***DELEGATION of the EUROPEAN COMMISSION***

**Lao PDR**

Food security for women and rural poor

**Contrat N°2011-046/BFC LOT1/LAOS**

**Framework Contract Beneficiaries – Lot 1**

**Endline survey report (final version)**

**February 2012**

***DELEGATION of the EUROPEAN COMMISSION***

**Food security for women and rural poor**

Endline survey report

**Contrat N°2011-046/BFC LOT1/LAOS**

**Framework Contract Beneficiaries – Lot 1**

**February 2012**

**Team composition:**

**Team Leader: Anne Pirotte**

This report was prepared with financial assistance from the Commission of the European Communities. The views expressed are those of the consultant and do not necessarily represent any official view of the Commission or the Government of this country

**Table of Contents**

1. Introduction and background 10

2. Methodology and limitations 12

3. Findings 15

3.1. GAA – Oudomxay 15

3.1.1. GAA target group and beneficiaries 15

3.1.2. Global indicators 17

3.1.3. Project impacts on food security (productive activities) 19

3.1.4. Other findings from case studies 21

3.2. CARE - Phongsaly 24

3.2.1. Target group and beneficiaries 24

3.2.2. Global indicators 24

3.2.3. Project impacts on food security (productive activities) 26

3.2.4. Other findings from case studies 28

3.3. AGRISUD – Luang Prabang 31

3.3.1. Target group and beneficiaries 31

3.3.2. Global indicators 31

3.3.3. Project impacts on food security (productive activities) 33

3.3.4. Other findings from case studies 33

4. Conclusions 37

5. Recommendations 40

6. References 42

7. Annexes 43

Annex 1 – Programme initial and revised global indicators (09/2009) 44

Annex 2 – Project achievements, per result: GAA 47

Annex 3 – Project achievements, per result: CARE 55

Annex 4 – Project achievements, per result: AGRISUD 58

Annex 5 - Houaydam village case study 63

(Oudomxay Province, Xay District – GAA project) 63

Annex 6: Nammong village case study 67

(Oudomxay Province, Namor District – GAA project) 67

Annex 7: Phakham village case study 71

(Oudomxay Province, Namor District – GAA project) 71

Annex 8: Nambout village case study 76

(Phongsaly Province, Khua District – CARE project) 76

Annex 9: Na village case study 80

(Phongsaly Province, Khua District – CARE project) 80

Annex 10: Senlath village case study 83

(Phongsaly Province, Khua District – CARE project) 83

Annex 11: Kunglith village case study 87

(Phongsaly Province, Khua District – CARE project) 87

Annex 12: Yangteuy village case study 90

(Phongsaly Province, Khua District – CARE project) 90

Annex 13: Dapkachok village case study 95

(Phongsaly Province, Khua District – CARE project) 95

Annex 14: Omtruen village case study 99

(Phongsaly Province, Khua District – CARE project) 99

Annex 15: Bouamvanh village case study 102

(Luang Prabang Province, Viengkham District – AGRISUD project) 102

Annex 16: Chakkang village case study 106

(Luang Prabang Province, Viengkham District – AGRISUD project) 106

Annex 17: Thavan village case study 110

(Luang Prabang Province, Viengkham District – AGRISUD project) 110

Annex 18: Technical centre in Muang Mouy 114

(Luang Prabang Province, Viengkham District – AGRISUD project) 114

Annex 19: Phonkham village case study 117

(Luang Prabang Province, Viengkham District – AGRISUD project) 117

Annex 20 122

Guidelines for interviews and focus group discussions 122

List of tables

[Table 1: Project beneficiaries vii](#_Toc318376837)

[Table 2: Villages sampled for field visits. 13](#_Toc318376838)

[Table 3: Target group and beneficiaries, GAA Oudomxay. 15](#_Toc318376839)

[Table 4: Global indicators, GAA. 18](#_Toc318376840)

[Table 5: Project impacts on food security (productive activities, GAA). 19](#_Toc318376841)

[Table 6: Target group and beneficiaries, CARE Phongsaly. 24](#_Toc318376842)

[Table 7: Global indicators, CARE 25](#_Toc318376843)

[Table 8: Project impacts on food security (productive activities, CARE). 26](#_Toc318376844)

[Table 9: Target villages and beneficiaries, AGRISUD Luang Prabang 31](#_Toc318376845)

[Table 10: Global indicators, AGRISUD. 32](#_Toc318376846)

[Table 11: Impact on food security, per activity, AGRISUD Luang Prabang 33](#_Toc318376847)

[Table 12: Project achievements per result, GAA. 48](#_Toc318376848)

[Table 13: Project achievements, par result, CARE 56](#_Toc318376849)

[Table 14: Project achievements, par result, AGRISUD 59](#_Toc318376850)

List of pictures

[Picture 1: Ginger plantation (yellow, black and hot ginger) 66](#_Toc318376851)

[Picture 2: Harvest of paddy field using SRI techniques 66](#_Toc318376852)

[Picture 3: “2 years ago, the houses were smaller and all roofs in natural material only” 68](#_Toc318376853)

[Picture 4: Latrine 70](#_Toc318376854)

[Picture 5: Embroidery 70](#_Toc318376855)

[Picture 6: Beekeeping 74](#_Toc318376856)

[Picture 7: Rice fields used for shallots and garlic production during the dry season 74](#_Toc318376857)

[Picture 8: Feeding a pig with rice husks 78](#_Toc318376858)

[Picture 9: Lowlands allow a second rice season 78](#_Toc318376859)

[Picture 10: Corn sheller 79](#_Toc318376860)

[Picture 11: Waterwheel 82](#_Toc318376861)

[Picture 12:Rice irrigated with the waterwheel; cassava production on the slopes 82](#_Toc318376862)

[Picture 13: Broom grass plantation at the village entrance 85](#_Toc318376863)

[Picture 14: Beekeeping 85](#_Toc318376864)

[Picture 15: Planting peanuts after adding some pig manure in each hole 86](#_Toc318376865)

[Picture 16: Custard apple tree 86](#_Toc318376866)

[Picture 17: Kitchen cabinet 93](#_Toc318376867)

[Picture 18: Removing rice seeds by hand 93](#_Toc318376868)

[Picture 19: Kitchen garden 97](#_Toc318376869)

[Picture 20: Baskets for waste 101](#_Toc318376870)

[Picture 21: Sesame 101](#_Toc318376871)

[Picture 22: Market oriented vegetable production in Bouamvanh 104](#_Toc318376872)

[Picture 23: Vegetable production generates valuable income for this lady who lost his sun and whose husband is very sick. 104](#_Toc318376873)

[Picture 24: AGRISUD handbook on organic vegetable production is also available online (in English or French) 105](#_Toc318376874)

[Picture 25: Job’s tears, drying 107](#_Toc318376875)

[Picture 26: Vigna, just harvested 107](#_Toc318376876)

[Picture 27: I have already earned 100 000 kip this year, selling vegetables in the village. 108](#_Toc318376877)

[Picture 28: Beautiful vegetables produced. 108](#_Toc318376878)

[Picture 29: Chicken pen with baskets for laying eggs. 108](#_Toc318376879)

[Picture 30: Old water supply system – no tap. 108](#_Toc318376880)

[Picture 31: Land use map 109](#_Toc318376881)

[Picture 32: Unused latrine built by the Lao Red Cross 109](#_Toc318376882)

[Picture 33: Mixed cropping corn and Stylosanthes (AGRISUD picture) 112](#_Toc318376883)

[Picture 34: Mixed cropping: corn and Vigna in association (AGRISUD picture) 112](#_Toc318376884)

[Picture 35: 3D map for land use planning 113](#_Toc318376885)

[Picture 36: Traditional small scale vegetable garden on stilts. 113](#_Toc318376886)

[Picture 37: One of the 18 families growing vegetables in Muang Mouy technical centre. 115](#_Toc318376887)

[Picture 38: Production of liquid compost 115](#_Toc318376888)

[Picture 39: A miller was given to the entre to generate income. 116](#_Toc318376889)

[Picture 40: Pig pen in Muang Mouy technical centre, used for quarantine. 116](#_Toc318376890)

[Picture 41: House in Phonekham village 120](#_Toc318376891)

[Picture 42: Precious water resources to be shared with the neighboring village. 120](#_Toc318376892)

[Picture 43: “Peuak meuak”, a NTFP collected in Phonkham and bought by Chinese traders for making incent, mosquito repellant and glue. 121](#_Toc318376893)

[Picture 44: Distributed piglets in their pig pen. 121](#_Toc318376894)

Abbreviations

CKSA Community Knowledge Support Association

DAFO District Agriculture and Forestry Office, MAF

DDP District Development Plan

DLMO District Land Management Office, NLMA

DMC Direct Sowing Mulched Based Cropping Systems

DPHO District Public Health Office

DPHO District Public Health Office

EC European Commission

FDI Foreign Direct Investment

FNAP Food and Nutrition Security Assessments and Plans

GAA German Agro Action

IPM Integrated Pest Management

IRD Institut de Recherche pour le Développement

LANN Linking Agriculture, Natural Resources and Nutrition

LWU Lao Women’s Union

MAF Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

MICS Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (UNICEF)

NGO Non Government Organization

NGPES National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy

NLMA National Land Management Authority, PMO

NNP National Nutrition Policy

NPD National Project Director

NTFP Non Timber Forest Products

PAFO Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office, MAF

PFSP Phongsaly Food Security Project

PLUP Participatory Land Use Planning

PMO Prime Minister’s Office

PRA Participatory Rural Appraisal

SRI System for Rice Intensification

VHV Village Health Volunteer

VRP Village Relocation Programme

VVW Village Veterinary Worker

Exchange rate is of 10 000 kip for 1 Euro and 8 000 kip for 1 USD at the end of 2011.

