive Board* was responsible for making management decisions for the project, in particular when guidance was required by the Project Manager. It approved the appointment and responsibilities of the Project Manager and any delegation of its project management responsibilities. The Board ensured that required resources are committed and arbitrated on any conflicts within the project or negotiated solutions to any problems with external bodies. In case consensus cannot be reached within the Board, the final decision was to rest with UNDP and MPI. The Project Executive Board was made up of:
* The *Executive*, representing the project ownership, chaired the Project Board. The role of executive was held by the Vice Governor of Bolikhamxay Province.
* *Senior Suppliers* was a group representing the interest parties concerned with funding agencies and/or special technical expertise to the project. The primary function of this group was to provide technical and managerial guidance to the project team. It was anticipated that this group would include UNDP, the Chief Technical Advisor of the Lao/021 project and an IBSA representative and possibly other INGOs. However, only UNDP represented the Senior Suppliers to the project. For unknown reason, the collaboration with the Lao/021 project did not materialize and, despite regular invitations sent to the Indian Embassy, no IBSA representatives participated in the management of the project during its implementation.
* *Senior Beneficiaries*, who represented the interests of those who will ultimately benefit from the project and ensure the realization of project results from the perspective of project beneficiaries. This role was held by representatives from PAFO, PNREO, DPI, DLF, and DOI.
* The *Project Implementing Partner* was responsible for the implementation of the project. This role was fulfilled by PAFO, which is responsible for the development of irrigation and agriculture in the province as well as being responsible for the management of watersheds, forests and fisheries. It also supervises activities of DAFOs.
* The *Project Manager*, who was a senior officer from PAFO, was an experienced project manager and his cost was covered by PAFO. The Project Manager (PM) was supervised by the Project Executive Board; he worked closely with the Project’s responsible parties and UNDP to ensure an effective implementation of project activities.
* *Project support* consisted of an Assistant Project Manager, a Finance/Administrative Assistant, a UNV and a driver. All were based at the PAFO office with the Project Manager in Paksane.

1. At the outset of the project, roles and responsibilities were clearly identified and accepted, including the need to follow administrative procedures from UNDP and the Government of Lao PDR. As the project was nationally implemented, the PAFO of Bolikhamxay Province was fully responsible for the procurement of goods and services for the rehabilitation of irrigation schemes, using national legal procurement rules and procedures. PAFO was also responsible for signing and managing/monitoring contracts.
2. The review indicates that these management arrangements – despite some difficulties with administrative procedures and delays in processing project requests, particularly for procuring goods and services – were adequate for the implementation of the project. It was the first project for UNDP to be implemented by Provincial Authorities using the UNDP National Implementation Modality (NIM) and it demonstrated the feasibility of this approach at this level of government. These arrangements provided the project with clear roles and responsibilities as well as clear reporting lines of authority. The good functioning of the Executive Board – well chaired - provided an effective way to communicate and keep stakeholders engaged, contributing to an effective use of project resources and a good national ownership of project achievements. This oversight body met annually during the implementation of the project to review its achievements and its work plans and to address any issues that needed attention.

## Project Implementation

1. This section discusses the assessment of how the project has been implemented. It assessed how efficient the management of the project was and how conducive it was to contribute to a successful project.

### *Adaptive Management*

1. The management of the project was marginally satisfactory. The Project Implementation Team followed the Government of Lao PDR and UNDP procedures for the implementation of the project and used adaptive management to secure project deliverables while maintaining adherence to the overall project design. The review indicates that project achievements are aligned with the project document that was endorsed by stakeholders. As discussed in Section 4.1.1, the *Result and Resources Framework* identified during the design phase of this project presents a satisfactory and logical “chain of results” that was used as a “blueprint” to guide the implementation of the project. An efficient implementation team was in place, detailed work plans were guiding the implementation, assignments were conducted with the required participation of relevant stakeholders and the project progress was well monitored. Adaptive management was used regularly to adapt to a constantly changing environment. It was used as a mechanism to respond to stakeholders’ needs and priorities and address issues at hand. As a result, activities supported by the project benefited from a good participation of stakeholders. Each assignment was conducted following well-defined terms of reference.
2. However, the review conducted by the Evaluation Team indicates that the Implementation Team focused too much on the delivery of planned activities and not enough on expected results at the outcome and objective levels. The review of progress reports indicates that the implementation of specific planned activities were well monitored; however, no real review were conducted at a higher level such as giving updates on how well the project is progressing toward its expected objective? The project certainly delivered the planned activities but critical delays – mostly in the rehabilitation of irrigation schemes – prevented key activities to be fully demonstrated such as activities to increase agriculture production and fisheries over a 2-year period as planned in the project document. This is particularly true for activities under outcome 4 and 5 that need at least a one-year cycle to be demonstrated. At the time of this evaluation, the Evaluation Team was not in a position to assess the results under outcomes 4 and 5; which are the key outcomes to achieve the objective that is to raise food security and increase local community livelihoods.
3. The issue of not being able to measure the results during this evaluation was also compounded by the fact that an initial survey was to be conducted at the start of the project “*among beneficiaries at both community and government levels to establish the project monitoring baseline[[5]](#footnote-5)*”. The result of this survey would have greatly helped the assessment conducted during this evaluation by giving a baseline at the start of the project and possibly corroborating the anecdotal information collected during the field visits in communities conducted by the Evaluation Team.
4. Finally, the Project Implementation Team missed the opportunity to use a mid-term review to review how well the project was progressing. Considering that the project was only 36 months, an external review at the mid-point would have certainly provided a valuable insight on the overall progress of the project and the assessment of the potential for the project to achieve its expected impacts and objective by the end of the project. Any delays would have been identified and discussed – including the risks linked to these delays - and mitigation measures would have been identified such as possibly project time extension or other measures to mitigate the impacts of these delays.
5. In conclusion, the Project Implementation Team should have more focused on the implementation timeline of project activities and on expected results – including the objective of the project - and use adaptive management earlier to mitigate the impacts of the delay in implementing the rehabilitation of irrigation schemes. Considering that this critical activity ended only in early 2015, the delay should have been “flagged” 12 to 18 months earlier and measures identified at this time to mitigate the impacts of this delay in increasing the water supply to these irrigated areas. The execution of a mid-term review would certainly have helped this process and contribute to the identification of mitigation measures.

### *Partnership Arrangements*

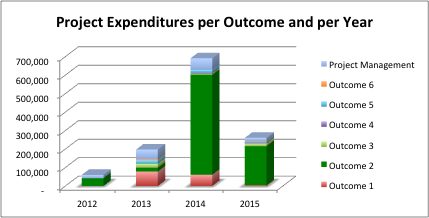
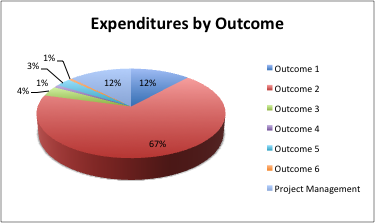
1. As discussed in Sections 4.1.5 and 4.1.9 above, the Stakeholders engagement and the management arrangements of the project were adequate for the implementation of the project; they provided the project with clear roles and responsibilities for each party engaged in the implementation of the project. The list of Stakeholders and their anticipated roles in implementing the project is provided in table 6 in Section 4.1.5.
2. The Evaluation Team particularly noted the valuable partnership between PAFO and the project. As the Project Implementing Partner, PAFO nominated the Project Manager to be a full time PAFO Senior Officer implementing the project. The cost of this position was fully funded by PAFO. The Project Manager was supported by a Project Team composed of an Assistant Project Manager, a Finance/Administrative Assistant, a UNV and a driver all funded by the budget of the project.
3. This arrangement provided a good collaboration between government services and the project as well as with the targeted communities in the Vienthong and Bolikhan Districts. It provided the project with a good “conduit” to communicate with government services; however, as discussed in Section 4.1.8, this opportunity was not much used by the project to disseminate best practices and lessons learned by the project such as organizing national workshops and seminars to transfer knowledge accumulated on the project.

### *Project Finance*

1. As indicated in Section 4.1.9, the implementation modality of the project to allocate, administer and report on project resources was the UNDP NIM[[6]](#footnote-6) (National Implementation Modality) modality; that is project activities were carried out by a Project Implementing Partner (PAFO) to execute the project led by a Project Manager who was a PAFO Senior Officer seconded full time to the project. It was the first time that UNDP implemented a project with this modality at the Provincial level in Lao PDR.
2. Each year, the Project Implementation Team produced a consolidated Annual Work Plan (AWP), including an annual budget, which was approved by the Project Executive Board and signed by both UNDP and the Vice Governor of Bolikhamxay Province as chair of the Executive Board. Following these AWPs, the project team was also putting together quarterly work plans with corresponding budgets. This quarterly work plans were approved by the chair of the Executive Board and submitted to UNDP for the release of the necessary IBSA funds to the project, following UNDP and Government of Lao PDR financial procedures.
3. The implementing partner – PAFO - was required to use Funding Authorization and Certification of Expenditures (FACE) forms to request advances/cash transfers and to report expenditures. The FACE forms were supported by quarterly progress reports and quarterly work plans for the following quarters. This process allowed all project partners to monitor the project’s progress and the disbursements made on a quarterly basis, including PAFO and UNDP-CO. Finally, the financial records were consolidated into the UNDP-ATLAS system as the accounting and financial system for all UNDP projects. It allowed the project management team to obtain financial reports at any time for period up to the last point of data entry. The Atlas system produces reports that contain financial information for any periods of the project that is broken down by main Activities (corresponding to project outcomes (6) and project management (1)) and by line items such as local consultant fees, travel tickets, printing and publications, utilities, etc. This financial information provided up-to-date consolidated financial information to project managers.
4. The review of actual expenditures for the years 2012 to 2015 – at the time of this evaluation - indicates that about 91% ($1,208,612) of the original IBSA budget (USD 1,323,000) was expended and recorded in the UNDP Atlas financial system. An amount of USD 114,388 (9%) remained unrecorded but it is expected that the entire IBSA budget will be expended at the end of the project (June 30, 2015) when all expenditures will be accounted for and recorded in the UNDP Atlas financial system. The breakdown of recorded project expenditures by outcome and by year is presented in the table below.

Table 7: UNDP/IBSA Funds Disbursement Status (in USD)

| **Component** | **Budget** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **Total** | **Total/**  **Budget** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome 1** | **237,000** |  | 78,066 | 60,344 | 4,453 | **142,863** | **60%** |
| **Outcome 2** | **800,000** | 42,184 | 20,171 | 541,379 | 211,117 | **814,851** | **102%** |
| **Outcome 3** | **38,000** |  | 22,621 | 6,236 | 14,259 | **43,116** | **114%** |
| **Outcome 4** | **17,000** |  |  | 6,500 | 5,979 | **12,479** | **73%** |
| **Outcome 5** | **73,000** |  | 17,920 | 12,755 | 5,267 | **35,942** | **49%** |
| **Outcome 6** | **15,000** |  | 5,923 |  | 2,635 | **8,558** | **57%** |
| **Project Management[[7]](#footnote-7)** | **143,000** | 17,844 | 52,687 | 63,518 | 16,754 | **150,803** | **106%** |
| **TOTAL** | **1,323,000** | 60,028 | 197,388 | 690,604 | 260,378 | **1,208,612** | **91%** |

 *Source: UNDP Atlas Financial Reports (CDRs).*

1. These financial figures presented above indicate that 67% of the total IBSA grant was expended on outcome 2 that was to make available “*water supply in both seasons for irrigating command area of Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District*”. Another 12% of the total IBSA grant was expended on outcome 1 that was to develop and implement “*a watershed management plan for Nampou project*”; 12% were spent on project management and the remaining expenditures (9%) were expended on outcome 3, 4, 5, and 6.
2. When looking at the above graph on the right, it is clear that this project is about rehabilitating irrigation schemes with 2/3 of the IBSA grant being disbursed for achieving this outcome; it was foremost an irrigation infrastructure project. It is an important fact to consider when assessing this project; especially when only 21% of the total grant has been spent on all other outcomes (1, 3, 4, 5 and 6).
3. Timeline wise, the graph on the left above indicates that 2014 was the year with high expenditures (~$691k) representing over 57% of the total expenditures expended during that year. It was mostly due to the completion of some work contracted for the rehabilitation of the irrigation schemes (outcome 2), which spanned over the years 2014 and 2015.

***Co-financing***

1. The co-financing commitments at the outset of the project totaled the amount of USD 216,300 (*see table below*). It included an estimated $84,000 as an in-kind contribution from the beneficiaries (communities) who were to provide labor for the rehabilitation of irrigation schemes and was estimated at about 10% of the budget for this work. Another $132,300 was an in-kind contribution from the Government of Lao PDR, representing a co-financing of about 10% of the total IBSA grant.

Table 8: Co-financing Status

| **Partner** | **Type** | **Commitments (US$)** | **Actuals**  **(US$)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Beneficiaries | In-kind | 84,000 |  |
| Government of Lao PDR | In-kind | 132,300 |  |
| **Total (US$)** | | **216,300** |  |

*Source: Project Document.*

1. No tracking of the planned co-financing amounts were made and reported though the project progress reports. However, the Evaluation Team confirmed that communities contributed as labor to the irrigation work done for these communities; that the Project Manager fulfilled his duties as a full time project manager of the project and that Provincial and Districts government services participated in the project in their respective areas such as agriculture extension, irrigation, fisheries and watershed management.

### *Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Approach*

1. An adequate M&E plan was formulated during the formulation of the project in accordance with standard procedures and common UNDP monitoring and evaluation practices for National Implementation (NIM) projects. As presented in the *Result and Resources Framework* a budget of $43,000 was allocated to M&E tasks such as inception workshop, project final meeting, quarterly and annual progress reports including a mid-term review, external monitoring, audits and site visits; representing about 3.3% of the total IBSA grant. It was noted that only $5,000 from this M&E budget was allocated to “regular project monitoring” including a mid-term review. This was a very low budget and would not have been enough to conduct an independent review.

1. This plan listed monitoring and evaluation tasks that were to be implemented during the lifetime of the project, including a mid-term review. For each task, the objective, frequency and who is responsible were identified. The overall M&E approach was to monitor the progress of the project toward meeting its targets established at the outset of the project and presented in the *Result and Resources Framework.* For each intended outcome, indicators were identified with their respective baseline and targets.
2. A summary of the operating modalities of the M&E plan were as follows:

* A set of indicators with their respective baselines and targets at the end of project were identified and documented in the *Result and Resources Framework*.
* An inception report was completed in December 2012 to summarize the inception phase conducted at the beginning of the project. This phase was an opportunity to explain the project objectives to all Stakeholders, to review the overall project strategy, management arrangements, monitoring indicators, risks, etc. and to review the project work plan and budget. No changes to the project strategy were made during the inception phase.
* Project spot checks were to be conducted every 6 months by UNDP. An external contractor/consultant was hired to monitor the irrigation component at different stages (feasibility studies, design, implementation and handover).
* Monthly and Quarterly Meetings: Monthly meetings between the Project Implementation Team and UNDP (project assurance) were organized to review progress and to discuss issues related to project management and implementation. Quarterly meetings were undertaken to discuss quarterly progress and work plans.
* Annual Review Meetings and Project Executive Board Meetings: Annual review meetings, involving all project national, provincial and district stakeholders were organized at the end of each calendar year to review overall progress and to discuss and review the annual work plan of the following calendar year. A Project Executive Board meeting followed each annual review meeting to finalize and approve annual work plans for the following years and discuss policy implications of the project.
* External mid-term and final project evaluations were to be conducted following UNDP evaluation guidelines.
* Audits: The project was to be submitted to regular external audits undertaken by a legally recognized auditor according to the establish procedures and international standards within the framework of the so-called Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT).
* A project-closing workshop was to be organized at the end of the project to allow all stakeholders to review the project achievements and lessons learned and to identify follow up actions if necessary.