Executive summary

A call for proposal was launched in 2008 by the European Commission for projects aiming at supporting food security for women and rural poor in Laos. With the same budget of EUR 430 000 and during the same 2 years duration, three selected projects implemented independently in the Northern Uplands by three NGOs have joined in a common programme. GAA, CARE and AGRISUD, have respectively operated in Oudomxay (Xay and Namor Districts), Phongsaly (Khua District) and Luang Prabang (Viengkham District) Provinces.

The endline evaluation and final evaluation of all three projects were carried out between November 2011and January 2012 by a consultant (Mrs Anne Pirotte, AETS) hired by the EU through a framework contract with Agriconsulting consortium. The evaluation of LANN community approach has been taken care of by a second consultant (Mrs Napat Gordon) whose findings are included in a separate report. This report focuses on the endline survey.

The endline survey aimed at providing quantitative and qualitative information about the projects achievements, based on the project monitoring and evaluation systems and on information collected during the field visits.

The impact of non-productive activities -like basic health, hygiene awareness, lightening women workload- on malnutrition and food security has been found very difficult to quantify, although they surely freed time and energy for productive activities. Aside for GAA, who internally organised some surveys at the end of 2010, no data were available to assess the impact of those activities. The time gain resulting from water collection is very high, estimated between two and four hours a day. Family planning has been also much appreciated for this reason, as well as women fatigue and health. Effects of LANN sessions themselves can hardly be isolated from subsequent activities who take place regarding hygiene, nutrition and agriculture. However, the situation improvement is clear.

The projects assisted a total of almost 22 000 persons living in 64 villages:

Table : Project beneficiaries

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NGO** | **Villages** | **HH** | **Population** | **Persons/HH** |
| AGRISUD | 25 | 1 796 | 10 737 | 6.0 |
| CARE | 23 | 859 | 4 759 | 5.5 |
| GAA | 16 | 1 354 | 6 372 | 4.7 |
| **Total** | 64 | 4 009 | 21 868 | 5.5 |

The projects’ impacts of productive activities on food security can be summarized as follow:

**GAA** gave the priority to lowland intensification, based on the System for Rice Intensification (SRI) and supporting paddy fields expansion, producing an additional 1 100 T rice, equivalent to 81 days of consumption in the 16 target villages. Other crops for upland farming (such as vegetables, fruit trees, pineapple, groundnuts and corn), and animal raised (goat, chicken, pig and fish), were partly self-consumed, partly sold, providing income. On top of the self-consumed food, the project has generated an average additional yearly income of 468 000 kip[[1]](#footnote-1), corresponding to an equivalent 30 days of rice consumption in the target villages.

The activities providing the highest average additional yearly income are galangal[[2]](#footnote-2), goat raising, and corn production, with respectively 2.8 million, 630 000 and 620 000 kip/HH. Off-farm vocational activities like engine mechanist and blacksmith were also found profitable, but of course much fewer people engaged in them. Other successful opportunities for local added value include mushroom production and ginger tea production. At the end of 2010, the Food Consumption Score reached 63 (for 61.3 according to the baseline survey); 72% HH eat nutritious food all year round; food-secure HH have increased from 46% (questionable reliability) to 55%.

**AGRISUD** impacted the food security with the production of an additional 19.1 T of vegetables by 277 households (15% total HH in the project target villages). Most of the vegetables produced were self-consumed (89% for the 246 households practicing vegetable gardening), while the 31 market oriented producers sold 60% of their production. Thanks to the project support, 277 HH are involved in vegetable production. Each household practicing home gardening produces on average 45g vegetable per HH member during 5 months (dry season[[3]](#footnote-3)). The market oriented producers produce 120g vegetable per household member/day. The vegetable sales provided income (on average 545 000 kip/HH/year for home gardening and 2.3 million for the market oriented producers) equivalent to respectively 38 and 160 days of rice consumption for each household. All the corn, sorghum and fodder grown were used to feed pigs and chickens. Food availability was increased in the target area, by the production of pigs (43T/year) and chicken (2T/year). Little meat is self-consumed outside of special events (visitors, festivals or ceremonies). Providing 2 sows to 112 families (6.2% HH) had a huge impact: the value of meat annually sold is estimated 3 450 000 kip/beneficiary/year, which corresponds to 240 additional days of rice consumption for those families. Providing 4 chickens to 213 families (12% HH) had obviously a more modest impact: the value of meat annually sold[[4]](#footnote-4) is estimated 236 000 kip/beneficiary/year, which corresponds to 16 additional days of rice consumption. Productive activities benefited to one third of households in 25 villages, which is a great achievement in such a short time.

**CARE** had limited impact on rice production (an additional 26T paddy produced on 10 ha cultivated) because of few lowlands in the target villages. Impacts on upland rice production could not be assessed[[5]](#footnote-5) and would anyway not be representative given the totally unusual weather in Phongsaly area this year. Significant impacts result from other food production: impossible to quantify for kitchen garden (practiced by 62% HH for self-consumption), various beans production (28% HH, with associated impacts on soil fertility). Fish farming, practiced by 12% HH, had the double advantage to provide proteins for the family (self-consumption is higher in the poor families) and income (1.25 million for 50 kg sold). It is too early to assess the impact of animal raising activities since goats, pigs and ducks have just been provided in December 2011. Other cash crops, like galangal, cardamom and broom grass generated an average 1.3 million kip/HH/year, corresponding to an additional 137 days of rice consumption[[6]](#footnote-6). This is of course an artificial calculation, since those income are not only used to bridge the gap regarding the rice deficit, but also for buying other food like oil, proteins, fish sauce, cover health care, education costs and other family basic needs.

As a conclusion, all projects substantially contributed to reduce food insecurity and malnutrition, directly and indirectly.

A common M&E system has not been found useful for the programme, given the different local contexts and opportunities, which led to diversified activities and numerous indicators (88). The baseline survey in 64 villages involved 600 man-days and mobilized 50 people for collecting the information.

The monitoring and evaluation systems could be lightened for future programmes, although a search for common global indicators could still be undertaken. The system will privilege regular small scale surveys at the end of an activity during the project implementation, and thematic surveys as inputs to feed the internal thinking for the project monitoring.

# Introduction and background

Traditionally, EU support to Food security in Lao PDR has been addressed in projects implemented by NGOs through the food security and NGO co-financing budget lines or through ECHO (the EC Directorate General for humanitarian Aid, as well as by other thematic or geographic programmes addressing rural livelihoods issues.

The Government of Lao PDR signed a Financing Agreement with the European Commission on a programme to Support Food Security for Women and the Rural Poor on 11 May 2007. A call for proposals[[7]](#footnote-7) was launched in the end of 2008 and three projects were selected, which started in July or August 2009. All projects are to be completed on 31 December 2011 and amount to EUR 430.000 each for a two years duration.

The programme aims to improve the food and nutrition security of women and rural poor and to empower the poor local communities to participate in decision-making at local level for the achievement of a sustainable food and nutrition security. A primary purpose is to develop the capacity and role of women to cope with issues of food insecurity.

The main results as described in the FA are:

1. Local communities are empowered to develop and pursue their own food and nutritional strategies.
2. Local food and nutrition strategies are developed and pursued for household and community levels that include diets based on culturally and locally adapted food and nutrition composition tables. Strong emphasis will be put on the health and food and nutritional security of women and young children.
3. Local communities are empowered and can engage with local and relevant national government institutions and local level decision-making processes affecting their food and nutritional security strategies.
4. Monitoring and results indicators are developed which will measure the achievements and sustainability of the actions as well as enable the replication of the approach in other areas. The indicators should include anthropometric food and nutritional measures as well as those for participation and capacity building. They should also include indicators that are developed by and acceptable to the cultures and values of the communities. All indicators will be age-, gender- and ethnicity- specific.