1. The review indicates that the mid-term evaluation did not take place as planned. It was discussed within the Implementation Team, found that the timing was not appropriate and finally a decision was made that it was too late to do it and that only the final evaluation will take place as planned instead. As it was discussed in Section 4.2.1, the fact that the mid-term review did not take place was a missed opportunity that would have helped the Implementation Team to review the implementation timeline and identify measures to mitigate the delays in the rehabilitation of irrigation schemes.
2. The set of indicators presented in the *Result and Resources Framework* was reviewed during this evaluation. It includes a set of 8 key indicators and 16 targets to monitor the performance of the project at the outcome level. The list of indicators and their respective baselines and targets is presented in the table below:

Table 9: List of Performance Indicators

| **Project Outcomes** | **Indicators / Baselines** | **Targets** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome 1:** A watershed management plan for Nampou project is developed and implemented | **Indicator 1.1:** Watershed Management Plan developed and implemented and Watershed Management Committee in place  *Baseline 1.1:* No existing watershed management plan  **Indicator 1.2:** Village forest management plan developed and implemented with corresponding committees in place  *Baseline 1.2:* No community based forest management | 1. Watershed Management plan developed and Watershed Management Committee in place (2013) 2. Community based forest management plans developed and corresponding committees in place (2014) 3. Forest management plans, including improvement of slash-and-burn agriculture, implemented (2015) |
| **Outcome 2:** Water supply in both seasons for irrigating command area of Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District is available | **Indicator 2.1:** 3,050 meter main canal of Nampou project, 1 weir of Namyang project and 1 weir of Phondou project is rehabilitated by 2013.  *Baseline 2.1:* Poor irrigation infrastructures facilities available | 1. Feasibility for rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure conducted (2012) 2. Completion of rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure (2013) |
| **Outcome 3:** Irrigation projects are co-managed by government authorities and Water Users' Association with women’s participation | **Indicator 3.1:** WUA established by 2012 and functional by 2014  *Baseline 3.1:* No existing WUA | 1. WUA established (2012) 2. WUA capacity developed (2013) 3. WUA able to co-manage irrigation projects in cooperation of provincial and district government authorities (2014) |
| **Outcome 4:** Agriculture production increased and diversified in Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District | **Indicator 4.1:** Two season cultivation with diverse cropping pattern in dry season, Crop yield increased by 2014 - rice 3.5 t/ha (wet season) 4.5 t/ha (dry season), Sweet corn 4.3 t/ha, Feed corn 5 t/ha, Soybean (2t/ha)  *Baseline 4.1:* Single crop (rice) cultivation, Rice yield 3.41 ton/ha, no other crops cultivated by 2012 | 1. Crop yield increased (2013) 2. Two season cultivation in at least 25% of irrigated area (205 ha) with crops other than rice in dry season (2013) 3. Two season cultivation in additional next 25% (410 ha) with crops other than rice in dry season (2014) |
| **Outcome 5:** Improved Fisheries in Nampou reservoir through establishment of fisheries co-management | **Indicator 5.1:** Fisheries co-management established  *Baseline 5.1:* No fisheries in Nam Pou reservoir | 1. Fisheries Management Subcommittee (FMsC) under the WMC established and capacity developed (2013) 2. Fisheries co-management plan developed (2013) 3. Fisheries co-management plan implemented (2015) |
| **Outcome 6:** Technical and managerial capacity of provincial and district level government staff enhanced | **Indicator 6.1:** One technical report assessing the technical and managerial capability of implementing partner available at the end of 1st quarter of the project  *Baseline 6.1:* No report  **Indicator 6.2:** Project management team trained following the assessment of institutional capacity in first quarter of project implementation  *Baseline 6.2:* Higher officials trained by previous donor supported projects in DOI | 1. Capacity assessment (2012) 2. Project team capable to manage all aspects of the project implementation (2013) |

*Source: Project Document*

1. This set of 8 key indicators and 16 targets did not change over the lifetime of the project. They were used yearly to report progress made in the Annual Review Reports. The review of these indicators and their respective targets reveals that they are SMART indicators[[8]](#footnote-8). The formulation of these indicators is such that their respective baselines and targets make them unambiguous indicators; they are specific, measurable, attainable and relevant for the project in a time-bound manner. However a few critical indicators are missing to measure the performance of the project at the objective level. This objective is about increasing communities’ livelihoods and food security; key indicators would be needed to monitor the project at this level and provide a complete set of indicators to measure how well the project was progressing.
2. All of these indicators are relatively easy to monitor and do not require too much resources; except the indicators for outcome 4 and 6. Surveys would need to be conducted to measure how well the project achieved the targets for outcome 4 and 6. Regarding outcome 4, in order to assess the increase of crop yields in both wet and dry seasons and to assess the increase in irrigated areas during the dry season, surveys are needed, ideally, as it was anticipated in the project document, after 2 years to benefit from 2 cycles of wet and dry agriculture production. Regarding outcome 6, a capacity assessment would be needed at the end of the project to assess how effective the delivered training has been.
3. The review of these indicators and targets against project achievements and information collected during the field visits of the Evaluation Team (*see also section 4.3.1*) reveals that 2 quantitative targets may not be met. Using these targets, the project document states “*currently, the irrigation system in Bolikhan covers only 150ha. After the rehabilitation of the irrigation scheme, it is expected that this area will be expanded to a total area of 500ha (+350ha). At present, the 2 proposed irrigation systems in Vienthong supply water for only 25ha in the dry season. After the construction of water gates and weirs, the improved systems should be able to irrigate 320ha both in dry and wet seasons[[9]](#footnote-9)*”. Therefore, based on the project document, it was anticipated that after the rehabilitation of the irrigation infrastructures the irrigated fields during the dry season would increase by 645ha. Information collected during the meetings with villagers indicates that these targets may be over optimistic (*see Annex 9*). However, to measure the real impact of the project on the extra areas that can be irrigated during the dry season will only be able to be done after a minimum of a full year cycle (*see section 4.3.1*).
4. The M&E plan – including its set of indicators and targets - provided the project with an adequate framework to measure its progress/performance. Quarterly and annual progress reports were produced timely and provided good information on the progress made in implementing planned activities (*see Annex 8*). However, it is a case of a project monitoring approach that was to focus on “*monitoring the trees but not the forest*”. In other words, monitoring activities focused on the progress of specific activities and tasks and not enough on how well the project was progressing in achieving its outcomes and particularly its objective. Progress reports did not focus on how well the project was progressing in increasing food security and community livelihoods. As a result, being at the end of the project, we don’t really know the potential impacts of the project on these two critical elements. This issue is also compounded by the fact that a delay in the rehabilitation of irrigation schemes prevented other project activities to benefit from at least a one-year agriculture cycle and provide data on the impact on agriculture production and fisheries from better irrigation water supplies. Based on the review of the M&E approach presented in the project document and of progress reports, the overall M&E function of the project is rated as *marginally satisfactory*.
5. Taking as an example the 2014 Annual Project Review Report, the focus of this report is mostly on tracking the progress of planned activities, which were planned under each outcome, indicator and target. For each planned activity, the report provides a good narrative on the progress made and the reach of this activity with beneficiaries. However, no information is provided to measure the achievements towards the outcomes and there is no indication on the kind of impacts these planned activities may have on increasing food security and livelihoods.

### *Contribution of UNDP and Implementing Partner*

1. The overall efficiency of the UNDP Country Office (CO) and PAFO, the Project Implementing Partner, to support the implementation of the project was good; it is rated as *satisfactory*. In their respective area of responsibility, they provided good support to the Project Implementation Team to ensure an efficient use of IBSA resources and an effective implementation of the project. Both agencies participated actively in the design and the implementation of the project through good communication and collaboration.
2. UNDP provided the required guidance to apply UNDP project management procedures such as procurement, hiring and contracting as well as guidance for reporting project progress. UNDP played a role of quality assurance over the implementation of the project, ensuring that the required qualities for project activities were fulfilled. Overall, UNDP backstopped the project with its own resources, supported the Project Implementation Team throughout the implementation including the participation in the decision-making process for implementing the project through the Executive Board.
3. PAFO, as the Project Implementing Partner, played an important role in the implementation of this project as the main government anchor point of the project. The Vice Governor of Bolikhamxay Province chaired the Executive Board; he provided excellent leadership in guiding the implementation of the project. Overall, PAFO played an important facilitator role for the project, providing the government/institutional context for the legitimization of project-supported activities to increase food security and livelihoods in the Districts of Vienthong and Bolikhan.

## Project Results

1. This section discusses the assessment of project results; how effective was the project to deliver its expected results and how sustainable these achievements will be over the long-term.

### *Overall Achievements/Results*

1. As presented in Sections 4.1.1, the project was implemented through six (6) outcomes. The implementation progress was measured though a set of 8 indicators with their respective baseline and 16 target values. On the next page is a table listing key results achieved by the project against each outcome and their corresponding targets planned at the end of the project.

Table 10: List of Delivered Results

| **Expected Results** | **Project Targets** | **Key Results** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome 1:** A watershed management plan for Nampou project is developed and implemented | * Watershed Management plan developed and Watershed Management Committee in place (2013) * Community based forest management plans developed and corresponding committees in place (2014) * Forest management plans, including improvement of slash-and-burn agriculture, implemented (2015) | * Draft initial Watershed Management Plan for Nam Pou prepared, discussed and revised by members of the watershed management committee. Watershed Management Plan approved by local authorities in 2015. It includes a land use zoning, which includes 521 ha of pasture, 3,088 ha of protected forest area, 2,325 ha of conservation forest, and 285 ha of training forest for the army. * Installed land use planning signboards (1.50 X 2 meters) in 5 villages * Public announcement for Land Use Planning (LUP) in Nam Pu area * Conducted awareness raising activities using appropriate games, role plays, posters, booklets, brochures and videos for primary school children and interested villagers in all 5 targeted villages: Ban Phamouang, Ban Bor, Phadai, Phonsong and Phonyeng * Conducted a study visit to the GIZ supported Nam Ton Watershed Management Project in Sangthong District and local authorities in Hinherb District * Watershed management committees in the 5 targeted villages was approved by the District Governor and met quarterly to developed their watershed management plan * Training on participatory watershed management and sustainable natural resource management conducted in the Bolikhan district * The village forest management committee membership was identified in the 5 targeted villages in Nam Pou watershed. * Final technical report by the national Land Use consultant approved. * The task Force on watershed and forest management led by PONRE has prepared a technical report and plan for a village forest management plan in the Nam Pou area. * Land Use Planning (LUP) implementing team approved by the Director of PNREO and the District Governor * All necessary equipment and materials for field survey and mapping and the review of relevant government policies and regulations by a consultant have started * Land use planning signboards (30cm X 30cm and 1.50 X 2 meters) installed in all 5 targeted villages: Phamouang, Phadai, Banbor, Phonyeng and Phonsong. * Village forests categories have been identified, mapped, demarcated – included LUP - and accordingly allocated (in accordance with forestry law and village participation) in the 5 targeted villages * Village Forest Management Plans for the 5 targeted villages developed and approved for implementation by the Governor of the Bolikhan District |
| **Outcome 2:** Water supply in both seasons for irrigating command area of Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District is available | * Feasibility for rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure conducted (2012) * Completion of rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure (2013) | * Construction work for Nam Sae and Nam Yang villages in Viengthong District and for Nam Pou completed at the end of 2014 and handover completed in early 2015 |
| **Outcome 3:** Irrigation projects are co-managed by government authorities and Water Users' Association with women’s participation | * WUA established (2012) * WUA capacity developed (2013) * WUA able to co-manage irrigation projects in cooperation of provincial and district government authorities (2014) | * Trained 70 WUA members in 4 villages from two Districts focusing on the creation of water user funds to operate and maintain local irrigation schemes. Agreement reached among members on water usage fees during rainy and dry season such as 67 kg of paddy rice per ha during rainy season for paddy field and 133 kg of paddy rice per ha during dry season for paddy field for water users in the Bor village * Conducted orientation meetings with water user group members on community participation and involvement for canal construction * Participation of water user group members to clean the canal before construction at Ban Bor in the Bolikhan District and Ban Phondou, Ban Nam Yang and Ban Thaphe in the Viengthong District |
| **Outcome 4:** Agriculture production increased and diversified in Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District | * Crop yield increased (2013) * Two season cultivation in at least 25% of irrigated area (205 ha) with crops other than rice in dry season (2013) * Two season cultivation in additional next 25% (410 ha) with crops other than rice in dry season (2014) | * Training provided on topics including rice seeds preparation, techniques for selection, storage, and transportation targeting farmers in two Districts. 21% of participants were women * Training methodology on seed plantation in the Viengthong District completed * Training to promote rice crop during the wet season targeting farmers in Viengthong and Bolikhan Districts completed * Survey conducted in November 2014 indicated that the rice yield for the recent rainy season was slightly lower than usual for all Districts. This could be a negative impact from climate change in the region. * Training provided to farmers on techniques to observe rice paddy crops and harvest rice in 7 villages in the Viengthong and Bolikhan District * Training provided on crop production, nurturing, and making compost in the village of Bor * In parallel to training activities the project provided 58kg for 9 households of maize seeds, 70 cans for 5 households of vegetable seeds, and 60kg for 6 households of rice seeds. * Follow up with farmers to observe rice paddy field conditions in 7 villages in Viengthong and Bolikhan Districts (2014) * Collection of data on dry season vegetable production in Ban Bor village in the Bolikhan District, Ban Phondou, Ban Thaphae and Ban Nam Yang villages in the Viengthong District. * According to information collected during this evaluation, households are now expanding their cash-crop production such as sweet corn, vegetable and water melon for home consumption and markets (*see Annex 9*). |
| **Outcome 5:** Improved Fisheries in Nampou reservoir through establishment of fisheries co-management | * Fisheries Management Subcommittee (FMsC) under the WMC established and capacity developed (2013) * Fisheries co-management plan developed (2013) * Fisheries co-management plan implemented (2015) | * Workshops conducted to share experiences on fishery management targeting fishery management committee members * Conducted regular (twice per month) monitoring and patrolling of fisheries conservation zone. The fisheries management committee was able to stop and educate fishermen who violated the regulations and were fishing in the conservation zone. This is a good signal proving that the village fisheries management committee is active and could manage its own fisheries * Workshop on fishery co-management approach conducted for fishery management committee members (35 participants; 31% women) * Completed an assessment survey to initiate a fish spawning activity * Training activity on fish hybridized (8 farmers; 25% women) * Released 5,000 fingerlings in the Nam Pou reservoir on the occasion of the National Fish Releasing Day on 13th of July 2014 and planned to release over 300,000 fingerlings in the same reservoir in 2015 and expand this fish ponds |
| **Outcome 6:** Technical and managerial capacity of provincial and district level government staff enhanced | * Capacity assessment (2012) * Project team capable to manage all aspects of the project implementation (2013) | * Capacity assessment of government staff completed including recommended actions * SIRA team participated in a training event on the new “UNDP NIM SOP” process |

*Source: Adapted from progress reports and notes from the mission to Lao PDR*

1. The review of achievements of the SIRA project (*see table 10 above*) indicates that most planned activities were delivered in the planned timeframe; its overall progress is rated as *marginally satisfactory*. The assessment conducted by the Evaluation Team reveals that the overall success of the project has been hampered by the delay of the construction work for rehabilitating irrigation infrastructures. Due to administrative difficulties during the procurement process including the need to select an adequate company to conduct the work and the seasonality of this work – cannot be done during the rainy season – delays were compounded and the construction work only completed/handover in early 2015. As a result, the benefits of having better irrigation water supply systems could not be fully demonstrated by the end of project in June 2015. There is a need for a minimum of one-year agricultural cycle – ideally 2 years – to measure some immediate results of this project; particularly for expected results under outcome 2 (how larger the irrigated fields are during the dry season), 4 and 5.
2. Nevertheless, the SIRA project resources were used to deliver the following results:
   1. Under outcome 1, it supported the establishment of a watershed management committee in Nam Pou area covering 5 villages: Ban Phamouang, Ban Bor, Phadai, Phonsong and Phonyeng. It also supported the development of a community-based watershed management plan for the Nam Pou watershed, including the land use zoning of the area (LUP). Areas have been categorized and demarcated, including conservation forest; protection forest; production forest; paddy field; garden; fruit tree; agriculture expansion; grazing area; and other areas such as road, water bodies, etc.
   2. Under outcome 2, it supported the rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructures including the construction of a 3.05km cemented channel for the Bor village in Bolikhan District and the construction of better and stronger weirs and water gates to manage the flow of water for the villages of Namyang, Thaphea and Phone Duo in the Vienthong District.
   3. Under outcome 3, it supported the establishment of 4 Water User Associations (WUAs) or also called Water User Groups (WUGs). Training on community participation in operating and maintaining irrigation infrastructures were provided, including the creation of water user funds managed by these WUGs to operate and maintain their irrigation infrastructures. Agreements were reached to set the water fees during the rainy and dry seasons.
   4. Under outcome 4, it supported agriculture extension services to provide enhanced techniques for rice production and cash-crop production during both the rainy and dry seasons. However, due to the delay in completing the construction work (under outcome 2), the villages have not been able to fully measure the benefits from better irrigated water supply systems in term of crop yield increase and larger irrigated paddy field areas, particularly in during the dry season. They need at least a full year agriculture cycle; ideally 2 years to be able to measure these benefits.
   5. Under outcome 5, it supported the establishment of a fisheries management sub-committee as well as the development of a fisheries co-management plan for the Nam Pou reservoir. Training activities were provided on fisheries management including monitoring and patrolling. The SIRA project also supported a fish spawning initiative and the release of about 5,000 fingerlings in the Nam Pou reservoir on National Fish Releasing day on July 13, 2014. However, similar to activities supported under outcome 4, the villagers have not been able to fully measure the benefits from these activities. It is only in 1 or 2 years that the benefits of these activities will be known.
   6. Under outcome 6, it supported a capacity assessment of government staff at both Provincial and District levels. However, no further activities were supported under this outcome to enhance the technical and managerial capacity Provincial and District government staff.
3. The assessment conducted for this evaluation by the Evaluation Team including the visits of project sites. It included meetings with villagers in Phone Duo, Namyang and Thaphea villages in the Vienthong District and in the village of Bor in the Bolikhan District. Notes from these meetings are presented in Annex 9 of this report.
4. In conclusion, the project delivered most of its planned activities within a tight timeline. Delays in implementing the main outcome of this project – the rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructures representing 2/3 of the IBSA grant – affected the implementation of other outcomes and particularly the time needed to acknowledge the benefits of capacity development activities. For instance, capacity development activities under outcome 4 were implemented to increase agriculture production through crop yield increase and extension of irrigated areas during the dry season. However, due to the fact that the improvement of the irrigated water supply systems were only functional early this year (2015), villagers have not yet completed a full agricultural cycle - rainy and dry seasons - using the increased availability of water during the dry season and using their new knowledge acquired through project activities. Therefore, it is too early to measure accurately these benefits. However, all indications observed and collected during this assessment lead to a positive assessment that this project will achieve its expected outcomes. A recommendation is made to conduct a survey next year after a full rainy and dry season to measure these benefits (*see Section 1)*.