The guidelines for the call for proposals included a list of global indicators that grantees would have to measure under result iv).

A significant amount of efforts and resources has been dedicated to M&E issues, somehow detrimental to the actual implementation of the activities with the targeted populations. In consultation with the three partners, the EU has agreed that funds from the financing agreement dedicated to evaluation and under the contingency budget line will be used to undertake all the final analysis while funds thus freed from the projects' budgets can be used to strengthen the activities with beneficiary populations and concentrate on their sustainability.

A request for service was launched to recruit a team of two consultants under a framework contract. The team leader (Mrs Anne Pirotte) is in charge of undertaking the endline survey for the three EU funded projects, as well as the final programme’s and of the three projects’ evaluations. The second consultant (Mrs Napat Gordon) takes care of the evaluation of the LANN[[8]](#footnote-8) community based training approach. The objective of the whole assignment is to provide a final analysis and lessons learned on the Programme “Support Food Security for Women and Rural Poor” in Lao PDR. Findings and best practices are summarised in a leaflets (English and Lao versions).

Because the baseline study was found unreliable for different reasons (see explanation under Methodology), it was agreed during the project kick-off meeting that there is not point replicating the same exercise at the project end. Time, human and financial resources available do not anyway allow this substantial effort. Therefore, this mission bases the analysis on existing data indicators for a quantitative assessment (no additional quantitative data collected). In parallel, a qualitative analysis is approached through village case studies. This “endline study report” summarises both the indicators analysis and field visits observations.

# Methodology and limitations

The programme and project evaluations were supposed to be based on a comparison between the baseline survey and endline survey data (to be collected). The baseline survey would be replicated at the project end, using the same methodology, the data being collected at the same season.

This logical idea included in the call of proposal is however undermined by some **limits of the baseline survey** as pointed out during the kick off meeting:

* The first consultant in charge of baseline survey stopped the work after the data collection; another one took over to analyse the data and did his best but could not restart from zero, going back to the indicator choice;
* As a result, indicators are not always suitable;
* Different indicators for the different projects - 88 indicators is far too much;
* After a 5-day training of all enumerators together in Oudomxay, all went back in their District for survey. No further support or quality control during data collection (the baseline consultant did not go to the villages);
* Complicated and long questionnaires;
* Questions not always well formulated;
* Complexity of Excel database hampers interpretation;
* No quality control for data entry - many mistakes during data entry reported by Agrisud.

All stakeholders are aware of the deficient baseline study. It was then agreed that **it does thus not make sense to replicate the baseline survey** and compare updated data with unreliable ones (incl. unsuitable indicators), even if the available resources would allow it (which is not the case anyway). Indeed, the sample size of the baseline survey covered 64 villages (3 NGOs), took 600 man-days and mobilized 50 people (total for 2 NGOs only) without having resulted in a qualitative study. The endline/final evaluation does not allow (budget and time) this sampling effort.

The follow up of these global indicators, on the top of each project's own indicators was a source of confusion. It was eventually officially clarified between the EU and the three partners that:

* Some of the global indicators were not relevant for a two-year project and they ought to be excluded if possible (according to section 8 of the mission ToRs)
* Each project was responsible to meet the indicators as written in the proposal; while the three grant contractors under the Call were responsible to measure progress towards the global indicators.
* The project-specific endline study and final evaluation should be done only once per project meaning that both are done in the context of the same study.

Given this background, it was agreed that, for the endline survey:

* **A qualitative approach would be used to emphasize lessons learned in the project evaluation**. Each village corresponds to a case study. The analysis is based on direct observations, individual and group interviews and focus group discussions. Different stakeholders involved have been met: villagers and village authorities, but also project staff and government partners (staff participating in the project and the department at District level, at provincial level whenever it was possible).

The projects operate in the changing environmentof Northern uplands. The proposed qualitative approach will analyze which strategies were developed by the projects in different contexts (ethnic groups, access to market, etc.), which successes and difficulties they met and lessons learned can be highlighted for future projects.

This emphasis on good practices and lessons learned looks relevant since at least 2 NGOs probably will continue similar projects.

However, the qualitative approach might implicate limits regarding the project impact and efficiency analysis.

* It was agreed that the experts shall not collect much more novel data, but the **quantitative analysis will rather evaluate from the existing data samples from the NGOs' progress reports and monitoring and evaluation reports**. Experts will identify key parameters (indicators) which allow an evaluation according to the 8 evaluation criteria and giving a significant conclusion. In particular, the most pertinent indicators will be kept as they are required for the quantitative evaluation (efficiency & impact).

Some **other limitations** met during the mission:

* It is a busy time for the three NGOs, who give the priority to the project completion. Last minutes visits for project evaluation, LANN evaluation and finally ROM evaluation was an additional heavy workload for them.
* The mission schedule was delayed by 18 days. As a result, GAA project closed down in September before the mission could start. The TA, who had an in-depth knowledge of the project in Oudomxay finished his contract before the mission’s start; other staff were re-assigned. Hopefully, the National Project Director (NPD) and District team leaders have been available during the mission field visits.
* The identification and recruitment of a suitable English-Khamu translator with a good knowledge of uplands realities and specific vocabulary was not very easy. The one identified for Oudomxay and Phongsaly was replaced for personal reasons during the field visits in Oudomxay, then he joined the mission and got sick himself. A third translator has been employed in Luang Prabang province.
* Farmers are quite busy finishing the rice harvest in November, but much more available in December. Some other stakeholders were not available to meet.
* The flight schedule to Oudomxay kept changing in November and the field mission schedule has been changed twice.

The **sampling method** is designed to be replicated in each project. The selected villages are representative of implemented activities, while covering contrasted situations corresponding to different realities, challenges and opportunities:

* Diverse ethnic groups;
* Production/consumption patterns: Self sufficient oriented families and other which already entered a market economy – linked to remoteness/easy access to market;
* Availability/access to forest (NTFP) and land.

The following villages have been visited:

Table : Villages sampled for field visits.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NGO** | **Province** | **District** | **Sampled villages** |
| GAA | Oudomxay | Xay | Houaydam |
| Namor | Nammong, Phakham |
| CARE | Phongsaly | Khua | Nambout, Na, Senlath, Kunglith, Yangteuy, Dapkachock, Omtruen |
| AGRISUD | Luang Prabang | Vieng Kham | Bouamvanh, Thavan, Chakkang, Phonkham and the technical centre in Mouang Mouy. |

The **approach chosen to assess the project impacts on food security** is as follow:

* For rice production, quantify the additional paddy production resulting from new lands under cultivation and from yield increase (resulting from improved techniques like SRI, irrigation or seeds varieties).
* For other productive activities, quantify the additional production resulting from the project support[[9]](#footnote-9) (seeds supply, animal revolving funds, technical advises…);
* Quantify the additional production self-consumed and sold. For the last one, assess its value and convert it into an equivalent of rice weight, based on the local paddy rice value.
* The equivalent additional total rice weight per family has been divided by the amount of family members (the average family size is known for each project). Based on an average consumption 350 kg paddy per person per year, recognised as an average figure for reference nationwide, the number of potential additional days of rice consumption has been calculated.

The ***advantage*** of this method is to give a broad picture, objectively assessing on a common basis how each activity allows families to overcome the widespread rice shortage.

The ***limit*** of this approach: it is somehow artificial, since the generated income are in reality not only used to buy rice, but also for education and health purposes, for buying other food like fish sauce, fishes, wild meat, sugar, oil, and other basic family supplies. It means that when income increase, each family operates choices in expenditures, privileging quality/quantity food intakes at some moments, access to services at others, which is hardly detected by this method.

**Family versus households**. Despite the indicator reads ‘families’ data had sometimes been collected per ‘household’ to stay in line with the data as provided by the baseline consultant. This has however no significant influence on the percentage given. Both terms have been used in this report, according to informants’ declarations.

# Findings

According to the kick-off meeting agreements, the *quantitative analysis* is based on existing available data from the NGOs' progress reports and monitoring and evaluation reports. The qualitative analysis complements the information, based on case studies. Each village corresponds to a case study (see all 15 case studies in annexes).

The call for proposal did set indicators at the result level only (results 1 to 3). No impact indicator has been proposed in this document, corresponding to the project overall objective and purpose.

The three NGOs and EU DEL have agreed to revise some global indicators during a meeting held on 9th October 2009. The annex 2 summarises the discussions and agreements.