### *Attainment of Project Objective / Impact*

1. The review of project achievements presented in the previous section 4.3.1 reveals that the implementation was *marginally satisfactory*. Nevertheless, most of the planned activities have been implemented but the achievements have been hampered by the delays of construction work for rehabilitating irrigation infrastructures, which was the main expected outcome of this project, particularly in term of money (2/3 of the IBSA grant). As concluded in the previous section, most planned activities were implemented including capacity development activities. However, the delays prevented the project to have sufficient time to acknowledge/measure the benefits of capacity development activities. A minimum of one full year is needed for these communities to use the improved irrigated water supply systems and complete a full agricultural cycle - rainy and dry seasons - using their new knowledge acquired through project activities before any accurate measurement can be done.
2. In the meantime, as discussed in Section 4.2.4, the M&E function on this project focused mostly on the progress of specific activities and tasks and not enough on how well the project was progressing in achieving its outcomes and particularly its objective. No indicators were monitoring the progress made toward achieving the project objective. As a result of this approach, limited information is available on the impact of these activities; particularly if the project will achieve its objective that is ***to contribute to sustainable livelihoods improvement and food security through the development of irrigated agriculture and the promotion of more sustainable management of corresponding watershed resources in the selected communities of Bolikhan and Viengthong Districts in the Bolikhamxay Province*.**
3. Nevertheless, as concluded on the review of the project achievements above, the observations, meetings and the review of project documents conducted during this evaluation lead the Evaluation Team to state that the project will have a positive impact on these communities in term of food security and more sustainable livelihoods. The Evaluation Team collected valuable information during the meetings with the targeted communities (*see Annex 9*). This anecdotal information indicates that potential improvements in term of food security and sustainable livelihoods should be seen when using their new knowledge and the improved irrigated water supply systems. However, at this point in time, it is not possible to further measure this potential impact. A recommendation is made in this report to conduct a survey next year after a full rainy and dry season to measure these potential benefits.
4. Some pictures of activities supported by the project are presented below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Macintosh HD:Users:bellamyjj:Downloads:thumb_DSCF4040_1024.jpg | Macintosh HD:Users:bellamyjj:Downloads:thumb_DSCF4155_1024.jpg |
| Consolidation of the Weir for the Namyang village | Water gate at the Nam Pou reservoir |
| Macintosh HD:Users:bellamyjj:Downloads:thumb_DSCF4122_1024.jpg | Macintosh HD:Users:bellamyjj:Documents:Data - ST Work:UNDP-IBSA - Lao:WIP:Photos:thumb_DSCF4146_1024.jpgMacintosh HD:Users:bellamyjj:Downloads:thumb_DSCF4161_1024.jpg |
| Fish pond for fish spawning in the village of Bor | Channel constructed (3.05km) for the village of Bor, Bolikhan District |
| Macintosh HD:Users:bellamyjj:Downloads:thumb_DSCF4107_1024.jpg | Macintosh HD:Users:bellamyjj:Downloads:thumb_DSCF4108_1024.jpg |
| Awareness poster distributed in villages | Signpost showing the zoning included in the watershed management plan for Nam Pou watershed. |
| Macintosh HD:Users:bellamyjj:Documents:Data - ST Work:UNDP-IBSA - Lao:WIP:Photos:thumb_DSCF4002_1024.jpgMacintosh HD:Users:bellamyjj:Documents:Data - ST Work:UNDP-IBSA - Lao:WIP:Photos:thumb_DSCF4011_1024.jpg | Macintosh HD:Users:bellamyjj:Documents:Data - ST Work:UNDP-IBSA - Lao:WIP:Photos:thumb_DSCF4013_1024.jpg |
| Water gate in the village of Phone dou | Consolidation of the Weir for the village of Phone dou |
| Macintosh HD:Users:bellamyjj:Documents:Data - ST Work:UNDP-IBSA - Lao:WIP:Photos:thumb_DSCF3989_1024.jpg | Macintosh HD:Users:bellamyjj:Documents:Data - ST Work:UNDP-IBSA - Lao:WIP:Photos:thumb_DSCF3992_1024.jpg |
| Regained rice paddy field in the village of Phone dou | Regained rice paddy field in the village of Phone dou |

*Source: Photos from Jean-Joseph Bellamy*

### *Relevance*

1. As discussed in section 4.1.3, the project was *relevant* for Lao PDR. Its timing was good; it provided the Government of Lao PDR with additional resources to demonstrate the implementation of a series of measures to increase food security and improve rural community livelihoods that are part of the objectives of the National Socioeconomic Development Plan 2011-2015 (7th NSEDP) and also part of the objectives of the agriculture development policy framework of MAF, including the government arrangements for operating and maintaining irrigation infrastructures.
2. The project has been a response to the national need that is to achieve self-sufficiency in food production, promoting crop diversification and expanding irrigation infrastructure in some of the poorest Districts in Lao PDR. The project provided resources to demonstrate how possible it is to improve the overall livelihoods and food security of local communities in 2 poor Districts of Bolikhamxay Province by supporting the development of irrigated agriculture and the community-based management of watershed resources such as forests and fisheries.
3. The project was implemented by the government as a pilot project to test and demonstrate the implementation of the irrigated agriculture policy, including the development of a community-based watershed management plan and the use of WUAs to co-manage these irrigation infrastructures. The project was, therefore, highly relevant in the context of Lao PDR’s development and it is critical that the benefits of this project be measured carefully (*see Section 4.3.1 and 4.3.2*) and disseminated throughout related government services in Lao PDR. At this point in time and considering that project benefits could not be measured adequately during this evaluation, it is hoped that the project achievements will be up-scaled at the province level and possibly at the national level.
4. The project was also *relevant* for UNDP in Lao PDR and for IBSA Fund. UNDP’s Country Programme 2012-2015 that is aligned with the UNDAF Action Plan is focus strategic initiatives with more direct impacts on poverty reduction. As part of its four programme priorities, the UNDP Country Programme 2012-2015 includes one programme to ensure the sustainable management of natural resources and of the environmental, and the adaptation to climate change. Under this programme, UNDP has been assisting the government of Lao PDR in strengthening capacities to formulate and implement strategies, policies and plans related to natural resource management, disaster risk reduction and climate change (*see Section 4.1.7*).
5. Regarding the relevance of the project for IBSA Fund, it is *relevant*. As discussed in section 4.1.8, the project is well aligned with some strategic objectives of IBSA Fund; particularly the strategic objectives a) combat poverty and hunger; b) provide development impact attributable to IBSA’s cooperation; and c) develop capacity and a sense of ownership in the beneficiary communities. However, regarding the other strategic objectives - d) promote and engage Southern experts and institutions; e) promote knowledge sharing in the spirit of South-South cooperation; and f) stress project sustainability with detailed strategy for future disengagement – the alignment of the project with these objectives is less obvious. A UN Volunteer from Brazil worked on the project for a year but neither other Southern Experts nor institutions has been involved in the implementation of the project. Knowledge produced by the project has not been shared among developing countries and the strategy to sustain the project achievements was rather weakly defined during the formulation phase. Nevertheless, this project was a good attempt to implement an IBSA Funded project in Lao PDR and lessons were learned on how to design and implement these projects.

### *Efficiency*

1. As discussed in other sections above, the management of the project was rated as *marginally satisfactory*. The Project Implementation Team followed the Government of Lao PDR and UNDP procedures for implementing the project and used adaptive management to secure project deliverables while maintaining adherence to the overall project design. Annual and quarterly work plans were developed with a corresponding budget to guide the implementation. An efficient implementation team was in place and stakeholders were engaged in the implementation of project activities.
2. The review noted that some difficulties occurred with administrative procedures and delays in processing project requests, particularly for procuring goods and services but following some “on-the-job training”, the administration of the project improved and was finally adequate. As discussed in section 4.1.9, it was also the first project for UNDP to be implemented by Provincial Authorities using the UNDP National Implementation Modality (NIM). Project activities were carried out by a Project Implementing Partner (PAFO) to execute the project led by a Project Manager who was a PAFO Senior Officer seconded full time to the project. After this three-year experience, it demonstrated the feasibility of this approach at this level of government. These arrangements provided the project with clear roles and responsibilities as well as clear reporting lines of authority.
3. The Executive Board – well chaired by the Vice Governor of the Bolikhamxay Province - provided an effective way to communicate and keep stakeholders engaged, contributing to an effective use of project resources and a good national ownership of project achievements. This oversight body met annually during the implementation of the project to review its achievements and its work plans and to address any issues that needed attention. The Board provided also an excellent “conduit” for the project to communicate with various government services.
4. Implementation progress was monitored through a set of indicators and targets and reported in quarterly and annual reports. However, as discussed in section 4.2.4, the focus of the monitoring function was very much on monitoring the implementation of planned activities and not enough on how well the project was progressing in achieving its outcomes and particularly its objective. It is a typical case of a focus on “*monitoring the trees but not the forest*”. As a result, through the progress reports we know the status of each planned activities but this monitoring information is limited when it comes to assessing the potential impacts of the project on food security and sustainable livelihoods that are part of the objective of the project. This weakness in the monitoring function was also compounded by the fact that a delay in the rehabilitation of irrigation schemes prevented other project activities to benefit from at least a one-year agriculture cycle and to provide data on the impact on agriculture production and fisheries from better irrigation water supplies.
5. Finally, given that it is always difficult to analyze the cost-benefit of such projects, the review of all management elements indicates that the implementation of the project was an efficient operation that created a fair value for money. The prudent approach – respecting procedures - to engage project funds was translated into fair value for money and the use of adaptive management allowed for the implementation of activities that were responsive to community needs in these two poor Districts in the Bolikhamxay Province.

### *Country Ownership*

1. As discussed in other sections of this report, the country ownership is excellent and it is due mostly to the management arrangement of the project. It was implemented by the Government of Lao PDR to address issues of poor rural communities of Laotians. The project was designed on the basis of responding to a government priority to increase agriculture production and by extension food security and also to improve sustainable livelihoods of rural communities. It became *de facto* a priority programme for the Bolikhamxay Province overseen by the Vice Governor of the Province and implemented by key government departments responsible for irrigation, agriculture extension, fisheries, and watershed management.
2. The timing of the project was also good. As discussed in section 4.3.3, it provided the Government of Lao PDR with resources to demonstrate the implementation of a series of measures to increase food security and improve rural community livelihoods that are part of the objectives of the National Socioeconomic Development Plan 2011-2015 (7th NSEDP) and also part of the objectives of the agriculture development policy framework of MAF, including the government arrangements for operating and maintaining irrigation infrastructures. It is expected that this good country ownership will contribute to the long-term sustainability of project achievements.

### *Sustainability*

1. Despite a poor sustainability strategy developed in the project document, the prospects for the long-term sustainability of project achievements are good; it is rated as *likely sustainable*. As discussed in section 4.3.3, the project was a direct response to the government irrigated agriculture policy, including the development of a community-based watershed management plan and the use of WUAs to co-manage these irrigation infrastructures. It is anticipated that the government will continue to implement this sectoral policy in the foreseeable future and, therefore, these project achievements should be sustained in the medium-term and used as demonstrations to be replicated in other Districts.
2. Furthermore, project achievements are mostly benefiting poor rural communities in the Vienthong and Bolikhan Districts in the Bolikhamxay Province. These benefits – irrigation infrastructures, co-management approaches to manage irrigated water and watershed, and improved agriculture and fishery techniques – can be considered as basic needs to these communities. Their livelihoods depend on irrigated water for their food security and increased agriculture production should have a direct impact on their own livelihoods. Project achievements are part of their sustainable livelihoods and the targeted communities “own” these achievements; it was implemented for them and it is anticipated that they will sustain these achievements as part of sustaining their own livelihoods.
3. However, the Evaluation Team noted that the sustainability strategy formulated in the project document was poorly written and certainly not providing a framework for the sustainability of project achievements. The main thrust of the sustainability of project achievements developed in the project document was to by providing initial financial support and training to improve the overall agricultural productivity and ensuring the long-term and sustainable management of natural resources, communities and their farming systems will sustain these achievements; including the fact that these achievements were handover to these communities and that they will be supported by local administrations. It is somewhat a simplistic approach to ensure the long-term sustainability of project achievements. Nevertheless, the nature of these achievements is such that their sustainability over the long-term should be ensured as discussed in the paragraph above.

***Financial risk***

1. When reviewing the sustainability of project achievements, financial risk is the main area where questions related to the long-term sustainability of project achievements need some discussions. The project invested in irrigation infrastructures for communities in 2 poor Districts in Bolikhamxay Province. Despite that the investments have been completed, these infrastructures need to be operated and maintained. Furthermore, communities in the Viengthong District are asking for better infrastructures; particularly for cemented channels (*see Annex 9*). “*Who will provide the financing for O&M and possibly for further investment in infrastructures?*”
2. The first action to mitigate this financial risk was the good engagement of these communities into the process of implementing these irrigation infrastructures, including the contribution of labor in this construction work. These infrastructures were handed over to these communities and the Evaluation Team found a good community ownership of these infrastructures. The second action was the establishment of WUGs composed of water users at the community level. These groups, which are part of government policy to operate and maintain irrigation infrastructures, were organized and training was provided by the project to develop their capacity in operating and maintaining these irrigation infrastructures, including the creation of water user funds for O&M. These WUGs agreed on a water user fee schedule during the rainy and the dry season. However, for obvious reasons (raising fees from poor communities) these funds will be limited to undertake only basic maintenance of these infrastructures. As of the time of this evaluation, it is not known if these funds will be sufficient and, moreover, some community members already mentioned the difficulties to pay these fees during the field visits of the Evaluation Team (*see Annex 9*). There is a risk that these funds will not be sufficient. It requires an attention from government services to ensure the sustainability of these infrastructures. The financial sustainability of project achievements is rated as *moderately likely sustainable*.

***Socio-economic risk***

1. As discussed in section 4.3.2, the project should have positive socio-economic impacts on the communities in these 2 Districts in the medium and long-term. As a result of the project, these communities are now more equipped to increase their food security and enhance their livelihoods. They now have better irrigation infrastructures and they established co-management schemes to manage these infrastructures but also their natural resources, including fisheries. Over the medium and long-term, it should impact the local economy and raise the livelihood of these communities. Within this context, the review indicated that there is no socio-economic risks that could threaten the sustainability of project achievements; it is rated as *likely sustainable*.