## GAA – Oudomxay

### GAA target group and beneficiaries

Oudomxay ranks as the second poorest province, with Namor district listed as one of the 27 poorest districts in the country. Since the construction of dirt track and access roads population concentration along the road has steadily increased. The subsequent pressure on finite resources such as arable land (partly occupied by rubber tree plantations) and clean water poses new challenges with regard to food security, nutrition, sanitation and health[[10]](#footnote-10).

The project spanned 16 villages with a total of more than 6,500 individuals in about 1,150 households[[11]](#footnote-11) at the end of the project. Ten villages are located in the Phonehom area in Xay district and six are in Namor district:

Table : Target group and beneficiaries, GAA Oudomxay.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Target area** | **In project proposal (2008)** | **At the project end**  **(end of 2011)** |
| Number of villages | 16 | 16 |
| Targeted population | 5 320 | 6 516 (6 344 at the project start) |
| Targeted households | 889 | 1 136 (1 076 at the project start) |
| Proportion of poor households in the targeted villages | 454 (or 51%) | 560 (or 52%) |
| Proportion of poorest households in the targeted villages | 286 (or 32%) | 299 (or 28%) |

“The change in population figures as compared with the figures given in the proposal (2008) occur mainly within the frame of village consolidation and the development-centre-approach driven by the Government of the Lao PDR. In addition to the natural population growth, some of the project villages have incorporated formerly split-up hamlets within their own village areas. (...) The project faces the situation of working with a growing number of households (over the time of the project). This is already reflected in the reported numbers of beneficiary households or families participating in individual activities being larger than the original numbers intended[[12]](#footnote-12)”.

During the previous (EU funded) GAA project (from 2006 to 2009), all villages were already targeted. The population is composed primarily of six of the province’s 16 ethnic groups: Leu, Khamu, Hmong, Akha, Phounjot and Kongsaad, with the Khamu being the largest group.

The following activities were conducted:

* LANN
* Awareness raising /information on family planning methods, workload share between men and women, women and villagers empowerment
* Drinking water supply systems: infrastructure and training for management and latrine construction (including maintenance and hygiene training)
* Support to lowland rice production: SRI (System for Rice Intensification), micro-irrigation schemes, second culture in dry season, lowland paddy expansion
* Agriculture diversification in the Uplands: galangal plantations (seedling supply), corn, pineapple, peanuts, cotton, turmeric, vegetable production and fruit trees (seed supply and extension – grating training for fruit trees).
* NTFP plantations: cardamom (seedling supply)
* Animal raising (pigs, chicken, goats, frogs): extension; fish and fingerlings production (support for ponds construction, fingerling)
* Bee keeping training.
* Off-farm income generation activities: conserved bamboo, ginger tea, [sen piat fibers](file:///C:\Documents%20and%20Settings\AP\My%20Documents\Anne\Possibilités\Evaluation%20EU%20Laos\Report\GAA%20FS%20project%20evaluation\Assessment%20GAA%20impacts.xlsx#RANGE!A66)[[13]](#footnote-13), cotton processing, natural dying (cotton & silk), tailor, engine mechanists, blacksmiths, handicapped basket weavers, carpentry and masonry, electrician, mushroom cultivation
* Set up of Village Development Funds (VDF) for delivering micro-credits
* Literacy courses
* Capacity building for 22 GoV staff and farmers.

The project strategy is discussed in 3.1.4 below.

### Global indicators

The detailed available quantitative data are presented in annexe 2. The table below on global indicators provides indicators on:

* ***Food security/nutrition***: 72% of HH eat nutritious food all year round and 29% do not reach food security all year round (amongst them 13% face more than 2 months food shortage per year). The FCS slightly improved during the project and can surprisingly be considered as satisfactory according to international standards.
* ***Women empowerment***: Although few women are elected as village heads (one in a total of 8 villages), it clearly shows a women active involvement in income generation activities, with 58% of women in all target villages. Expenditures are used to purchase food for the family and schooling for the children;
* ***Villagers empowerment***:
  + The participation of villagers in meetings at District level twice a year -which was not the case before- corresponds to a villagers’ empowerment, since it is an occasion for them to give their opinion regarding the village development plan.
  + An improved management of natural resources, by local committees;
* ***Health and hygiene***:
  + 84% HH are classified as hygienic in relation to the GoV standards;
  + All mothers reported to practise exclusive breast feeding for at least 4 months. More than a half continued for over one year;
* ***Capacity building***: A high participation of Government staff in project implementation (22 staff) and GAA constant efforts for capacity building, including for participatory and gender-sensitive approaches.

These improvements are expected to be sustainable. The project impacts on food security is analysed just below, and more details provided in the GAA final evaluation report.

**Project set objectives at overall and specific objectives, and achievements:** GAA project in Oudomxay. The table below summarises set objectives and status after 24 months.

Table : Global indicators, GAA.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Objectives** | **Available data and comments** |
| **Overall objectives: The food and nutrition security of the women and the rural poor has improved and local communities are empowered to participate in decision-making at the local level for the achievement of a sustainable food and nutrition strategy.** | |
| After 24 months all women, men and children of all ethnic backgrounds in all 16 villages eat nutritious and diversified food - vegetable, meat and fish - at least three times a week all year round (Food Consumption Score) | From 1,109 households there are already 793 households that eat nutritious food[[14]](#footnote-14) all year round (72%).  There is more and better food available and consumed as demonstrated in the rise of the Food Consumption Score (FCS). The FCS collected is based on a variety of indicators and changed for the 258 sample families from 61.3 (Baseline) to 63. This corresponds to a slight improvement and to an “adequate” food consumption score, according to international standards (cf. WFP, 2008). The minimum score is of 0 and the maximum of 112. A FCS above 35.5 is considered as corresponding to an adequate food consumption. In the sampling of 248 HH, only one scores 30 and is to be considered as “border line” for food consumption. |
| **Specific objective: The food and nutritional security on household and community level among women and the rural poor in two selected districts of Oudomxay province has been strengthened.** | |
| 1. The lean period for food insufficient families has diminished to two months average per year or less at the end of the project in all target villages | From a total of 1,109 households, 609 households are already food-sufficient and 319 households (29%) do not yet have full food sufficiency all year round. Amongst them, 181 households (16%) have not yet reached the target of a sufficiency in rice of two months/year or less. The remaining 7% of food insecure HH face more than 2 month food shortage. This shows an increase of food-secure households from 46% (Baseline) to 55%.  End of 2011. The intensification of lowland rice only provided an average 81 additional days of rice consumption per family living in the target area. Other activities provide an average income of 468 000 kip/year to the beneficiaries, corresponding to the capacity to buy an additional 30 days of rice consumption for their family. |
| 2. By the end of the project all incidents of uncontrolled depletion of natural resources within the village perimeter are dealt with according to the Lao forestry law and the rules as established by the respective village committees | Few incidents noted – dealt with by adequate committees: In the 22 conservation areas (18 forest conservation zones, 4 fish conservation zones) there were 6 reported incidents. All 6 were in the forest zones: 2 incidents where large trees were cut and 4 incidents where farmers cut down forest to create fields for swidden agriculture. All incidents were dealt with according to the regulations that foresee a warning by the village headman for first time offenders. |
| 3. After 24 months at least 50 % of all women (approximately 400) engaging in successful income generating activities use the extra income for themselves and their children | End of 2010: from a total of 1,321 women aged 15 to 45, 774 women were participating in one form of income generation activity. This represents 58% of all women in the 16 villages. Expenditures were used to purchase food for the family and schooling for the children. |
| 4. At the end of the project 70% of all target households are classified as hygienic according to Government standards | End of 2011: From a total of 1,109 households 940 are already classified as hygienic in relation to the given standards (84%). |
| 5. At the end of the project at least 40% of all mothers practice exclusive breast feeding for at least 4 months after childbirth | End of 2011: During the last year there were 320 women with children under 2 years of age. All mothers reported to practise exclusive breast feeding for at least 4 months. 190 women continued for over one year. |
| 6. Village committee members participate at least twice a year at a district or provincial meeting for pro actively interfacing with government decision makers | End of 2011: On average, village committee members participated in official meetings between 3 to 12 times per year. Most meeting recorded were with the district agriculture office, health office and education office |
| 7. At the end of the project in 8 villages leading women are elected member of the village administration committee supported by their communities | There are 20 women in the 10 villages of Xay district with the capacity to become village head(wo)men. 4 stood for elections in the 8 villages where elections were held but only one has been elected (Houay Thong). There were no elections held in Namor. |
| 8. After 24 months all staff is able to perform their tasks and facilitates all development activities of the beneficiaries in a participatory and gender sensitive way in the target area leading to higher numbers of farmer staff interactions and women's participation | There were 22 government staff members cooperating with the project (5 women).  Equipped with training and guidance from the CKSA and WHH staff and the project management, they mostly carried out their tasks in a gender-sensitive and participatory way leading to a large number of activities being carried out which resulted in the outcomes as reported above. |

### Project impacts on food security (productive activities)

The project impacts on food security are summarized in the table below. Comments follow the table.