***Institutional framework and governance risk***

1. As said earlier, the project was a direct response to the government irrigated agriculture policy, including the development of a community-based watershed management plan and the use of WUAs to co-manage these irrigation infrastructures. It is anticipated that the government will continue to implement this sectoral policy in the foreseeable future and, therefore, these project achievements should be sustained in the medium-term and used as demonstrations to be replicated in other Districts. Furthermore, communities in Vienthong and Bolikhan Districts now “own” these project achievements. Irrigation infrastructures were handed over to these communities and co-management agreements are in place for communities to “govern” these achievements. Since their livelihoods depend on irrigated water for their food security and that increased agriculture production should have a direct impact on their own livelihoods, these communities should continue to “govern” these achievements; their sustainability with regards to institutional framework and governance matters is rated as *likely sustainable*.

***Environmental risk***

1. The review did not find any particular environmental risks to the sustainability of project outcomes; it is rated as *likely sustainable*. The project provided better irrigation infrastructures and supported the beneficiaries to establish co-management agreements to operate and maintain these infrastructures and also to manage natural resources such as local fisheries and through a watershed management plan, which should have positive environmental impacts over the medium and long-term.

### *Mainstreaming*

1. As described in section 4.1.6, a replication approach was not really developed during the project formulation phase and by extension the planning of mainstreaming project achievements in the Province and nation wide. The only related element in the project document was to state that the “*exposure and engagement of central level agencies (in the project) will contribute to the further improvement of the policy and legal framework related to a more integrated approach to irrigation development*”. It was anticipated that through the participation of central level agencies in the project through the Executive Board, it will contribute to the “*improvement and the further development of the corresponding policy and legal frameworks*”.
2. In the meantime, as discussed in section 4.3.3, the Evaluation Team found that this project was highly relevant for the Government of Lao PDR and also for UNDP and IBSA Fund. The project was one response to the national priority that is to achieve self-sufficiency in food production, promoting crop diversification and expanding irrigation infrastructure in some of the poorest Districts in Lao PDR. The project provided resources to demonstrate how to improve the overall livelihoods and food security of local communities in 2 poor Districts of Bolikhamxay Province; mostly by supporting the development of irrigated agriculture and the community-based management of watershed resources such as forests and fisheries.
3. However, one important missing part before mainstreaming/replicating the results of this project is the confirmation of the impact of the project on food security and sustainable livelihoods. As discussed in section 4.3.2, the Evaluation Team was not able to assess this potential impact. Most planned activities have been implemented but the impact has been hampered by the delays of construction work for rehabilitating irrigation infrastructures. These delays prevented the project to have sufficient time to acknowledge/measure the benefits of capacity development activities. A minimum of one full year (2015-2016) is needed for these communities to use the improved irrigated water supply systems and complete a full agricultural cycle - rainy and dry seasons - using their new knowledge acquired through project activities before any accurate measurement can be done. It is recommended to conduct a survey next year (mid-2016) to assess the potential impact on food security and livelihoods.
4. Once it will be possible to better ascertain the project results, lessons learned and best practices should be clearly identified, documented and disseminated through related government services throughout Lao PDR. The review of project achievements indicates that there is a good potential for learning from this experience and contribute further to the national priority that is to achieve self-sufficiency in food production, promoting crop diversification and expanding irrigation infrastructure in some of the poorest Districts in Lao PDR. However, the fact that it was not “embedded” in the project strategy, no particular mainstreaming/replicating activities were supported by the project and, considering that the project is now closed, for this to happen it will now necessitate resources from the Government or another project/donor.

### *Catalytic Role*

1. Using a definition of the catalytic role of projects used by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the aim is that such funded projects will attract additional resources, pursue strategies that have a greater result than the project itself, and/or accelerate a process of development or change. The review of the catalytic role of the SIRA project is to consider the extent to which the project has demonstrated: a) production of a public good, b) demonstration, c) replication, and d) scaling up.
2. Considering the analysis discussed in all sections of this chapter 4 above, the SIRA project has had a limited catalytic role so far. Using the definition above, the project produced public goods with the provision of better irrigation infrastructures and demonstrated co-management mechanisms for O&M of these infrastructures and the management of natural resources, including fisheries. However, as replication and scaling-up were not part of the project strategy, no emphasis has been put on replicating and scaling-up project achievements.
3. Nevertheless, the same government priorities justifying this project are still current, the need for better irrigation water supply systems is still a high priority for rural communities – particularly for poor rural communities, and the need to secure food production is also a high priority for these communities as well as the need to enhance their livelihoods. Once the results of this project will be confirmed, the project and its accumulated knowledge could be replicated to other areas in Lao PDR using the “conduit” through the Provincial Authorities. The Evaluation Team observed clear needs for more resources in this area, including a larger project building on the achievements of the SIRA project and covering other Districts in the Bolikhamxay Province.

# LESSONS LEARNED

1. A summary of lessons learned is presented below. These are based on the review of project documents, interviews with key informants and analysis of the information collected:

* Performance indicators (with their respective baselines and targets) are needed at all level of a project strategy, particularly at the outcome and objective levels. It guides the project monitoring function and lead the project implementation teams to focus on high level expected results and use a more results-based management (RBM) approach as opposed to a management by activity.
* Critical principles such as IBSA strategic objectives need to be “embedded” into the project strategy to ensure that the project is aligned and implemented according to these principles.
* Mainstreaming, replicability and scaling-up are critical success factors for any development projects. They need to be part of the project strategy and “embedded” in the set of expected results. Once there are integrated in the project strategy, the implementation team will naturally focus on these principles seeking to mainstream, replicate and/or scale-up project achievements. If there are not part of the logic model (*Result and Resources Framework*), they tend to be ignore until the end of the project.
* It is critical on development projects to monitor closely the scheduling/timing of project activities, particularly for agriculture projects and short duration projects (such as 3 years) where it is easy to lose a one-crop season due to implementation delays. It is an important task to keep these projects on time and it should include measures to mitigate any delays (adaptive management).
* A mid-term review is particularly useful when some issues exist on a project but less useful when the project implementation goes well. It provides an opportunity to the project implementation team to review the progress as seen by an independent reviewer and question the potential delays, issues and other concerns that may hamper the progress of the project to meet its targets.
* A demonstration project provides a lot of lessons and best practices that are important to document. These projects should always end with a final phase to document their results and identify the way forward to replicate these results in similar context in the country and in the region. It should be part of any exit strategy for this type of project.
* A project that is a response to national needs and priorities is often highly relevant for beneficiaries and its chance of being implemented effectively are maximized. There seems to be a link between a relevant project and its implementation effectiveness.
* A project with some investments in tangible deliverables (such as irrigation infrastructures) brings tangible results to beneficiaries with positive direct and immediate impacts on their livelihoods. It facilitates a strong participation of beneficiaries in project activities and can make big differences in livelihoods of communities; particularly poor communities.
* The application of the UNDP NIM modality is an effective management tool to develop national ownership of projects funded by international donors. Additionally, this first experience shows than it can be done at the Provincial level; closer to beneficiaries.
* In order to increase agriculture production, it is critical to use an integrated approach encompassing infrastructure development, agriculture extension services covering the full range of techniques (soil preparation, seeds, plantation, fertilizing, pesticide control, harvesting, storing, etc.), micro-financing and marketing.
* When a project seeks to change an agriculture system such as from one season per year to two seasons, it needs to address behavioral norms and cultural practices as well, as part of the change process.

# Annex 1: Terms of Reference

Terminal Evaluation Terms of Reference

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with UNDP and IBSA M&E policies and project completion report guidelines (Annex 6) and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP support financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. These terms of reference (TOR) sets out the expectations for a Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the Project *“Support to Integrated Irrigated Agriculture in 2 Districts in Bolikhamxay”*(Award ID:00068072).

The essentials of the project to be evaluated are as follows:

Project Summary Table

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Project Title: | *Support to Integrated Irrigated Agriculture in 2 Districts in Bolikhamxay (SIRA)* | | | | |
|  | |  |  | *at endorsement (Million US$)* | *at completion (Million US$)* |
| UNDP Project ID: | | 00083482 | IBSA financing: | 1,323,000 |  |
| Country: | | Lao PDR | IA/EA own: |  |  |
| Region: | | SE Asia | Government: | 84,000 |  |
| Focal Area: | |  | Other: |  |  |
| Executing Agency: | | UNDP | Total Project Cost: | 1,323,000 |  |
| Government Implementing Partner (IP): | | Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office of Bolikhamxay Province, (PAFO) | ProDoc Signature (date project began): | | 10 May 2011 |
| Other Partners involved: | | -Ministry of Agriculture (MAF)  -Provincial Department of Planning and Investment of MPI,  -Provincial Natural Resources and Environment Office (PNREO) of MONRE,  -Department of Irrigation of MAF,-Department of Livestock and Fisheries of MAF,  -Department of Forest Resources Management of MONRE,  -Department of Forestry of MAF | (Operational) Closing Date: | Proposed:  June 2015 | Actual:  June 2015 |

Objective and Scope

The project was designed to promote the realization of the Government of Lao PDR’s agricultural sector focus on achieving self-sufficiency in food production, promoting crop diversification and expanding irrigation development. This project aims at improving the overall livelihoods and food security of local communities in the 2 of the poorest districts of Bolikhamxay by supporting the development of irrigated agriculture and the community based management of watershed resources such as forests and fisheries.

*Project Objective*

The overall objective of the project to contribute to sustainable livelihoods improvement and food security through the development of irrigated agriculture and the promotion of more sustainable management of corresponding watershed resources in the selected communities of Bolikhan and Viengthong Districts of Bolikhamxay Province.

*Six* outcomes will contribute to this objective;

1. Watershed management plan for Nam Pou project is developed and implemented
2. Water supply in both season for irrigating command area of Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District is available
3. Irrigation projects are co-managed by government authorities and Water Users’ Association with women participation
4. Agriculture production increased and diversified in Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District
5. Improved Fisheries in Nam Pou reservoir through establishment of fisheries co-management
6. Technical and managerial capacity of provincial and district level government staff enhanced

An overall approach and method[[10]](#footnote-10) for conducting project terminal evaluations of UNDP supported projects has developed over time. The evaluator is expected to frame the evaluation effort following the ENAG Standards for Evaluation UN System (2005) and using the criteria of **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact,** as defined and explained in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported Projects. A set of questions covering each of these criteria have been drafted and are included with this TOR ([*Annex*](#_TOR_Annex_C:) *3*) The evaluator is expected to amend, complete and submit this matrix as part of an evaluation inception report, and shall include it as an annex to the final report.

The evaluation must provide evidence‐based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, UNDP Country Office, project team, UNDP Programme Specialist in the UN Office for South-South Cooperation based in the UN HQ and key stakeholders. The evaluator is expected to conduct a field mission to Bolikhamxay (Viengthong and Bolikhan Districts) including a selected number of the at least 5 target villages*.* Interviews will be held with the following organizations and individuals at a minimum: MAF, DOI, PAFO, DAFO, Project steering committees (including LWU), provincial, and district and village / farmer representatives.

The evaluator will review all relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project reports – including Annual APR, project budget revisions, progress reports, project files, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the evaluator considers useful for this evidence-based assessment. A list of documents that the project team will provide to the evaluator for review is included in [Annex](#_TOR_Annex_B:) 2 of this Terms of Reference.

Evaluation Criteria & Ratings

An assessment of project performance will be carried out, based against expectations set out in the Project Logical Framework/Results Framework [Annex](#_TOR_Annex_A:) 1, which provides performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification. The evaluation will at a minimum cover the UNDP criteria of: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. Also, the evaluation should be undertaken following the analytical framework for IBSA Fund South-south Cooperation Principles Assessment at Project Level, see Annex 8.

Ratings must be provided on the following performance criteria. The completed table must be included in the evaluation executive summary. The obligatory rating scales are included in  [Annex](#_TOR_Annex_D:) 4.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation Ratings:** | | | |
| **1. Monitoring and Evaluation** | ***rating*** | **2. IA& EA Execution** | ***rating*** |
| M&E design at entry |  | Quality of UNDP Implementation |  |
| M&E Plan Implementation |  | Quality of Execution - Executing Agency |  |
| Overall quality of M&E |  | Overall quality of Implementation / Execution |  |
| **3. Assessment of Outcomes** | **rating** | **4. Sustainability** | **rating** |
| Relevance |  | Financial resources |  |
| Effectiveness |  | Socio-political |  |
| Efficiency |  | Institutional framework and governance |  |
| Overall Project Outcome Rating |  | Environmental |  |
|  |  | Overall likelihood of sustainability |  |

Project finance / cofinance

The Evaluation will assess the key financial aspects of the project. Project cost and funding data will be required, including annual expenditures. Variances between planned and actual expenditures will need to be assessed and explained. Results from recent financial audits, as available, should be taken into consideration. The evaluator(s) will receive assistance from the Country Office (CO) and Project Team to obtain financial data in order to complete the co-financing table below, which will be included in the terminal evaluation report.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Finance (type/source) | UNDP own financing (mill. US$) | | Government  (mill. US$) | | Partner Agency  (mill. US$) | | Total  (mill. US$) | |
|  | |  | |  | |  | |
| Planned | Actual | Planned | Actual | Planned | Actual | Actual | Actual |
| Grants |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Loans/Concessions |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * In-kind support |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Other |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Totals |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Mainstreaming

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project was successfully mainstreamed with other UNDP priorities, including poverty alleviation, improved governance, the prevention and recovery from natural disasters, and gender.

Impact

The evaluators will assess the extent to which the project is achieving impacts or progressing towards the achievement of impacts. Key findings that should be brought out in the evaluations include whether the project has demonstrated: a) verifiable improvements in ecological status, b) verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems, and/or c) demonstrated progress towards these impact achievements[[11]](#footnote-11).

Conclusions, recommendations & lessons

The evaluation report must include a chapter providing a set of **conclusions**, **recommendations** and **lessons**.

Implementation arrangements

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation resides with the UNDP CO in Lao PDR.The UNDP CO will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the evaluation team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the Evaluators team to set up stakeholder interviews, arrange field visits, coordinate with the Government etc.

Evaluation timeframe

The total duration of the evaluation will be *25* days according to the following plan:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | Timing | Completion Date |
| **Preparation** | *3* days | *Late April 2015* |
| **Inception Report** | *1 day* | *May 8, 2015* |
| **Evaluation Mission** | *12* days | *May 10-12, 2015* |
| **Draft Evaluation Report** | 7 days | *June 03, 2015* |
| **Final Report** | *2* days | *June 19, 2015* |

Evaluation deliverables

The evaluation team is expected to deliver the following:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Deliverable | Content | Timing | Responsibilities |
| **Inception Report** | Evaluator provides clarifications on timing and method | No later than 2 weeks before the evaluation mission. | Evaluator submits to UNDP CO |
| **Presentation** | Initial Findings | End of evaluation mission | To project management, UNDP CO |
| **Draft Final Report** | Full report, (per Annex 6 template) with annexes | Within 3 weeks of the evaluation mission | Sent to CO, reviewed by UNOSSC NY |
| **Final Report\*** | Revised report | Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft | Sent to CO for uploading to UNDP ERC. |

\*When submitting the final evaluation report, the evaluator is required also to provide an 'audit trail', detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final evaluation report.

Team Composition

The evaluation team will be composed of 1 international and 1 national evaluators. The consultants shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects. Experience with IBSA financed projects is an advantage*. (The international evaluator will be designated as the team leader and will be responsible for finalizing the report).*The evaluators selected should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities.