Table : Project impacts on food security (productive activities, GAA).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Detail per activity** | **Villages** | **HH** | **Partici-pation** | **Additional** | **Additional rice** | **Additional** |
|  |  |  | **(% HH)** | **production** | **consumption** | **Income** |
|  |  |  |  | **(T/year)** | **(days)** | **(kip/year/HH)** |
| **Rice cropping** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Micro-irrigation schemes | 14 | 150 | 11 | 300 | 81 |  |
| Second culture in dry season | 9 | 50 | 4 | 225 |  |
| Other fields under SRI | 16 | 223 | 16 | 446 |  |
| Lowland paddy expansion | 16 | 303 | 22 | 135 |  |
| **Other crops** |  |  |  |  | Additional income converted in additional rice consumption (days) |  |
| Galangal | 11 | 107 | 8 | 23 | 180 | 2 841 121 |
| Corn | 13 | 145 | 11 | 117 | 39 | 620 690 |
| Pineapple (half sold) | 13 | 85 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 29 412 |
| Peanuts | NA | 76 | 6 | 2 |  | Self consumed |
| Cotton | 3 | 6 | 0 | 0 |  | Processed |
| Turmeric (for tea production) | 1 | 9 | 1 | NA | NA | NA |
| Vegetables | ? | 433 | 32 | 10 |  | NA |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Detail per activity** | **Villages** | **HH** | **Partici-pation** | **Additional** | **Additional rice** | **Additional** |
|  |  |  | **(% HH)** | **production** | **consumption** | **Income** |
|  |  |  |  | **(T/year)** | **(days)** | **(kip/year/HH)** |
| **Animal raising** |  |  |  | **(heads/year)** |  |  |
| Pigs | NA | NA | NA | 257 |  | NA |
| Goats | NA | 23 | 2 | NA+187 | 40 | 629 130 |
| Chicken | NA | 22 | 2 | 1 862 | 14 | 227 273 |
| Frogs | 7 to 11 | 29 | 2 | Mostly eaten | 2 | 34 483 |
| Fish[[15]](#footnote-15) | NA | 465 | 34 | 13.65T | 7 | 103 226 |
| Beekeeping | 2 | 29 | 2 | 73 kg | 5 | 78 966 |
| **NTFP** |  |  |  | **(T/year)** |  |  |
| Cardamom plantations | 16 | 515 | 38 | 2.38 |  |  |
| **Income generation activities** |  |  |  | **(kg/year)** |  |  |
| Conserve bamboo |  | 744 | 55 | 23 000 |  | NA |
| Ginger tea | 2 | 44 | 3 | 1 069 | 36 | 560 864 |
| [Sen piat fibers](file:///C:\Documents%20and%20Settings\AP\My%20Documents\Anne\Possibilités\Evaluation%20EU%20Laos\Report\GAA%20FS%20project%20evaluation\Assessment%20GAA%20impacts.xlsx#RANGE!_ftn1) |  | 48 | 4 | 62 | 11 | 178 042 |
| Cotton processing | 2 | 28 | 2 | 197 | 5 | 84 286 |
| Natural dying (cotton/silk) | 1 | 8 | 1 | 172 | 19 | 298 250 |
| Tailor | 8 | 9 | 1 |  | 18 | 283 333 |
| Engine mechanists | 6 | [11](file:///C:\Documents%20and%20Settings\AP\My%20Documents\Anne\Possibilités\Evaluation%20EU%20Laos\Report\GAA%20FS%20project%20evaluation\Assessment%20GAA%20impacts.xlsx#RANGE!_ftn2) | 1 |  | 140 | 2 218 182 |
| Blacksmiths | 3 | 5 | 0 | 295 tools | 86 | 1 358 000 |
| Handicapped basket weavers | 4 | 4 | 0 | 403 baskets | 62 | 981 500 |
| Carpentry and masonry | 4 | 7 | 1 | 11 orders | 14 | 217 857 |
| Electrician | 1 | 1 | 0 |  | 33 | 520 000 |
| Mushroom cultivation | 5 | 15 | 1 | 3357 bags | 16 | 254 467 |

**The additional rice production corresponds to almost 3 months of consumption in the target area.**  GAA was right to concentrate on lowland rice cultivation: the project have had a huge impact on food security.

Various **other crops** cultivated in upland farming, were self-consumed and/or sold. Respectively 11%, 6% and 6% of households involved in corn, pineapple and peanuts cultivation. Corn provided on average 620 000 kip per family, pineapple 30 000 kip only, but they contributed to supply the family with fruits. 8% of the families decided to plant galangal; each earn on average 2.8 million kip per year. With 32% of families involved, vegetable production had a major effect on nutrition, 87% of the produced vegetable being self-consumed. It is too early for the 1 250 fruit trees distributed to contribute to income and nutrition.

**Animal raising** have had an impact on food security too: directly for the animal eaten and indirectly for the heads sold. Small animals like chicken but also fishes, frogs and honey were mainly eaten by the producers, while goats and pigs are partly sold and partly kept as savings, enhancing the family safety nets. It might be a factor explaining why the intensification sometimes remains limited: ***some families might consider the animals as safety nets more than income generating activities***[[16]](#footnote-16).

The promotion of **NTFP plantation** (cardamom) in the forests corresponds to a sustainable use of the forest. This activity involved 38% of the families in the target area, providing modest income, but which should be raising in the coming years.

**Off-farm income generating activities** have provided employment and income. They also allowed selling some agricultural products which would not have been otherwise (case of ginger used for the ginger tea). The project had offered a large panel of opportunities to 28 men and 137 women; the mushroom production being offered to the family as a whole. Yearly additional average income have been of 450 000 kip per person.

The common image of handicrafts generating low income is confirmed in the case of cotton processing, natural dying, sen piat fibers and tailor. However, in a context where income opportunities are limited, they are valuable opportunities.

The total of above data provides additional income of more than 634 millions kip for sold products only. This represents an average additional income of 468 000 kip per family.

The activity which has provided the highest income is galangal, which represents 52% of total additional income generated thanks to the project support.

More comments appear in the individual final evaluation reports.

### Other findings from case studies

**Project strategy**. During the previous project, all major infrastructures have been created already, groups founded and management systems put in place. The current project aimed at setting up village micro-credit funds, consolidating and making sustainable the outcome of the previous project. Therefore, most of the proposed future activities were of a “soft” nature. The following strategic orientations have been selected to contribute enhancing food and nutrition security:

1. Improve the rural infrastructures in a first phase (previous project). Enhance the sustainability by building the local capacity for management and maintenance (current project).
2. Support to lowland and sedentary upland agriculture: increasing the production area, intensification and diversification, according to an integrated model of agriculture. To some extent, upland rice production is substituted with other crops (fruits, vegetables, fodder, ...), which can either be consumed or sold. As livestock is the most important source of protein, small and large livestock raising practices have been further improved, introducing fodder production, pens and improving animal health. A special focus is on fish production for local consumption, with the introduction fingerling production techniques, and fish farming extension.
3. Income generating activities[[17]](#footnote-17) development (in-farm mainly and off-farm).
4. Decreasing waste of time and energy, with improved access to drinking water (previous phase mainly) and family planning, better health as a result of improved hygiene practices and breastfeeding.
5. Women empowerment and, to a larger extent, villagers empowerment.

**GAA villages context in Oudomxay**

* **Access to market** is easier and collectors are more present in Xay District than in Namor. Although travelling time to the provincial market in Xay might be long (1-2 hour drive, with potentially some difficulties during the rainy season), all villages are all located close to a decent road, which facilitates their access to market.

Examples of contract farming that have not been respected have been mentioned: the client did not come back to buy what he asked to plant or the price was lower than initially agreed. This suggests high risk concluding such agreements without having other marketing opportunities.

* In all villages, the **availability of lowlands** where intensification opportunities still exist corresponds to a very favourable context to enhance food security[[18]](#footnote-18).
* An increasing competition for land use results from fields’ expansion, forest cut and from plantations’ development, either belonging to households or to companies. **Access to land and to forest is decreasing** for households. Land titles have been allocated based on family labour[[19]](#footnote-19), between 2006 and 2008. In visited villages, limited spare lands are still available for new families (just married and/or new comers).

As agreed in the project MOU, no target village supported by the project was resettled during the project. However, some were displaced before the project start. Those usually face more difficulties to access land, the farm lands usually being located near the “old village”. Part of the population stays overnight in former village to take care of the cattle and fields during the rainy season.

Because access to land is decreasing for them, two new groups gradually become at **higher risk regarding food security in Oudomxay** beside the vulnerable groups already identified (poor and female headed households):

* + *Families having sold their land title*, either to face urgent cash needs, or encouraged by plantation investors. They might have had the impression to make quick and easy money, but remain with few resources once it is spent. In a context where wage labour is very limited and where they lost part of their land, their low production capacity increases their vulnerability.
  + *Groups characterized by a high fertility rate* (more likely to belong to upland ethnic groups such as the Akha) gradually see the cultivated land surface per household member decreasing. Arrangements to cultivate available lowland are already being discussed.
* The general evolution influences time use allocation: families are much more involved in agricultural activities during the dry season than before. Time previously spent to hunt, relax but also to support disadvantaged families is shortened, which is negatively affecting the traditional system of mutual assistance according to interviews in Phakham, confirming the loss of social solidarity/networking.

**Different topics have been discussed during the field mission, as follows.** They are more elaborated in the GAA project final evaluation report:

**Reaching the target group.**

* ***Supporting women and poor.*** From a total of 1,321 women aged 15 to 45, 774 women were participating in one form of income generation activity. This represents 58% of all women in the 16 villages. Expenditures were used to purchase food for the family and schooling for the children. 
  + The Village Development Funds, with a 1% amount dedicated to social loans clearly supported the poorest families, including female heads of households.
  + In case the fund is a saving fund too (Phakham village), the better off only became members, because poor don’t have savings, which was set as the pre-condition to belong to the group. As a result, poor don’t access credit in Phakham.
  + To target the most vulnerable groups, different levels of subsidies have been applied depending on the family poverty level. Pigs and fruit trees have been distributed for free to the poorest families during the last two years.
* ***General approach and communication methods*** have been adjusted according to the culture. In Hmong society, the village leader demonstrates a major role, not only in the decision-making process, but also regarding the respect of agreements afterwards. Some practical examples:
  + No PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) with immediate agreement is possible in this context. Ideas are evocated with the project team, but need to be further discussed inside the community before decision-making.
  + The village head was a key participant to be invited in family planning information sessions. He spread the information and convinced the villagers that family planning is an option to consider.
* ***Project policy for risk management*** (short term) and sustainable material dissemination. If something is not found in project area (plant, seeds...), the project provides it for free but the family engage to diffuse/share to others. Better off families more easily engage than poor ones, who cannot take risks. More time is needed for them to get confidence that the risk is acceptable before adopting new species and techniques. Sustainable systems are then needed to reach them, encouraging the information spread and material dissemination, like the revolving funds initiated. At this stage, it is risky to speculate how far it will work in the future, but the trial of encouraging a snowball effect it very positive.

**Partnerships and strengthening the local capacities.** CKSA[[20]](#footnote-20) was not officially integrated in the MOU agreement. This local NGO has had a limited input in the project, focusing on research: village environment, food consumption patterns. The reports were not available at the District level (lost during the project document handover?).

## CARE - Phongsaly

### Target group and beneficiaries

The table below summarises the objectives recorded in the grant application and achievements in terms of target group. All populations belong to the Khamu ethnic group.

Table : Target group and beneficiaries, CARE Phongsaly.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Target area** | **Objective** | **In November 2011** |
| Number of villages | 23 | 23 |
| Number of kumbans | 3 | 3 |
| Targeted population | 5 000 | 4 759 |
| Targeted households | 900 | 859 |
| Proportion of poor households in the targeted villages[[21]](#footnote-21) | 27% | 40%[[22]](#footnote-22) |

As a conclusion, the project reached the quantitative targets set regarding the number of beneficiaries. The proportion of poor households is significantly higher than expected (as shown in the table above).

### Global indicators

The indicators have been discussed with CARE team. Available data and comments appear in the table below.

**Project set objectives at overall and specific objectives, and achievements.**

The indicators chosen at the level of global and specific objectives finally did provide less information than expected about the project actual impacts. Indeed, some data were not available (FCS and incidence of diarrhoea). The rice deficit duration is unknown. However, the reduction of the rice deficit duration was measured by both purchasing power and direct rice production, as discussed in the next chapter.

Table : Global indicators, CARE

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Indicators** | **Available data and comments** |
| ***Overall objective - To improve the food and nutrition security of women and the rural poor and to empower poor local communities to participate in decision making at the local level for the achievement of a sustainable food and nutrition strategy.*** | |
| District authorities accept village food and nutrition assessments and plans (FNAP) as official input into the district development plan (DDP). | At the time of the field visit (November 2011), the Village Food and Nutrition Assessments and Plans (FNAP) were prepared in all 6 target villages, but they were not presented to the District authorities yet. |
| ***Specific objective – To increase food and nutritional security of the poorest at household and community levels through facilitating the development of food and nutritional strategies and meaningful engagement in wider decision-making processes at local levels affecting the future food security.*** | |
| **SO1** Rice deficit (measured by both purchasing power and direct rice production) decreased by 10%, measured at household and village level, disaggregated by household wealth cohort, by EoP. *(Global indicator 1.1)* | Rice harvesting is still on-going and yields are not available yet. However, rice production is not an indicator:   1. Objectively reflecting the project impact in 2011, because of the exceptional weather conditions: the rains came early this year and the population did not have the time to burn the forest. As a result, very few paddy lands are cultivated in 2011. The production is expected to be very low in Khua District. 2. Suitable for Khua, because most of the inhabitants are uplanders with very few paddy rice fields.   As a result, the project impact on food security is assessed instead through additional production of other food and additional income generated thanks to the project and related increased capacity to buy food (see R1). |
| **SO2** Food Consumption Score improved by 5% over baseline, by EoP, disaggregated by wealth cohort, gender and age. *(Global indicator 2.1)* | The variety of food (available and consumed) was surveyed after LANN ToT2 in 2010. This exercise was undertaken one time only, which does not allow any analysis about the evolution in the time. |
| **SO3** Incidence of diarrhoea by women and children in past 30 days, reduced 20% over baseline *(Global indicator 2.3) by EoP* | Not available. |
| **SO4** Minimum of 6 villages represent their long term food and nutritional security strategies to district and provincial representatives *(Global Indicator 3.3) before EoP* | At the time of the field visit (November 2011), the Village Food and Nutrition Assessments and Plans (FNAP) were prepared in all 6 target villages, but they were not presented to the District authorities yet. |

### Project impacts on food security (productive activities)

Table : Project impacts on food security (productive activities, CARE).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Detail per activity** | **Villages** | **HH** | **Provided**  **by project** | **Partici-pation** | **Additional rice**  **consumption** | **Additional**  **income** | **Remark** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | **(% HH)** | **(days)** | **(kip/HH/year)** |  |
| Bean seeds/soil improvement | 21 | 271 | **728 kg seeds** | **28** |  |  | °°° |
| Upland rice | 19 | 282 | **2 888 kg seeds** | **29** | **NA** |  |  |
| Paddy fields expansion | 2 | 35 | **10.17 ha** | **4** | **5** |  |  |
| Kitchen garden | 23 | 607 | **seeds** | **62** | **Not applicable** | **Not applicable** | Self-cons. |
| Poultry raising | 16 | 78 | **316 ducks** | **8** | **Too early** | **Too early** |  |
| Cattle bank |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Cow bank | 3 | 64 | **78 cows, 1% mortality** | **7** | **NA** |  | 50% self cons. |
| Goat bank (previous project) | 1 | 30 | **Follow up** | **3** | **72** | **830 000** | + self cons.\* |
| New goat bank | 4 | 40 | **44 goats, 40% mortality** | **4** | **Too early** | **Too early** |  |
| Pig banks | 8 | 90 | **56 pigs** | **9** | **Too early** | **Too early** |  |
| Training on pig food cooking | 12 | 102 |  | **10** | **Too early** | **Too early** |  |
| Fish farming | 8 | 116 | **113 328 fingerlings** | **12** | **108** | **1 250 000** | + self cons.\*\* |
| Galanga plantations | 23 | 500 | **19 350 roots** | **51** | **171** | **2 000 000** |  |
| Cardamom plantations | 23 | 466 | **81 700 kg seedlings** | **47** | **99** | **1 150 000** |  |
| Broom grass plantation | 11 | 213 |  | **22** | **191** | **2 215 000** |  |
| Bee keeping | 4 | 41 | **508 hives** | **4** | **53** | **620 000** | +13% self-cons.  estimated 1 l honey/HH/year |
| **Total beneficiaries (agricultural production activities)** |  |  |  | **NA** | **137** | **1 344 167** |  |
| °°° The proportion of beans self-consumed and sold is unknown. | | | | | | | |
| \* Self consumption has been limited, estimated 400g meat/person/year | | | | | | | |
| \*\* Fish were almost totally self-consumed by the very poor families. Some sold 50kg, the wealthiest up to 100 kg. | | | | | | | |
| Based on 50kg/family, income generated reaches 1.25 million kip/family/year. | | | | | | | |

In CARE target villages, the (sticky) rice production is always low and characterized by uncertainties resulting from the weather. There is a chronicle deficit, compensated by rice purchases. In 2011, the situation is worse than usual, because of the weather. All families met during the field visit declared that they will most probably not have enough rice for 2012.