The Team members must present the following qualifications:

***For the International Evaluator:***

Education:

* Technical knowledge/recognized degree in the targeted focal area(s): irrigation, agriculture, food security, knowledge management,

Experience:

* Minimum 10 years of relevant professional experience in the academia or research institutions, with a focus on socio-economic analysis,
* 8 years technical experience with water resources management analysis, the socio-economic impact assessment related to irrigation, agriculture and rural development, and institutional development towards integrated irrigated agriculture
* Experience in project reviewing or evaluating within United Nations and IBSA systems
* Experience in reviewing or evaluation of similar irrigated agriculture sector projects with UNDP-IBSA supported projects
* Experience with results‐based monitoring and evaluation methodologies;
* 3 years of working experience in the Mekong region (South East Asia)

Other Knowledge and Skills:

* Capability to lead and guide the works of the national consultant into joint working results and evaluation reports
* Demonstrated analytical and presentation skills
* Excellent English communication and report writing skills

***For the national Evaluator:***

Education:

* Technical knowledge/recognized degree in the targeted focal area(s): irrigation, agriculture, food security, knowledge management, etc

Experience:

* Minimum 5 years of relevant professional experience in the academia or research institutions, with a focus on socio-economic analysis,
* 3 years technical experience with water resources management analysis, the socio-economic impact assessment related to irrigation, agriculture and rural development, and institutional development towards integrated irrigated agriculture
* Experience in project reviewing or evaluating within United Nations and IBSA systems
* Experience in reviewing or evaluation of similar integrated irrigated agriculture projects with UNDP-IBSA supported projects
* Experience with results‐based monitoring and evaluation methodologies;

Other Knowledge and Skills:

* Capability to work collectively with international consultants
* Demonstrated analytical and presentation skills
* Excellent English communication and report writing skills

**Competencies for both International and National evaluators**

Functional competencies:

* Shares knowledge and experience.
* Plan and prioritizes work activities to meet organizational goals.
* Builds and sustains relationships with key stakeholder groups and project team.
* Conceptualizes and analyzes problems to identify key issues, underlying problems, and how they relate.
* Demonstrates excellent and effective written and oral communication skills
* Demonstrate respect to knowledge and culture and religion in a multidisciplinary working environment.
* Applies the required depth and breadth of knowledge and expertise to meet job demands.
* Uses information technology effectively as a tools and resource
* Demonstrated flexibility and adaptability in taking on this type of consultancy.

**Corporate Competencies:**

* Demonstrates integrity by modeling the UN’s values and ethical standards;
* Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP;
* Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability;
* Treats all people fairly without favoritism;
* Fulfills all obligations to gender sensitivity and zero tolerance for sexual harassment

Evaluator Ethics

Evaluation consultants will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct (Annex 5) upon acceptance of the assignment. UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the [UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations'](http://www.unevaluation.org/ethicalguidelines)

Payment modalities and specifications

(*this payment schedule is indicative, to be filled in by the UNDP CO based on their standard procurement procedures)*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| % | Milestone |
| *10%* | At contract signing |
| *40%* | Following submission and approval of the 1ST draft terminal evaluation report |
| *50%* | Following submission and approval (UNDP-CO and UNOSSC) of the final terminal evaluation report |

Application process

Applicants are requested to apply online (indicate the site, such as http://jobs.undp.org, etc.) by 7th of April 2015. Individual consultants are invited to submit applications together with their CV for these positions. The application should contain a current and complete C.V. in English with indication of the e‐mail and phone contact. Shortlisted candidates will be requested to submit a price offer indicating the total cost of the assignment (including daily fee, per diem and travel costs).

UNDP applies a fair and transparent selection process that will take into account the competencies/skills of the applicants as well as their financial proposals. Qualified women and members of social minorities are encouraged to apply.

**TOR - Annex 1: SIRA Project Logical Framework**

| **INTENDED OUTPUTS** | **OUTPUT TARGETS FOR (YEARS)** | **INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1.** Watershed management plan for Nam Pou project is developed and implemented |  |  |
| **Indicator 1.1:** Watershed Management Plan developed and implemented and Watershed Management Committee in place  **Baseline 1.1:** No existing watershed management plan  **Indicator 1.2:** Village forest management plan developed and implemented with corresponding committees in place  **Baseline 1.2:** No community based forest management | **Target 1.1 (2013):** Watershed Management plan developed and Watershed Management Committee in place  **Target 1.2 (2014)**: Community based forest management plans developed and corresponding committees in place  **Target 1.3 (2015)**: Forest management plans, including improvement of slash-and-burn agriculture, implemented. | 1.1 Development of Watershed Management Plan based on participatory land use planning and formation of Watershed Management Committee  1.2 Demarcation of village forests, establishment of village forest committees and development of village forest management plans  1.3 Implementation of village forest management plans including the improvement of slash-and-burn agriculture |
| **2.** Water supply in both season for irrigating command area of Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District is available |  |  |
| **Indicator 2.1**: 3,050 meter main canal of Nampou project, 1 weir of Namyang project and 1 weir of Phondou project is rehabilitated by 2013.  **Baseline 2.1 :** Poor irrigation infrastructures facilities available | **Target 2.1 (2012):** Feasibility for rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure conducted  **Target 2.1 (2013):** Completion of rehabilitation of irrigationinfrastructure | **2.1.** Review and validation of design and costing of irrigation schemes  **2.2.** Contract Awarding and Contract Management/monitoring |
| **3.** Irrigation projects are co-managed by government authorities and Water Users’ Association with women participation |  |  |
| **Indicator 3.1:** WUA established by 2012 and functional by 2014  **Baseline 3.1:** No existing WUA | **Target 3.1(2012):** WUA established  **Target 3.1 (2013)** : WUA capacity developed  **Target 3.1 (2014):** WUA able to co-manage irrigation projects in cooperation of provincial and district government authorities | **3.1** Institutional support (logistic, administrative, managerial) for WUA establishment and management from 2012 through 2014  **3.2** Capacity developing activities |
| **4.** Agriculture production increased and diversified in Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District |  |  |
| **Indicator 4.1:** Two season cultivation with diverse cropping pattern in dry season, Crop yield increased by 2014 - rice 3.5 t/ha (wet season) 4.5 t/ha (dry season), Sweet corn 4.3 t/ha, Feed corn 5 t/ha, Soybean (2t/ha)  **Baseline 4.1:** Single crop (rice) cultivation, Rice yield 3.41 ton/ha, no other crops cultivated  by 2012 | **Target (2013):** Crop yield increased  **Target (2013):** Two season cultivation in at least 25% of irrigated area (205 ha) with crops other than rice in dry season  **Target** (**2014):** Two season cultivation in additional next 25% (410 ha) with crops other than rice in dry season | **4.1** Training on improved agriculture method - efficient irrigation, diversified cropping method for farmers representing all households ensuring at least 33% women participation  **4.2** Seed (other than rice) provision for 25% of dry season cultivated land  **4.3** Seed provision (Other than rice) for 50% of dry season cultivation land |
| **5.** Improved Fisheries in Nam Pou reservoir through establishment of fisheries co-management |  |  |
| **Indicator 5.1:** Fisheries co-management established  **Baseline 5.1:** No fisheries in Nam Pou reservoir | **Target 5.1 (2013):** Fisheries Management Subcommittee (FMsC) under the WMC established and capacity developed  **Target 5.1 (2013**): Fisheries co-management plan developed.  **Target (2015):** Fisheries co-management plan implemented | **5.1** Formation and capacity building of FMsC  **5.2** Development Fisheries Co-Management plan  **5.3** Implementation of fisheries co-management plan |
| **6. Technical and managerial capacity of provincial and district level government staff enhanced** |  |  |
| **Indicator 6.1:** One technical report assessing the technical and managerial capability of implementing partner available at the end of 1st quarter of the project  **Baseline 6.1**: No report | **Target (2012):** Capacity assessment | **6.1:** Capacity Assessment |
| **Indicator 6.2 :**  Project management team trained following the assessment of institutional capacity in first quarter of project implementation  **Baseline 6.2:** Higher officials trained by previous donor supported projects in DOI | **Target (2013):** Project team capable to manage all aspects of the project implementation | **6.2:** Staff training and updating on Project Cycle Management. |

**TOR - Annex 2: List of Documents to be reviewed by the evaluators**

1. Project Document,
2. Annual Project Reports,
3. Technical Reports from Consultants,
4. Annual Work Plans and Budgets,
5. Minutes of project monthly meetings and Board Meetings,
6. Training and Workshop Reports;

**TOR - Annex 3: Evaluation Questions**

*This is a generic list, to be further detailed with more specific questions by UNDP CO and UNOSSC Programme Specialist based in the UNDP HQ based on the particulars of the project.*

| **Evaluative Criteria Questions** | | **Indicators** | **Sources** | **Methodology** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Relevance: How does the project relate to the main objectives of the IBSA focal area, and to the environment and development priorities at the local, regional and national levels? | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved? | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
| Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards? | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
| Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results? | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
| **Impact: Are there indications that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress toward, reduced environmental stress and/or improved ecological status?** | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |

**TOR - Annex 4: Rating Scales**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, I&E Execution*** | ***Sustainability ratings:*** | ***Relevance ratings*** |
| 6: Highly Satisfactory (HS): no shortcomings  5: Satisfactory (S): minor shortcomings  4: Moderately Satisfactory (MS)  3. Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): significant shortcomings  2. Unsatisfactory (U): major problems  1. Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): severe problems | 4. Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability | 2. Relevant (R) |
| 3. Moderately Likely (ML):moderate risks | 1.. Not relevant (NR) |
| 2. Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks  1. Unlikely (U): severe risks | ***Impact Ratings:***  3. Significant (S)  2. Minimal (M)  1. Negligible (N) |
| *Additional ratings where relevant:*  Not Applicable (N/A)  Unable to Assess (U/A | | |

**TOR - Annex 5: Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct and Agreement Form**

**Evaluators:**

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people’s right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people’s right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders’ dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study imitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

**Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form[[12]](#footnote-12)**

**Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System**

**Name of Consultant:** \_\_     \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Consultancy Organization** (where relevant)**:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.**

Signed at *place* on *date*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**TOR - Annex 6: Evaluation Report Outline[[13]](#footnote-13)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **i.** | Opening page:   * Title of UNDP-IBSA supported project * UNDP project ID#s. * Evaluation time frame and date of evaluation report * Region and countries included in the project * IBSA Operational Program/Strategic Program * Implementing Partner and other project partners * Evaluation team members * Acknowledgements |
| **ii.** | Executive Summary   * Project Summary Table * Project Description (brief) * Evaluation Rating Table * Summary of conclusions, recommendations and lessons |
| **iii.** | Acronyms and Abbreviations  (See: UNDP Editorial Manual[[14]](#footnote-14)) |
| **1.** | Introduction   * Purpose of the evaluation * Scope & Methodology * Structure of the evaluation report |
| **2.** | Project description and development context   * Project start and duration * Problems that the project sought to address * Immediate and development objectives of the project * Baseline Indicators established * Main stakeholders * Expected Results |
| **3.** | Findings  (In addition to a descriptive assessment, all criteria marked with (\*) must be rated[[15]](#footnote-15)) |
| **3.1** | Project Design / Formulation   * Analysis of LFA/Results Framework (Project logic /strategy; Indicators) * Assumptions and Risks * Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g., same focal area) incorporated into project design * Planned stakeholder participation * Replication approach * UNDP comparative advantage * Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector * Management arrangements |
| **3.2** | Project Implementation   * Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation) * Partnership arrangements (with relevant stakeholders involved in the country/region) * Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management * Project Finance: * Monitoring and evaluation: design at entry and implementation (\*) * UNDP and Implementing Partner implementation / execution (\*) coordination, and operational issues |
| **3.3** | Project Results   * Overall results (attainment of objectives) (\*) * Relevance(\*) * Effectiveness & Efficiency (\*) * Country ownership * Mainstreaming * Sustainability (\*) * Impact |
| **4.** | Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons   * Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project * Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project * Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives * Best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success |
| **5.** | Annexes   * ToR * Itinerary * List of persons interviewed * Summary of field visits * List of documents reviewed * Evaluation Question Matrix * Questionnaire used and summary of results * Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form * Evaluation Report Clearance Form |

* **Project objectives contribute to the beneficiary country’s efforts to reduce poverty and hunger**
* **Projects are encouraged to utilize mutual exchange between developing countries, in particular the exchange of best practices in reducing poverty and hunger**
* **Projects should identify and strengthen local capacities – with preference for capacities provided through cooperation**

1. Is there a preference for utilizing local capacities and strengthening them?
2. Are local actors deemed to be the best situated to understand their singularities and conditions and to propose the course of action?
3. Do partners cooperate as peers; consider each other as equals and their relationship as horizontal (non-hierarchical)?
4. Are partners free to express their concerns? Do they discuss and negotiate on equal footing?

**Equality and Horizontality**

* **Project objectives should be clearly aligned with the priorities of the country concerned**
* **Projects are encouraged to make use of new ways of approaching development issues, where appropriate, with emphasis on the replication and innovative experiences already implemented in other developing countries, in particular experiences in the IBSA countries**

1. Is the cooperation complementary to North-South cooperation by fulfilling all of the following:
2. it is not a substitute to NSC but acts side-by-side,
3. it is not the same as NSC but different and distinct,
4. it adds value, complements with other forms of contributions.

**Complementarity**

* **Project objectives should be clearly aligned with the priorities of the country concerned**

1. Was the project sourced through a demand-driven approach?
2. Does the project follow the government’s stated priorities?

* **National entities in the beneficiary countries are strongly encouraged to participate in the project implementation and to do so with a longer-term perspective**

1. Is the government engaged?
2. How does the government demonstrate its ownership of the projects?
3. Did the government provide a counter-part to the project?
4. Does the government provide continuous strategic directions to the project’s formulation and implementation?
5. Have the directions provided by the government guided the activities and outcomes of the project?
6. Has there been a buy-in process, or was there no need to sell the project and buy support?
7. Is there high-level representation from the beneficiary country at project milestone events?

* **Projects should seek to improve or create sustainable activities to continue in a longer-term perspective**

1. Does the project employ government implementing and/or monitoring systems?
2. Is the government involved in the sustainability strategy for the project outcomes?

**National leadership and Ownership**

* **No conditions on IBSA Fund support established**

1. Has IBSA established any conditions required for the cooperation to take place?
2. If there are supervening events affecting the governance of the partner country, does the cooperation stay the course?

**Non-conditionality**

* **Projects are encouraged to utilize mutual exchange between developing countries, in particular the exchange of best practices in reducing poverty and hunger**

1. Does the project support mutual benefits through sharing of knowledge and experiences, training, technology transfer?
2. Are there mutual gains? What does IBSA gain from the cooperation?

* **Projects are encouraged to utilized the capacities and expertise available in IBSA countries**

1. Does the cooperation make use of IBSA country capacities? How?

* **Activities should have clearly identifiable development impact attributable to the IBSA Fund support**

1. Does the SSC enhance the position and visibility of IBSA as emerging players in the global arena?

**Mutual benefit**

**TOR - Annex 7 - IBSA Guidelines Revision 8**

**analytical framework IBSA Fund South-South cooperation principles assessment at project level**

**TOR - Project Completion Report Required Formats and Content**

Once finalized, projects must submit to the IBSA Fund Board, through its Secretariat:

1. ***A Final Project Progress Report***: Outlining the projects accomplishments, challenges and perspectives.

1. ***A Financial Report:*** Comprised of an Atlas Generated UNDP Combined Delivery Report (CDR) for each project year, signed by the project manager.

1. ***An Evaluation Report:*** an independent, outcome evaluation report, conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG ‘Standards for Evaluation in the UN System’, 2005[[16]](#footnote-16) and the UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation’ June 2008.[[17]](#footnote-17) In some circumstances, particularly for small grants or projects with a very limited, specific and concrete delivery such as infrastructure, a self-evaluation might be acceptable.

1. (Only were applicable) ***An audit Report***: Where one has been conducted.

1. (Only were applicable) ***An Asset Transfer Report:*** Where the project acquired or produced substantial assets that are transferred upon the project’s completion.