The project had limited impact on **rice production** (with an additional 26T paddy) because of few lowlands in the target villages. Impacts on upland rice production could not be assessed and would anyway not be representative given the totally unusual weather in Phongsaly area in 2011[[23]](#footnote-23). Significant impacts result from other food production: impossible to quantify[[24]](#footnote-24) for kitchen garden[[25]](#footnote-25) (practiced by 62% HH for self-consumption), various beans production (28% HH, with associated impacts on soil fertility). Fish farming, practiced by 12% HH, had the double advantage to provide proteins for the family (self-consumption is higher in the poor families) and income (1.25 million Kip for 50 kg sold). It is too early to assess the impact of animal raising activities since goats, pigs and ducks have just been provided in December 2011.

**Other cash crops**, like galangal, cardamom, broom grass and honey generated an average 1.3 million kip/HH/year, corresponding to an additional 137 days of rice consumption. This is of course an artificial calculation, since those income are not only used to bridge the gap regarding the rice deficit, but also for buying other food like oil, proteins, fish sauce, cover health care, education costs and other family basic needs. Tea (supported in a previous phase) is another activity that sustainably generates income in the project villages.

All plantation crops have a very high market potential, and demand greatly exceeds the supply. However, the cash crops prices evolve with cyclical patterns but also unexpected ups and downs, apparently linked to the supply/demand evolution. The tea price is currently quite low. The price of galangal and cardamom increased by 70% in 2010 has attracted more families to plant in 2011 and went down at the end of the year. ***Unstable prices are found a typical pattern for cash crops worldwide, whose impacts on family income variations could be reduced by agriculture diversification***.

**Broom grass** is usually collected from the forest. It has been promoted as a plantation crop. Quality is increasingly rewarded, quality criteria including removal of all seed, unbroken and many bristles, retaining flexibility through sun-drying process (vs. fire dried process). The project has provided tools for cultivation as well as technical extension on cultivation. The project also supports the setting up of a Marketing Information System, and started to inform regularly the villagers about broom grass prices in Khua (center of the district).

**White tea** (shade dry) is the most recently identified activity for income generation in the project area. The project has supported villagers to improve their quality and proper packing and introduce tea products to the local markets. A black tea processing test was done to evaluate if the bitterness in these varietals could be reduced. No data available about the production or families involved.

**Sesame** was highlighted as another identified opportunity**[[26]](#footnote-26)**  of high-value-for-weight-commodity thanks to an Agricultural Market Development Study done by Care.

### Other findings from case studies

The project is settled in a highly vulnerable area: Khua District is ranked among the 72 poorest districts in the country with almost 50% of villages classified as ‘poor’ by the National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES). The largely Khamu population of Khua, are one of the most vulnerable[[27]](#footnote-27) ethnic groups, with some studies showing stunting rates of 70%. Within targeted communities, food insecurity and malnutrition result from complex, inter-linked factors relating to access, availability and utilisation of foods. At household levels, foods are gathered, produced and purchased.

**Project strategy.** The project aimed to contribute to the development of successful strategies to address widespread chronic malnutrition, particularly amongst the Khamu, the largest non-Tai ethnic group in the country. It builds on and expands the results of the EC-financed Phongsaly Food Security Project regarding improved access to food, with a substantially increased focus and allocation of resources towards food **utilisation** and enabling women and poorer households to represent their priority food and nutrition strategies and concerns in local decision-making processes. The action targeted to increase food and nutritional security through:

1. Increasing production and ability to purchase various food for a balanced diet, by building on and up-scaling proven pro-poorest household strategies[[28]](#footnote-28), and enabling villages, especially poor households within these, to participate in larger networks for marketing and accessing information and inputs.
2. Strengthening women’s leadership and participation in analysis and planning, and their ability to meet family nutrition needs, building on local practices and traditions to provide increased knowledge and skills in support of improved food utilisation and health-promoting behaviours.
3. Increased engagement of women and communities in village food and nutrition assessment and planning, and in district planning processes by sensitisation of district officials to community-identified needs and opportunities, exposure to national policies and increased technical and methodological capacity.

**CARE villages context in Phongsaly.** CARE works with two types of villages:

* Almost all of them are very poor and remote villages, with easy access to land and plenty of forest. Forest still plays a major role in the family diet (collected vegetables, bamboo shoots and worms, leaves, small animals hunt...) and in income (broom grass, mulberry paper, benzoin).
* Two villages on 23 only have easy access to market, cultivate lowlands and can grow rice twice a year. But lowlands attract people and access to land is decreasing.

CARE has selected villages which really need support and where many challenges should be overcome. Access to market was part of the priorities. Access roads were built during a previous project, using food for work. Villagers are responsible for and actively involved in its maintenance. Now, traders from Phongsaly and Luang Prabang access the villages. The ones coming from Luang Prabang usually offer a higher price. Other infrastructures have been built, like water supply systems and latrines. In all villages, animal health has improved, due to a higher vaccination rate, livestock housing (introduction of pig pens) and to a better food supply, but foot and mouth disease and avian influenza outbreaks[[29]](#footnote-29) remains threats that the project cannot avoid.

**Numerous topics have been discussed:**

1. **About the approach**

***Communication***. CARE team made the effort to learn Khamu language, which facilitates the collaboration much.

***Social cohesion and project intervention***. The example of Nambout, a village with Khamu on one side of the river and Thai on the other one highlights that, if the social cohesion is absent, the project could accept to set up different groups and work with them separately.

***Pro-poor approach.***  Many efforts have been made in order to ensure the inclusion of poor families[[30]](#footnote-30): (a) the project staff visits them first when arriving in a village; (b) the meeting schedule has been adapted, with meeting organised early morning before going to the fields or in the evening after dinner. The staff stays in the village overnight, which changes the relationship and builds up trust; (3) different levels of subsidies have been applied depending on the poverty level.

1. **About the activities**

The idea of “***market-based” home gardens*** disappeared in the logical framework. The production is oriented for self-consumption purposes. CARE decided to started with small scale garden requiring a limited input in labour (thus activity feasible for the poor[[31]](#footnote-31)) and directly benefiting the family nutrition.

***Diffusion of appropriate technologies***. A model of waterwheel locally built and easily replicated (three villagers trained) in the villages is used for irrigation. Corn shellers perform very fast this time-consuming task for an investment of 10 USD (distributed under another funding).

***Marketing network for price information***. Creating the link between farmers and buyers corresponds to an easy and cheap system for selling at the highest price. Buyers from Luang Prabang generally offer better prices than the ones in Khua. Taxes set last year on trade to neighbouring provinces hampered the commercial activities, but check points are now removed.

***Medecine box***. The system of village health volunteer set as such (2% profit on basic drugs listed by the Ministry of Health) provides so limited income that the volunteer is not encouraged to continue. Some VHV have then included on their own initiative more drugs for sale. This option could be shared to enhance the medicine box sustainability in other villages. However, to avoid public health risks, such initiatives should be properly monitored by health staff (type and quality of drugs, recommended use).

***For a sustainable seed private supply***. After the first attempt, private suppliers involved in the COUPON system (subsidised seeds), conclude that the gain was too low for them to continue. The project then proposed them to set by themselves at which price the seeds would be sold.

Banana trees have been promoted by the project and produce ***fruits*** almost all year round while banana trees can alternatively be used to feed pigs. Indeed, it is a good strategy.

1. **About challenges and opportunities**

Farmers notice that ***the prices of cash crops vary up and down***. Some variations follow an annual cycle; some other are quite unexpected, like the dramatic fall of cardamom price (-50%) from the beginning of the season (2011). Tea was planted when the price was high. The same is happening with galangal (23 000 to 27 000 kip/kg offered last year, 16 000 kip/kg this year) and broom grass (4 000 kip/kg in 2010 and 8 000 kip/kg in 2011). A few farmers came themselves with the conclusion that (1) they should put their energy in the cash crop (already planted) offering the best opportunity at each time[[32]](#footnote-32) and that (2) they should avoid specialising too much.