# Annex 2: Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct and Agreement Form

***Evaluators:***

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people’s right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people’s right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders‟ dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study imitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

|  |
| --- |
| ***Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form***  Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System  Name of Consultant: ***Jean-Joseph Bellamy, International Evaluator***  Name of Consultant: ***Dr. Saythong Vilayvong, National Evaluator***  We confirm that we have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.  Signed at Ottawa on June 10, 2015 Signed at Vientiane on June 18, 2015      Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

# Annex 3: Evaluation Matrix

The evaluation matrix below served as a general guide for the evaluation. It provided directions for the evaluation; particularly for the collection of relevant data. It was used as a basis for interviewing people and reviewing project documents. It also provided a basis for structuring the evaluation report as a whole.

| **Evaluated component** | **Sub-Question** | **Indicators** | **Sources** | **Data Collection Method** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Evaluation criteria: Relevance*** *- How does the project relate to the main objectives of the IBSA fund, UNDP and to the agriculture and environment priorities at the local, regional and national levels?* | | | | |
| *Is the Project relevant to IBSA objectives?* | * How did the Project support the related strategic priorities of IBSA? * Was the project strategy aligned with IBSA Fund’s objectives? | * Level of coherence between project objectives and those of the IBSA | * Project documents * IBSA policies, strategies and objectives * IBSA web site | * Documents analyses * Interviews with government officials and other partners |
| *Is the Project relevant to UNDP objectives?* | * How did the project support the objectives of UNDP in this sector? | * Existence of a clear relationship between project objectives and country programme objectives of UNDP | * Project documents * UNDP strategies and programme | * Documents analyses * Interviews with government officials and other partners |
| *Is the Project relevant to Lao PDR’s development objectives?* | * Does the project follow the government's stated priorities? * How did the Project support the development objectives of Lao PDR? * How country-driven was the Project? * Did the Project adequately take into account national realities, both in terms of institutional framework and programming, in its design and its implementation? * To what extent were national partners involved in the design of the Project? | * Degree to which the project support national environmental and development objectives * Degree of coherence between the project and nationals priorities, policies and strategies * Appreciation from national stakeholders with respect to adequacy of project design and implementation to national realities and existing capacities? * Level of involvement of Government officials and other partners into the project * Coherence between needs expressed by national stakeholders and UNDP-IBSA criteria | * Project documents * National policies, strategies and programmes * Key government officials and other partners | * Documents analyses * Interviews with government officials and other partners |
| *Does the Project address the needs of target beneficiaries?* | * How did the project support the needs of target beneficiaries? * Was the implementation of the project been inclusive of all relevant Stakeholders? * Were local beneficiaries and stakeholders adequately involved in project formulation and implementation? | * Strength of the link between project expected results and the needs of target beneficiaries * Degree of involvement and inclusiveness of beneficiaries and stakeholders in project design and implementation | * Beneficiaries and stakeholders * Needs assessment studies * Project documents | * Document analysis * Interviews with beneficiaries and stakeholders |
| *Is the Project internally coherent in its design?* | * Was the project sourced through a demand-driven approach? * Is there a direct and strong link between project expected results (Result and Resources Framework) and the project design (in terms of project components, choice of partners, structure, delivery mechanism, scope, budget, use of resources etc.)? * Is the length of the project conducive to achieve project outcomes? | * Level of coherence between project expected results and project design internal logic * Level of coherence between project design and project implementation approach | * Program and project documents * Key project stakeholders | * Document analysis * Key Interviews |
| *How is the Project relevant in light of other donors?* | * With regards to Lao PDR, does the project remain relevant in terms of areas of focus and targeting of key activities? * How do IBSA funds help to fill gaps (or give additional stimulus) that are crucial but are not covered by other donors? | * Degree to which the project was coherent and complementary to other donor programming in Lao PDR * List of programs and funds in which future developments, ideas and partnerships of the project are eligible? | * Other Donors’ policies and programming documents * Other Donor representatives * Project documents | * Documents analyses * Interviews with other Donors |
| **Future directions for similar Projects** | * What lessons have been learnt and what changes could have been made to the project in order to strengthen the alignment between the project and the Partners’ priorities and areas of focus? * How could the project better target and address priorities and development challenges of targeted beneficiaries? |  | * Data collected throughout evaluation | * Data analysis |
| ***Evaluation criteria: Effectiveness*** *– To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?* | | | | |
| *How is the Project effective in achieving its expected outcomes?* | * Is the project being effective in achieving its expected outcomes?   + A watershed management plan for Nampou project is developed and implemented   + Water supply in both seasons for irrigating command area of Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District is available   + Irrigation projects are co-managed by government authorities and Water Users' Association with women participation   + Agriculture production increased and diversified in Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District   + Improved Fisheries in Nampou reservoir through establishment of fisheries co-management   + Technical and managerial capacity of provincial and district level government staff enhanced | * New methodologies, skills and knowledge * Change in capacity for information management: knowledge acquisition and sharing; effective data gathering, methods and procedures for reporting. * Change in capacity for awareness raising   + Stakeholder involvement and government awareness   + Change in local stakeholder behavior * Change in capacity in policy making and planning to improve irrigated agriculture and better manage watersheds:   + Policy reform   + Legislation/regulation change   + Development of national and local strategies and plans * Change in capacity in implementation and enforcement   + Design and implementation of risk assessments   + Implementation of national and local strategies and action plans through adequate institutional frameworks and their maintenance   + Monitoring, evaluation and promotion of pilots * Change in capacity in mobilizing resources   + Leverage of resources   + Human resources   + Appropriate practices   + Mobilization of advisory services | * Project documents * Key stakeholders including UNDP, Project Team, Representatives of Gov. and other Partners * Research findings | * Documents analysis * Meetings with main Project Partners * Interviews with project beneficiaries |
| *How is risk and risk mitigation being managed?* | * How well were risks and assumptions being managed? * What was the quality of risk mitigation strategies developed? Were these sufficient? * Were there clear strategies for risk mitigation related with long-term sustainability of the project? | * Completeness of risk identification and assumptions during project planning * Quality of existing information systems in place to identify emerging risks and other issues? * Quality of risk mitigations strategies developed and followed | * Project documents and evaluations * UNDP, Project Staff and Project Partners | * Document analysis * Interviews |
| **Future directions for similar Projects** | * What lessons have been learnt for the project to achieve its outcomes? * What changes could have been made (if any) to the formulation of the project in order to improve the achievement of project’s expected results? * How could the project be more effective in achieving its results? |  | * Data collected throughout evaluation | * Data analysis |
| **Evaluation criteria: *Efficiency*** *- Was the project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards?* | | | | |
| *Is Project support channeled in an efficient way?* | * Was adaptive management used or needed to ensure efficient resource use? * Did the project *Result and Resources Framework* and work plans and any changes made to them use as management tools during implementation? * Were the accounting and financial systems in place adequate for project management and producing accurate and timely financial information? * Were progress reports produced accurately, timely and responded to reporting requirements including adaptive management changes? * Was project implementation as cost effective as originally proposed (planned vs. actual) * Was the leveraging of funds (co-financing) happened as planned? * Were financial resources utilized efficiently? Could financial resources have been used more efficiently? * How was RBM used during project implementation? * Did the government provide continuous strategic directions to the project's formulation and implementation? * Have these directions provided by the government guided the activities and outcomes of the project? * Were there an institutionalized or informal feedback or dissemination mechanisms to ensure that findings, lessons learned and recommendations pertaining to project formulation and implementation effectiveness were shared among project stakeholders, UNDP and IBSA staff and other relevant organizations for ongoing project adjustment and improvement? * Did the project mainstream gender considerations into its implementation? | * Availability and quality of financial and progress reports * Timeliness and adequacy of reporting provided * Level of discrepancy between planned and utilized financial expenditures * Planned vs. actual funds leveraged * Cost in view of results achieved compared to costs of similar projects from other organizations * Adequacy of project choices in view of existing context, infrastructure and cost * Quality of RBM reporting (progress reporting, monitoring and evaluation) * Occurrence of change in project formulation/ implementation approach (i.e. restructuring) when needed to improve project efficiency * Existence, quality and use of M&E, feedback and dissemination mechanism to share findings, lessons learned and recommendation on effectiveness of project design. * Cost associated with delivery mechanism and management structure compare to alternatives * Gender disaggregated data in project documents | * Project documents and evaluations * UNDP, Representatives of Gov. and Project Staff * Beneficiaries and Project partners | * Document analysis * Key Interviews |
| *How efficient are partnership arrangements for the Project?* | * Is the government engaged? * How does the government demonstrate its ownership of the projects? * Did the government provide a counter-part to the project? * To what extent partnerships/linkages between institutions/ organizations were encouraged and supported? * Which partnerships/linkages were facilitated? Which one can be considered sustainable? * What was the level of efficiency of cooperation and collaboration arrangements? (between local actors, UNDP and relevant government entities) * Which methods were successful or not and why? | * Specific activities conducted to support the development of cooperative arrangements between partners, * Examples of supported partnerships * Evidence that particular partnerships/linkages will be sustained * Types/quality of partnership cooperation methods utilized | * Project documents and evaluations * Project Partners * Beneficiaries | * Document analysis * Interviews |
| *Does the Project efficiently utilize local capacity in implementation?* | * Was an appropriate balance struck between utilization of international expertise as well as local capacity? * Does the project support mutual benefits through sharing of knowledge and experiences, training, technology transfer among developing countries? * What does IBSA gain from the cooperation? * Does the cooperation make use of IBSA country capacities? How? * Does the SSC enhance the position and visibility of !BSA as emerging players in the global arena? * Did the Project take into account local capacity in formulation and implementation of the project? * Was there an effective collaboration with scientific institutions with competence in irrigated agriculture and watershed management? | * Proportion of total expertise utilized taken from Lao PDR * Number/quality of analyses done to assess local capacity potential and absorptive capacity | * Project documents and evaluations * UNDP, Project Team and Project partners * Beneficiaries | * Document analysis * Interviews |
| **Future directions for similar Projects** | * What lessons can be learnt from the project on efficiency? * How could the project have more efficiently addressed its key priorities (in terms of management structures and procedures, partnerships arrangements etc.…)? * What changes could have been made (if any) to the project in order to improve its efficiency? |  | * Data collected throughout evaluation | * Data analysis |
| **Evaluation criteria: *Impacts*** *- Are there indications that the project has contributed to sustainable livelihoods improvement and food security, as well as reduced environmental stress on local watersheds?* | | | | |
| *How is the Project effective in achieving its long-term objectives?* | * Will the project achieve its goal that is to support Lao PDR to promote food security and reduce poverty in a sustainable manner? * Will the project achieve its objective that is to contribute to sustainable livelihoods improvement and food security through the development of irrigated agriculture and the promotion of more sustainable management of corresponding watershed resources in the selected communities of Bolikhan and Vienthong Districts of Bolikhamxay Province? * Is the cooperation complementary to North-South Cooperation (NSC) by fulfilling all of the following:   + It is not a substitute to NSC but acts side-by-side,   + It is not the same as NSC but different and distinct,   + It adds value, complements with other forms of contributions. | * Changes in capacity:   + To pool/mobilize resources   + To provide an enabling environment,   + For implementation of related strategies and programmes through adequate institutional frameworks and their maintenance, * Changes in use and implementation of sustainable alternatives * Changes to the quantity and strength of barriers such as change in   + Infrastructure systems are incomplete and damaged;   + Uncertain and generally limited water availability during the dry season (gravity schemes);   + High cost of electricity and of repair of pumps (in pump-lift schemes);   + Difficulty in organizing effective management of the scheme;   + The Irrigation Management Transfer concept could not be fully realized   + Local livelihood | * Project documents * Key Stakeholders * Research findings | * Documents analysis * Meetings with UNDP, Project Team and project Partners * Interviews with project beneficiaries and other stakeholders |
| *How is the Project impacting the local environment?* | * What are the impacts or likely impacts of the project on?   + local environment;   + poverty; and,   + other socio-economic issues. | * Provide specific examples of impacts at those three levels, as relevant | * Project documents * Key Stakeholders * Research findings | * Data analysis * Interviews with key stakeholders |
| **Future directions for the Project** | * How could the project build on its successes and learn from its weaknesses in order to enhance the potential for impact of ongoing and future initiatives? |  | * Data collected throughout evaluation | * Data analysis |
| ***Evaluation criteria: Sustainability*** *- To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?* | | | | |
| *Are sustainability issues adequately integrated in Project design?* | * Were sustainability issues integrated into the formulation and implementation of the project? * Does the project employ government implementing and/or monitoring systems? * Is the government involved in the sustainability strategy for project outcomes? | * Evidence/Quality of sustainability strategy * Evidence/Quality of steps taken to address sustainability | * Project documents and evaluations * UNDP, project staff and project Partners * Beneficiaries | * Document analysis * Interviews |
| *Financial Sustainability* | * Did the project adequately address financial and economic sustainability issues? * Are the recurrent costs after project completion sustainable? | * Level and source of future financial support to be provided to relevant sectors and activities after project end? * Evidence of commitments from international partners, governments or other stakeholders to financially support relevant sectors of activities after project end * Level of recurrent costs after completion of project and funding sources for those recurrent costs | * Project documents and evaluations * UNDP, project staff and project Partners * Beneficiaries | * Document analysis * Interviews |
| *Organizations arrangements and continuation of activities* | * Were results of efforts made during the project implementation period well assimilated by organizations and their internal systems and procedures? * Is there evidence that project partners will continue their activities beyond project support? * Has there been a buy-in process, or was there no need to sell the project and buy support? * What degree is there of local ownership of initiatives and results? * Were appropriate ‘champions’ being identified and/or supported? | * Degree to which project activities and results have been taken over by local counterparts or institutions/organizations * Level of financial support to be provided to relevant sectors and activities by in-country actors after project end * Number/quality of champions identified | * Project documents and evaluations * UNDP, project staff and project Partners * Beneficiaries | * Document analysis * Interviews |
| *Enabling Environment* | * Were laws, policies and frameworks addressed through the project, in order to address sustainability of key initiatives and reforms? * Were the necessary related capacities for lawmaking and enforcement built? * What is the level of political commitment to build on the results of the project? | * Efforts to support the development of relevant laws and policies * State of enforcement and law making capacity * Evidence of commitment by the political class through speeches, enactment of laws and resource allocation to priorities | * Project documents and evaluations * UNDP, project staff and project Partners * Beneficiaries | * Document analysis * Interviews |
| *Institutional and individual capacity building* | * Is the capacity in place at the regional, national and local levels adequate to ensure sustainability of results achieved to date? | * Elements in place in those different management functions, at appropriate levels (regional, national and local) in terms of adequate structures, strategies, systems, skills, incentives and interrelationships with other key actors | * Project documents and evaluations * UNDP, Project staff and project Partners * Beneficiaries * Capacity assessments available, if any | * Interviews * Documentation review |
| *Social and political sustainability* | * Did the project contribute to key building blocks for social and political sustainability? * Did the project contribute to local Stakeholders’ acceptance of the new practices? | * Example of contributions to sustainable political and social change with regard to irrigated agriculture, watershed management and food security | * Project documents and evaluations * UNDP, project staff and project Partners * Beneficiaries | * Interviews * Documentation review |
| *Replication* | * Were project activities and results replicated elsewhere and/or scaled up? * What was the project contribution to replication or scaling up of innovative practices or mechanisms to increase irrigated agriculture, food security and watershed management? | * Number/quality of replicated initiatives * Number/quality of replicated innovative initiatives * Volume of additional investment leveraged | * Other donor programming documents * Beneficiaries * UNDP, project staff and project Partners | * Document analysis * Interviews |
| *Challenges to sustainability of the Project* | * What are the main challenges that may hinder sustainability of efforts? * Have any of these been addressed through project management? * What could be the possible measures to further contribute to the sustainability of efforts achieved with the project? | * Challenges in view of building blocks of sustainability as presented above * Recent changes which may present new challenges to the project | * Project documents and evaluations * Beneficiaries * UNDP, project staff and project Partners | * Document analysis * Interviews |
| **Future directions for the Project** | * Which areas/arrangements under the project show the strongest potential for lasting long-term results? * What are the key challenges and obstacles to the sustainability of results of project initiatives that must be directly and quickly addressed? * How can the experience and good project practices influence the strategies for sustainable livelihoods improvement and food security? * Are national decision-making institutions (Parliament, Government etc.) in Lao PDR ready to improve their measures to improve sustainable livelihoods improvement and food security? |  | * Data collected throughout evaluation | * Data analysis |

# Annex 4: List of Documents Reviewed

A-Pro Consulting Sole Co., Ltd., July 30, 2014, *Draft Final Report: Technical Consulting Services for SIRA Project in Bolikhamxay Province*

ADB, December 2007, *Lao People’s Democratic Republic: Updating the National Water Policy and Strategy*

ADB, November 2014, *Proposed Policy-Based Loan for Subprogram 2 Lao People’s Democratic Republic: Governance and Capacity Development in Public Sector Management Program*

ADB, *Sector Assessment (Summary): Agriculture And Natural Resources*

Bartlett Andrew, April 4, 2013, *Capacity-building and alternative realities: Some observations on the political context of technical assistance in Lao PDR*

Committee for Planning and Investment, October 2006, *National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2006-2010)*

Department of Water Resources Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment, Lao PDR, October 2011, *IWRM-based Water Planning Approach in Lao PDR*

IBSA, UNDP, Government of Lao PDR, *Project Document SIRA*

IBSA, UNOSSC, 2014 and 2015, *Overview of Project Portfolio*

Khamphoukeo Khamouane, September 2014, *The 2nd Regional Forum on Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization - Enabling Environment for Custom Hiring of Agricultural Machinery*

Lao People’s Democratic Republic, December 2014, *(Draft) National Rice Policy For Food Security (Revised 08 December 2014)*

Lao People’s Democratic Republic, December 2013, *Annual Meeting Minute 2013*

Lao People’s Democratic Republic, January 29, 2015, *Annual Review Meeting Minute 2014*

Lao People’s Democratic Republic, March 2015, *Agriculture Development Strategy 2011 –2020*

Lao People’s Democratic Republic, *National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES)*

Lao People’s Democratic Republic, September 15, 2010, *Agricultural Master Plan 2011-2015 (draft)*

Larrabure Juan Luis, Sysaneth Souklaty, Lopez-Rodriguez Luz, Luangkhot Ny, December 2014, *Government and Public Administration Reform (GPAR) Assessment and Concept Development - Lao PDR*

LUX DEV, *Bolikhamxay Provincial Planning and Investment Department, Village Development Funds - Bolikhamxay Livelihood Improvement and Governance Project – LAO/021* (brochure)

Margaret Jones Williams (Dr.), January 28-29, 2015, *Back to Office Report (BTOR)*

Mekong River Commission, November 11, 2011, *Agriculture and Irrigation Programme (AIP) - Programme Document 2011-2015*

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, September 15, 2010, *Strategy for Agriculture Development 2011-2020*

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, June 2012, *National Rio+20 Report for Lao PDR*

Ministry of Planning and Investment, *The Seventh Five-year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2011-2015)*

Nexia STT, *Audit Report 2014*

Nonthaxay Phonechaleun, *Water Resources Management in Lao PDR*

Phommahack Savengkith (Dr.), March 19, 2015, *Result of Analysis on District Development Fund (DDF) Mechanism integrating into Government Systems including possible support to its “3 Builds” or Samsang Initiative*

Phommahack Savengkith (Dr.), January 2015, *Report (Second Draft) on the Analysis of District Development Fund (DDF) Mechanism integrating into Government Systems*

Phommalath Anouxay, June 10, 2014, *Report of Conduct Participatory Land Use Planning in Namphu Watershed*

Siisouphanthong Bounthavy (Dr.), *7th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2011-2015)* (presentation)

Singha Ounniyom, *Back to Office Report (BTOR) – (May 4, 2015 and June 8, 2015)*

SIRA Project, *2012 Annual Progress Report*

SIRA Project, *2013 Annual Progress Report*

SIRA Project, *2014 Annual Project Review Report*

SIRA Project, *Annual Work Plan 2013*

SIRA Project, *Annual Work Plan 2014*

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# Annex 5: Interview Guide

*Note: This was a guide for the interviewers; it is a simplified version of the evaluation matrix. Not all questions were asked to each interviewee; it was a reminder for the interviewers about the type of information required to complete the evaluation exercise and a guide to prepare the semi-structured interviews.*

**I. RELEVANCE** - *How does the project relate to the main objectives of the IBSA fund, UNDP and to the agriculture and environment priorities at the local, regional and national levels?*

1. Is the project relevant to the IBSA objectives?
2. Is the project relevant to UNDP objectives?
3. Is the project relevant to Lao PDR’s development objectives?
4. Does the project address the needs of target beneficiaries?
5. Is the project internally coherent in its design?
6. How is the project relevant in light of other donors?

***Future directions for similar projects***

1. What lessons have been learnt and what changes could have been made to the project in order to strengthen the alignment between the project and the Partners’ priorities and areas of focus?
2. How could the project better target and address priorities and development challenges of targeted beneficiaries?

**II. EFFECTIVENESS** – *To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?*

1. How is the Project effective in achieving its expected outcomes?
   * A watershed management plan for Nampou project is developed and implemented;
   * Water supply in both seasons for irrigating command area of Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District is available;
   * Irrigation projects are co-managed by government authorities and Water Users' Association with women participation;
   * Agriculture production increased and diversified in Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District;
   * Improved Fisheries in Nampou reservoir through establishment of fisheries co-management;
   * Technical and managerial capacity of provincial and district level government staff enhanced.
2. How is risk and risk mitigation being managed?

***Future directions for similar projects***

1. What lessons have been learnt for the project to achieve its outcomes?
2. What changes could have been made (if any) to the design of the project in order to improve the achievement of project’ expected results?
3. How could the project be more effective in achieving its results?

**III. EFFICIENCY** - *Was the project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards?*

1. Was adaptive management used or needed to ensure efficient resource use?
2. Did the project *Result and Resources Framework* and work plans and any changes made to them use as management tools during implementation?
3. Were the accounting and financial systems in place adequate for project management and producing accurate and timely financial information?
4. Were progress reports produced accurately, timely and respond to reporting requirements including adaptive management changes?
5. Was project implementation as cost effective as originally proposed (planned vs. actual)
6. Was the leveraging of funds (co-financing) happening as planned?
7. Were financial resources utilized efficiently? Could financial resources have been used more efficiently?
8. How was RBM used during project implementation?
9. Were there an institutionalized or informal feedback or dissemination mechanism to ensure that findings, lessons learned and recommendations pertaining to project formulation and implementation effectiveness were shared among project stakeholders, UNDP and IBSA Staff and other relevant organizations for ongoing project adjustment and improvement?
10. Did the project mainstream gender considerations into its implementation?
11. To what extent were partnerships/ linkages between institutions/ organizations encouraged and supported?
12. Which partnerships/linkages were facilitated? Which one can be considered sustainable?
13. What was the level of efficiency of cooperation and collaboration arrangements? (between local actors, UNDP, IBSA and relevant government entities)
14. Was an appropriate balance struck between utilization of international expertise as well as local capacity?
15. Did the project take into account local capacity in design and implementation of the project?

***Future directions for the project***

1. What lessons can be learnt from the project on efficiency?
2. How could the project have more efficiently addressed its key priorities (in terms of management structures and procedures, partnerships arrangements etc…)?

**IV. IMPACTS** - *Are there indications that the project has contributed to sustainable livelihoods improvement and food security, as well as reduced environmental stress on local watersheds?*

1. Will the project achieve its goal that is to support Lao PDR to promote food security and reduce poverty in a sustainable manner?
2. Will the project achieve its objective that is to contribute to sustainable livelihoods improvement and food security through the development of irrigated agriculture and the promotion of more sustainable management of corresponding watershed resources in the selected communities of Bolikhan and Vienthong Districts of Bolikhamxay Province?

***Future directions for the project***

1. How could the project build on its apparent successes and learn from its weaknesses in order to enhance the potential for impact of ongoing and future initiatives?

**V. SUSTAINABILITY** - *To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?*

1. Were sustainability issues adequately integrated in project formulation?
2. Did the project adequately address financial and economic sustainability issues?
3. Is there evidence that project partners will continue their activities beyond project support?
4. Were laws, policies and frameworks being addressed through the project, in order to address sustainability of key initiatives and reforms?
5. Is the capacity in place at the national and local levels adequate to ensure sustainability of results achieved to date?
6. Did the project contribute to key building blocks for social and political sustainability?
7. Were project activities and results being replicated elsewhere and/or scaled up?
8. What are the main challenges that may hinder sustainability of efforts?

***Future directions for the project***

1. Which areas/arrangements under the project show the strongest potential for lasting long-term results?
2. What are the key challenges and obstacles to the sustainability of results of the project initiatives that must be directly and quickly addressed?

**IBSA Guidelines Revision 8**

**ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK IBSA FUND SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION PRINCIPLES ASSESSMENT AT PROJECT LEVEL**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| National leadership and Ownership | **Project objectives should be dearly aligned with the priorities of the country concerned**   * + - Was the project sourced through a demand-driven approach?     - Does the project follow the government's stated priorities?   **National entities in the beneficiary countries are strongly encouraged to participate In the project implementation and to do so with a longer-term perspective**   * + - Is the government engaged?     - How does the government demonstrate its ownership of the projects?     - Did the government provide a counter-part to the project?     - Does the government provide continuous strategic directions to the project's formulation and implementation?     - Have the directions provided by the government guided the activities and outcomes of the project?     - Has there been a buy-in process, or was there no need to sell the project and buy support?     - Is there high-level representation from the beneficiary country at project miles tone events?   **Projects should seek to improve or create sustainable activities to continue in a longer-term perspective**   * + - Does the project employ government implementing and/or monitoring systems?     - Is the government involved in the sustainability strategy for the project outcomes? |
| Mutual benefit | **Projects are encouraged to utilize mutual exchange between developing countries, in particular the exchange of best practices in reducing poverty and hunger**   * + - Does the project support mutual benefits through sharing of knowledge and experiences, training, technology transfer?     - Are there mutual gains? What does IBSA gain from the cooperation?   **Projects are encouraged to utilized the capacities and expertise available in IBSA countries**   * + - Does the cooperation make use of IBSA country capacities? How?   **Activities should have clearly identifiable development impact attributable to the IBSA Fund support**   * + - Does the SSC enhance the position and visibility of IBSA as emerging players in the global arena? |
| Equality and Horizontality | **Project objectives contribute to the beneficiary country's efforts to reduce poverty and hunger Projects are encouraged to utilize mutual exchange between developing countries, in particular the exchange of best practices in reducing poverty and hunger**  **Projects should identify and strengthen local capacities - with preference for capacities provided through cooperation**   * + - Is there a preference for utilizing local capacities and strengthening them?     - Are local actors deemed to be the best situated to understand their singularities and conditions and to propose the course of action?     - Do partners cooperate as peers; consider each other as equals and their relationship as horizontal (non-hierarchical)?     - Are partners free to express their concerns? Do they discuss and negotiate on equal footing? |
| Non-conditionality | **No conditions on IBSA Fund support established**   * + - Has IBSA established any conditions required for the cooperation to take place?     - If there are supervening events affecting the governance of the partner country, does the cooperation stay the course? |
| Complementarity | **Project objectives should be clearly aligned with the priorities of the country concerned**  **Projects are encouraged to make use of new ways of approaching development issues, where appropriate, with emphasis on the replication and Innovative experiences already implemented In other developing countries, in particular experiences in the IBSA countries**   * + - Is the cooperation complementary to North-South cooperation by fulfilling all of the following:       * It is not a substitute to NSC but acts side-by-side,       * It is not the same as NSC but different and distinct,       * It adds value, complements with other forms of contributions. |

# Annex 6: Evaluation Mission Agenda

**SIRA Project Final Evaluation**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **When** | **What/where** | **Who** | **Remark** |
| Sunday, June 14: | Arrival to Vientiane | JJ |  |
| Monday, June 15:  8:00-12:00 | Meet with Environment Programme Officer | JJ, Saythong | Room # 207 |
| 13:30-14:00 | Meet with Mme. Azusa Kubota, DRR UNDP: | JJ, Saythong, Singha, | Room # 215 |
| 14:00-17:00 | Meet with Environment Programme Officer | JJ, Saythong | Room # 207 |
| Tuesday, June 16:  8:00-9:00 | Meet with Dr. Margaret Jones Williams, Environment Unit Chief/UNDP | JJ and Saythhong, Singha | Room # 204 |
| 9:00-12:00 | Travel from VTE to Bolikhamxay Province | JJ and Saythhong | by SIRA Project car |
| 13:00-14:00 | Meet with SIRA project team at SIRA Office/PAFO | JJ and Saythhong |  |
| 14:00-15:00 | Meet with SIRA Project Board members in Paksane, Bolikhamxay province | JJ and Saythhong |  |
| 15:00-19:00 | Travel to Viengthong district | JJ and Saythhong | by SIRA Project car, stay overnight in Viengthong |
| Wednesday, June 17: | Meet with beneficiaries in Nam Yang and Nam Sae villages | JJ and Saythhong | Stay overnight in Viengthong. |
| Thursday, June 18/morning: | Continue working with Viengthong district authorities | JJ and Saythhong |  |
| Thursday, June 18/afternoon: | Travel from Viengthong to Paksane district | JJ and Saythhong | by SIRA Project car, stay overnight in Paksane. |
| Friday, June 19/morning: | Travel to Bolikhan district, meet with Bolikhan district authority and then with beneficiaries in Bor village | JJ and Saythhong | by SIRA Project car, |
| Friday, June 19/afternoon: | Continue working with beneficiaries in Bor village/Bolikhan district | JJ and Saythhong | by SIRA Project car, stay overnight in Phaday village |
| Saturday, June 20/morning: | Meet with beneficiaries of Phone song village then with Phone Yaeng villages | JJ and Saythhong |  |
| Saturday, June 20/afternoon: | Meet with beneficiaries in Phadai village then with Phamouang village in Bolikhan district | JJ and Saythhong | Stay overnight in Phaday village, Bolikhan district |
| Sunday, June 21/morning: | Meet with beneficiaries in Phamouang village in Bolikhan district | JJ and Saythhong |  |
| Sunday, June 21/afternoon: | Travel to Vientiane Capital | JJ and Saythhong | by SIRA Project car |
| Monday, June 22:  9:00-10:00 | Meet with Mr. Nouanedeng Rajvong, DDG, Department of Irrigation/MAF | JJ, Saythong, Margaret/ Singha, DoI/MAF representative(s) | Confirmed, at DoI |
| 14:30-17:00 | Update the report and presentation as appropriate at UNDP | JJ and Saythhong |  |
| Tuesday, June 23:  7:00-9:30 | Travel to Bolikhamxay | JJ, Saythong, Margaret, Singha. | By UNDP/SIRA cars (TBC) |
| 10:00-12:00 | Stakeholders consultation meeting at in Paksane | JJ, Saythong, Margaret, Singha, PB, PAFO, … |  |
| 14:00-16:30 | Travel to Vientiane Capital | JJ, Saythong, Margaret, Singha, DRR, RR. | By UNDP and SIRA cars |
| Wednesday, June 24: | Prepare the Final Evaluation Report | JJ and Saythhong |  |
| 9:30-10:30 | Meeting with FAO | JJ and Saythhong | TBC |
| 11:00-12:00 | Meeting with Indian Embassy | JJ and Saythhong | TBC |
| Thursday, June 25 |  |  |  |
| 9:30-10:30 | Meeting with DIC | JJ and Saythhong | TBC |
| Departure |  | JJ | TBC |

# Annex 7: List of People Interviewed

Ms. Azusa Kubota, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP

Mr. Chanthaphone Thammavong, Assistant Project Manager, SIRA Project

Mr. Manfred Staab, Senior Technical Advisor, IRAS Project

Dr. Margaret Jones Williams, Environment Unit Manager, UNDP

Mr. Mone Inthasen, Head of Agriculture and Forestry in Bolikhan District

Mr. Nouanedeng Rajvong, Deputy Director General, Department of Irrigation, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Mr. Peter Kurt Hansen, CTA, Livelihood Improvement and Governance Project - LAO/021

Mr. Senabandit Thongbanh, Project manager, SIRA Project

Dr. Sima Mostofi Javid, Technical Advisor, Disaster Risk Management Specialist, Department of Disaster Management and Climate Change, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Mr. Singha Ounniyom, Climate Change Policy Specialist, Environment Unit, UNDP

Ms. Sisomboun Ounavong, Director General, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Planning and Investment

Mr. Sonexay Khayalath, Head of Agriculture and Forestry in Viengthong District

Dr. Souvanny Xaysana, Vice Governor, Bolikhamxay Province

Dr. Stephen Rudgard, Representative, FAO

Mr. Subir Dutta, First Secretary, Embassy of India

Mr. Valter Ziantoni, UNV

Mr. Vipaka Halsacda, Assistant Project Manager, IRAS Project

Head of water user group and villagers in Phone dou village in Viengthong District

Head of water user group and villagers in Nam yang village in Viengthong district

Head of water user group and villagers in Tha phea village in Viengthong District

Heads of water user groups and villagers in Bor, Phone song, Phone yeang, and Pha dia villages in Bolikhan District

# Annex 8: Project Expected Results and Planned Activities

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Intended Outcomes** | **Targets** | **Indicative Activities** |
| 1. Watershed management plan for Nam Pou project is developed and implemented  ***Indicator 1.1:*** Watershed Management Plan developed and implemented and Watershed Management Committee in place  ***Baseline 1.1:*** No existing watershed management plan  ***Indicator 1.2:*** Village forest management plan developed and implemented with corresponding committees in place  ***Baseline 1.2:*** No community based forest management | ***Target 1.1 (2013):*** Watershed  Management plan developed and Watershed Management Committee in place  ***Target 1.2 (2014):*** Community based forest management plans developed and corresponding committees in place  ***Target 1.3 (2015):*** Forest management plans, including improvement of slashand-burn agriculture, implemented. | 1.1 Development of Watershed Management Plan based on participatory land use planning and formation of Watershed Management Committee  1.2 Demarcation of village forests, establishment of village forest committees and development of village forest management plans  1.3 Implementation of village forest management plans including the improvement of slash-and-burn agriculture |
| 2. Water supply in both season for irrigating command area of Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District is available  ***Indicator 2.1:*** 3,050 meter main canal of  Nampou project, 1 weir of Namyang project and  1 weir of Phondou project is rehabilitated by  2013.  ***Baseline 2.1:*** Poor irrigation infrastructures facilities available | ***Target 2.1 (2012):*** Feasibility for rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure conducted  ***Target 2.1 (2013):*** Completion of rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure | 2.1. Review and validation of design and costing of irrigation schemes  2.2. Contract Awarding and Contract Management/monitoring |
| 3. Irrigation projects are co-managed by Association with women participation  ***Indicator 3.1:*** WUA established by 2012 and functional by 2014  ***Baseline 3.1:*** No existing WUA | ***Target 3.1(2012):*** WUA established  ***Target 3.1 (2013):*** WUA capacity developed  ***Target 3.1 (2014):*** WUA able to co-manage irrigation projects in cooperation of provincial and district government authorities | 3.1 Institutional support (logistic, administrative, managerial) for WUA establishment and management from 2012 through 2014  3.2 Capacity developing activities |
| 4. Agriculture production increased and diversified in Nam Pou project in Bolikhan District and Namyang and Phondou projects in Viengthong District  ***Indicator 4.1:*** Two season cultivation with diverse cropping pattern in dry season, Crop yield increased by 2014 - rice 3.5 t/ha (wet season) 4.5 t/ha (dry season), Sweet corn 4.3 t/ha, Feed corn 5 t/ha, Soybean (2t/ha)  ***Baseline 4.1:*** Single crop (rice) cultivation, Rice yield 3.41 ton/ha, no other crops cultivated by 2012 | ***Target (2013):*** Crop yield increased  ***Target (2013):*** Two season cultivation in at least 25% of irrigated area (205 ha) with crops other than rice in dry season  ***Target (2014):*** Two season cultivation in additional next 25% (410 ha) with crops other than rice in dry season | 4.1 Training on improved agriculture method – efficient irrigation, diversified cropping method for farmers representing all households ensuring at least 33% women participation  4.2 Seed (other than rice) provision for 25% of dry season cultivated land  4.3 Seed provision (Other than rice) for 50% of dry season cultivation land |
| 5. Improved Fisheries in Nam Pou reservoir through establishment of fisheries co-management  ***Indicator 5.1:*** Fisheries co-management established  ***Baseline 5.1:*** No fisheries in Nam Pou reservoir | ***Target 5.1 (2013):*** Fisheries Management Subcommittee (FMsC) under the WMC established and capacity developed  ***Target 5.1 (2013):*** Fisheries co-management plan developed.  ***Target (2015):*** Fisheries co-management plan implemented | 5.1 Formation and capacity building of FMsC  5.2 Development Fisheries Co-Management plan  5.3 Implementation of fisheries co-management plan |
| 6. Technical and managerial capacity of provincial and district level government staff enhanced  ***Indicator 6.1:*** One technical report assessing the technical and managerial capability of implementing partner available at the end of 1st quarter of the project  ***Baseline 6.1:*** No report  ***Indicator 6.2:*** Project management team trained following the assessment of institutional capacity in first quarter of project implementation  ***Baseline 6.2:*** Higher officials trained by previous donor supported projects in DOI | ***Target (2012):*** Capacity assessment  ***Target (2013):*** Project team capable to manage all aspects of the project implementation | 6.1: Capacity Assessment  6.2: Staff training and updating on Project Cycle Management. |

# Annex 9: Summary of Field Data Collection in Vienthong and Bolikhan Districts

**Viengthong district**

The SIRA project commenced in this district during July 2013. The main activities are 1) improved existing irrigation system, and 2) agricultural extension for the representative farmers.

**Phone Duo village, Vienthong district**

1. The first irrigation channel was built in 1990 by the DAFO. It was made by rocks and it can be irrigated 58 ha of paddy field. At that time, the rice yield was about 4-4.5 t/ha. During the 2009 the storms brought the heavily rain and hit the weirs broken. After that the DAFO had rehabilitated the irrigation system by SIRA project.
2. At the present day, the irrigation can be irrigated 70 ha of paddy field (some farmers expend rice field) but the rice yield is not be able to estimate due to they do not harvest rice yet.
3. Villagers provided in kind contribution of 12% to the project budget for improving irrigation system in their village. They gave labors to dig and maintain the channel without fee.
4. The different between old and new irrigation system. The most advantage of the new irrigation system are:
   * Stronger soil erosion protector
   * Stronger, longer and bigger weir
   * Getting much more water
5. Problem in irrigation use. There are three problems such as:
   * Water seeps away into the stream and leach out the channel
   * Soil erosion as the channel is made by soil
   * Water distribution is not evenly, some get much but some get less.
6. Water use group. The group committee consists of 4 persons and the group members are 26 households in the village while the total household is 105 ha. The function of the group is to ensure the water supply and water distribution in regularly and evenly after the project closed. The group has its own rule and fund. The fund composes of registration and water use fees. The registration fee is 20,000 LAK/person and the water fee is 70 kg and 150 kg of paddy rice/season for the rainy and dry seasons, respectively. The 15% of total fund is deducted for administration of the group.
7. During the dry season there were 3 households got water for 2 ha of water melon planting. They invested 10,000,000 LAK and got total income 30,000,000 LAK. However, last dry season they could not plant the watermelon due to the irrigation channel was still in maintaining.
8. The SIRA project provided training of farmers in terms of rice seed selection, bio-fertilizer utilization, and seed keeping. The result of rice seed selection found that seedling is stronger, less mixed rice, and rice is maturated at the same time.
9. Water use group. In order to continue the project after the project closed they set the water use group to ensure the sustainability of irrigation system.
   * The water use group will cooperate with DAFO and PAFO if there is any problems and suggestions in water use and irrigation system
   * Villagers will fix and maintain the irrigation system themselves if no big broken
   * Villagers will follow the rule that the project led them to establishment. If there is some violence they will convince:
     + First time: notification
     + Second time: fine 150,000-500,000 LAK
     + Third time: convince by the DAFO and PAFO
10. This dry season (2015) cannot estimate the number of ha for irrigating due to the irrigation channel had just finished. We expect to estimate by the next year dry season (June 2016).
11. Suggestion. We need the concrete irrigation channel; people will contribute the labors for building.

**Namyang and Thaphea villages, Vienthong district**

1. In the past day people made the irrigation channel for their cropping. During the 2009 the storms brought the heavily rain and hit the weirs broken. After that the DAFO had rehabilitated the irrigation system by SIRA project.
2. Before SIRA came to the village, they could do dry rice 30 ha, maize and ground bean 50 ha in the dry season. The rice yield is 3.5 t/ha for the wet season. For the rainy season they can grow to 250 ha in totally. However, villagers in these villages used to do dry rice production in 1997. After that there is no enough water for dry rice
3. Until SIRA came to the village and improved the irrigation system and resulting in those villagers expect to do dry rice again in this dry season (2015) and grow other crops. In this rainy season 2015 they also expect to grow crop with 250 ha in totally.
4. In the dry season 2015, there were 15 ha produced vegetable with 2,900 kg and they got cash 9,370,000 LAK in a total. In addition, this wet rainy season (2015) they could do rice nursery bed on the seasonal planting date due to they get water from the irrigation.
5. The new irrigation channel are better than the old one as they are:
   * Concrete channel 250 m, stronger and less maintaining of the channel every year
   * Bigger and stronger water gate
   * Get much more water
6. Water use group. There are 4 members of group committee while the total members are 67 ha (25 ha in Thaphea and 42 ha in Namyang villages). While the total households in two villages are 596 ha. The function of the group is the same in Phone Due village. The group fund consists of registration and water use fees. The registration fee is 20,000 LAK/person and the maintaining fee is 50,000 LAK/member. The part of fund 15% is allocated for group administration. The water use group has regular meeting, 2 times a month for the cropping period and one in three months for none cropping period.
7. In addition, project also provided training on compost making and rice seed selection and provided seeds of vegetable for model farmers. The results from the training observed that 3 ha in Thaphea and 11 ha in Namyang villages applied lesson learnt to do compost for plantation of vegetable to reduce the expenditure for fertilizers. The villagers reported that in the last dry season, 3 ha in Thaphea village could harvest of 1,000 kg of vegetable for sale. While there is no collect data in Namyang village. The main problem is lack of water for vegetable production. They hope that in the next year the situation will be better due to they have new improved irrigation system.
8. In general, villagers are very happy that SIRA improved the irrigation system for support agricultural production. If no irrigation they may be not able to do rice production, they said.

**Bolikhan district**

The main activities in this district are related to 1) agricultural extension for the representative farmers, 2) improved irrigation system, 3) improved Fisheries, 4) watershed management, 5) land use planning.

**Bor village, Bolikhan district**

In this village there are 5 activities promote by SIRA. 1) improving irrigation system, 2) Agricultural production, 3) watershed management, 4) fishery, and 5) land use planning for agricultural production and protective forest areas.

1. The SIRA improved existing irrigation system by creating the new channel with a distance of 3,050 m of concrete. The new channel brings more and regular water for two seasons of agricultural production. The old irrigation system can be irrigated only 150 ha of dry rice, but today it can be irrigated up to 300 ha of dry rice production. In addition, in the past villagers could not grow vegetable, but from this year (2015) they can produce divers crops for both home consumption and market. During the last dry season, 9 ha planted 5.44 ha of sweet corn, which they can make benefit by 11,250,000 LAK. Moreover, 5 ha produced 0.5 ha of vegetable for mixed purposed (home consumption and market). This evidence indicated the new irrigation system led the villager plant diverse crops for mix purposes. In addition, the irrigation channel increases the water level in the well and useful for household utilization. The irrigation also is useful for animal. In the past during the dry season there is lack of water for animal, but today animal can have enough water through the year.
2. Water use group. The group and legislation had set up to support the sustainable way of irrigation system use. There are 60 ha can get water for cropping during the dry season. However, there are still 6 ha do not get water from the irrigation channel even the channel pass their paddy field. Until now they still have a conflicting among water use group and these 6 ha. The main water use group is a conflicting of group members. Some bodies may open the gate and influencing some farmers do not get water for rice crop. This issue becomes a main conflicting among the water users in every season. The group has been trying to solve the problem by adjust the rule of water use. The water use group collect water fee by 67 kg of paddy grain for wet season and 133 kg of paddy grain for the dry season.
3. Agricultural extension. SIRA provided maize seed 58 kg for 9 ha, vegetable seed 70 cans for 5 ha, rice seed 60 kg for 6 ha. In addition, the project also provided training on crop production, nurturing, and making compost 4 times. There are 6 ha applied the lesson learned for maize production, 3 ha for vegetable production, while the rice extension is failure due to rice crop was ruined by disease and no one keep this kind of rice variety.
4. The watershed management is one of successful activity. This activity does not exist in the village before. The SIRA project led villagers allocate the land water pool, protective forest areas, and agricultural production. Today they have 15 ha of conservative forest area and a large water pool. The conservative forest area covers 5 around villages including Bor, Phonesong, Phoneyeang, Phamuang, and Phadia villages.
5. The water pool and reservoir contribute to reduce the food insufficiency of local people. Today, the number of fish in the water pool and reservoir has been increasing steadily due to villagers can get more fishes for home consumption compare to the past days. In addition, the legislation of forest protection of villages is set up and empowerment in the around villages. This resulting in less invades of cutting woods in the protective forest areas. The set of legislation had agreed by the around communities and approved by the government (district governor and provincial governor) which it is in the sustainable way of watershed management.
6. Moreover, the representative villagers in Bor can do fish breeding themselves, which they have never learnt in the past. Today, they can produce fingerlings themselves without supporting from the project staff. This year (2015) they planned to produce 300,000 fingerlings of common carb and released into the water pool and reservoir. In the next years they plan to produce more fingerlings. In the next they plan to expand the fishpond and maintain the water system. However, they are now facing with lack of fund for continuing this activity.
7. The village set up the committee for management of water pool and reservoir consists of village policeman and village youth union to conserve the water pool and reservoir in the sustainable way.
8. Land use planning. In the past they have never do land use plan until the project came and led people allocated the forests and land for cropping and animal husbandry. In the past they had never land use plan and resulting in that villagers do upland rice in scattered spots. After the project led them do land use plan they have a specific boundary of land use such as, 521 ha of pasture, 3,088 ha of projective forest area, 2,325 ha of conservative forest, and 285 ha of training forest for army. The cleared boundaries of land use are very useful for management of watershed and protect the forest areas, which will be led to the management sustainable way in the next future.
9. In general, villagers are very happy to get the improving of irrigation system by the SIRA project. The water use groups in the Bolikhan district look stronger than the Vienthong district in terms of cash crop production, water use, and management of irrigation system. This is due to people in the Bolikhan district have a longer experience of irrigation use than the people in the Vienthong district. However, the main problems in irrigation management are the same in both districts as they are:

* Water seeps away into the stream and leach out the channel
* Soil erosion as the channel is made by soil
  + Water distribution is not evenly, some get much but some get less

1. All villagers request the supporting for making of concrete irrigation channel to solve above obstacles in both districts.

# Annex 10: Report Clearance Form

Evaluation Report Clearance Form FOR the Evaluation report

for 00083482-sira project

*(to be completed by Government Implementing Partner, UNDP CO and concerned key stakeholders and included in the final document)*

Reviewed and cleared by:

**Government Implementing Partner**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Thongbanh Senabandith***, Director, Irrigation Section, PAFO of Bolikhamxay Province, Project manager for SIRA Project

**UNDP Country Office (Lao PDR)**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Singha Ounniyom***, Climate Change Policy Specialist

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Margaret Jones Williams***, manager, Environment Unit.

1. Conclusions and Recommendations are in Chapter 1 with a brief background section. It is structured as an Executive Summary and a stand-alone section presenting the highlights of this final evaluation. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) Fund is an example of cooperation among three developing countries and constitutes a pioneering initiative to implement South-South cooperation for the benefit of other Southern countries in partnership with the UN system. Its purpose is to identify replicable and scalable projects that can be disseminated to interested developing countries as examples of best practices in the fight against poverty and hunger. It was established in 2004 and became operational in 2006 (<http://tcdc2.undp.org/ibsa/>). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The “3 Builds” initiative is a three-pronged approach to develop the capacity of local authorities:

   Build the province to be a strategic-making unit

   Build the district to be a strengthened in all regards unit

   Build the village to become a development unit [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Unexploded ordnance (UXOs) are explosive weapons (bombs, shells, grenades, land mines, naval mines, etc.) that did not explode when they were employed and still pose a risk of detonation, potentially many decades after they were used or discarded. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Page 11 paragraph #30 of the project document [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. UNDP defines NIM (National Implementation Modality) as the management of UNDP programme activities in a specific programme country carried out by an eligible national entity of that country. It is expected to contribute most effectively to: (i) greater national self-reliance by effective use and strengthening of the management capabilities, and technical expertise of national institutions and individuals, through learning by doing; (ii) enhanced sustainability of development programmes and projects by increasing national ownership of, and commitment to development activities; and (iii) reduced workload and integration with national programmes through greater use of appropriate national systems and procedures. (*Source: UNDP Financial Resources*) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Include exchange rate gain (loss) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Project document, page 10, paragraph 26 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. For additional information on methods, see the [Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](http://www.undp.org/evaluation/handbook), Chapter 7, pg. 163 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. A useful tool for gauging progress to impact is the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) method developed by ………. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. [www.unevaluation.org/unegcodeofconduct](http://www.unevaluation.org/unegcodeofconduct) [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The Report length should not exceed *40* pages in total (not including annexes). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. UNDP Style Manual, Office of Communications, Partnerships Bureau, updated November 2008 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Using a six-point rating scale: 6: Highly Satisfactory, 5: Satisfactory, 4: Marginally Satisfactory, 3: Marginally Unsatisfactory, 2: Unsatisfactory and 1: Highly Unsatisfactory, see section 3.5, page 37 for ratings explanations. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Available at <http://www.unevaluation.org/unegstandards> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Available at <http://www.uneval.org/search/index.jsp?q=ethical+guidelines> [↑](#footnote-ref-17)