Hybrid seeds begin to appear on the local market that cannot be multiplied (100% of Chinese cabbage seeds). The project explains the specificity of those seeds, but much people appreciate eating Chinese cabbage. It is indeed very important to raise farmers’ attention on this question and highlight the risk to become dependent from the seeds suppliers.

***Challenges to intensify pig farming, M&E effectiveness****.* Noticing that farmers were busy in the field and did not feed the pigs so well during the rainy season, CARE found practical advises for them, like picking some banana tree or cassava roots while coming back from the field.

***Goat bank, an evolving approach highlighting CARE’s follow up and M&E efforts***. The project has been waiting that "candidates" who want to raise goats did organise to grow the appropriate food before distributing the goats. Follow up has shown that the group of 10 people did not allow optimal grazing and that the goats were not well fed. The project then agreed with the goat owners to organise groups of 3 families in order to allow rotating the grass lands. The situation has improved a lot and is now satisfactory.

***Animal health.*** An outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease has been recorded in April 2011. The project has stopped buying cattle. A joint activity has then started between CARE and the District Animal Health Services to follow up the situation evolution. Uncertainties in the cold chain for vaccines hampered the efficiency of the vaccination programme. Although no avian influenza was observed during the last two years, ducks are more resistant to disease than chicken and can be vaccinated orally. The project has decided to switch from chicken to duck promotion.

***Opportunities for quality products and higher prices***. Some families are working on quality, looking at increasing the prices. For example, cardamom picked at the right time and properly dried is sold at higher price. A simple cardamom dryer model was introduced by the project in order to increase quality... and price. Broom grass, if all seeds carefully removed, are also sold at higher prices. Honey quality was also improved. These are examples of potential local added value, generating employment and income.

## AGRISUD – Luang Prabang

### Target group and beneficiaries

The project supported 25 target villages and their almost 11 000 households.

Table : Target villages and beneficiaries, AGRISUD Luang Prabang

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Target villages | 25 | villages |
| Population (25 villages) | 1 796 | HH |
|  | 10 737 | persons |
| Population (10 villages) | 698 | HH |

### Global indicators

According to the logical framework updated in August 2011, thefollowing global indicators have been chosen to assess project impacts. Objectives set and achievements are compared in the table below. The main conclusions can be summarized as follows:

* **Additional food production and associated income** (when the products are sold) have been generated thanks to vegetable gardening and animal raising (pigs, chicken). In some cases, because the activity is just starting, production and income will come soon. Private vegetable seeds supply chains appeared with the growing demand, which indicate a real interest and foreseen.
* **Water supply systems** were set up in 10 villages. They obviously facilitate daily life and -although there is no data based evidence- improve hygiene.
* Regarding **hygiene, food processing and nutrition**, data show that many villagers were trained (650 HH) and this has raised their awareness. However, actual impacts can hardly be assessed without a KAP survey.
* Regarding **villagers and women empowerment**: 25 village committees have been created, and empowered to work on PLUP. All beneficiaries had the possibility to think about their own food security strategy, and choose the activity they preferred, based on their personal constraints. Women had the occasion to express their opinion during the meetings and did so.
* In practice, it means that the project had just the time to propose activities and convince villagers to implement them. **Limited time or in some cases no time at all was available to follow up** what is happening later on, noting and analysing difficulties met for implementation, supporting to farmers to overcome them. Building the capacities of Government staff is expected to facilitate further support in this regard. However, one might wonder if it will be the case (sufficient knowledge? ability to continue regular field visits?).
* As a result, **the sustainability of the activities was hampered by a speedy process and further funding/support highly recommended**.

Table : Global indicators, AGRISUD.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Objectively verifiable indicators of achievement** | **Available data and comments** |
| **Overall objective: Improve food and nutrition security of women and rural poor households** | |
| - 508 families (around 3,000 members) have sustainable food access (100%) at the end of the action for vegetable and fruits  - 80% of supported families have sufficient incomes through production selling to cover 100% of the gap of rice   - The other 20% of families have generate incomes through production selling to cover 50% of the gap of rice.  NB Rice sufficiency has been estimated only 7.7 months per year during the baseline. However, the baseline report comments that “unfortunately, data is often ambiguous as some respondents refer to the sufficiency of *self-produced rice*, while others refer to the number of months with enough food to eat”. This means in practice that the rice shortage duration has been overestimated and would lead to underestimate the project effect, since the indicator in formulated in %.  For this reason, the duration of rice shortage estimated during the baseline has not been used as a reference. Alternatively, estimates on project impacts have been done objectively, based on small scale surveys implemented by AGRISUD estimating the production, sales and prices. Project impact assessment has been calculated together during the field mission.  In any case, the production increase (and reduction of rice shortage duration) does not reach to the initial goals, which is not a surprise given the delay for the project start and actual remaining duration for implementing extension activities. | Food access improved for 566 families (31% total population of target villages):  277 families (15%) of population in 25 target villages grow vegetables:   * Home gardening (246 families-13.7%) provides on average 45g vegetable per person per day during 5 months of gardening (between November and March); * Market oriented vegetable producers (31 families – 1.7%) earn on average 900 000 kip/year, equivalent in value to 63 additional days of rice consumption.   Given the time limitation, no activity was implemented regarding fruit production.  Pig raising generates an average income of 3.4 million kip for each of the 112 families beneficiaries (6%) corresponding to 240 additional days of rice consumption per family.  Chicken raising generates an average income of 236 000 kip for each of the 213 families beneficiaries (12%), corresponding to 16 additional days of rice consumption per family.  Vegetable production has essentially had a direct impact on family consumption/diet (+ income in the case of a few market oriented producers), while animal breeding was mainly oriented for income generation, indirectly contributing to enhance food security, since rice, oil, sugar, fish and other food has been bought thanks to the additional income. |
| **Overall Objective: Empower poor local communities to participate in decision-making at the local level for achievement of a sustainable food and nutrition strategy** | |
| -25 villages have reached a good level in decision making (villages committees) and have built 25 action plans for food safety and nutrition improvement  - At the end of the Action 50% of villages families who are no direct beneficiaries (around 750 families) have start to duplicate the farming systems diversification through small scale vegetable cultivation | A “good level in decision making” is a subjective indicator. 23 actions plans will be ready late December (21 early December).  Too early. |
| **Specific objectives:**   * **SO1: Sustainable improvement of food production through diversification of agricultural and non timber forest products (NTFP) and promotion of environmental friendly and sustainable practices** | |
| - 508 households have more diversified agricultural products (vegetable, fruits, pigs)  - Average level for vegetable and fruits production is 250 kg/family at the end of the Action  - 120 to 130 tons of vegetable and fruits are produced annually by the direct beneficiaries at the end of the Action (70% additional production)  - Average level for pork meat production per family is 210 kg per year  - Around 75 tons of pork meat are produced annually | * 566 households diversified agricultural production (vegetables, pigs, chicken). * The average production of vegetables is of 262 kg/family for ***market oriented vegetable producers (1).*** * The average production is of vegetable is of 45 kg/family for ***vegetable gardening families (2).*** * Respectively 11.2 + 8.1 = 19.3 tons of vegetables are produced annually by the direct beneficiaries (1)+(2). * 34.5 tons of pork (piglets only) are produced annually; 43T if distributed sows are included. |
| - 30% of the direct beneficiaries' families have a regular saving capacity one year after their support by the project (money, livestock...) | * Indicator measurable but requiring sensitive surveys, which usually implies a limited reliability. |
| **SO2: Improvement of villages sanitary conditions through improved water supply, training of villagers and awareness raising on hygiene, food safety, and nutrition basic principles.** | |
| - 600 households are trained regarding hygiene, food safety and nutrition practices (300 first year / 300 second year)  - 10 villages (5 per year) have a sustainable access to water (quality and quantity)  - 80% of the trained households apply properly in their own context the promoted practices regarding hygiene, food safety and nutrition practices | * 650 households were trained. * 10 villages benefit from a new or improved water supply and access water in sufficient quantity and quality * NA |

### Project impacts on food security (productive activities)

The detail of households involved in each project activity is summarised in the table below, with all (or almost all) households benefiting from water supply, LANN, hygiene and women rights training, and a total of a third of households involved in productive (agricultural) activities:

Table : Impact on food security, per activity, AGRISUD Luang Prabang

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Detail per activity** | **Villages** | **HH** | **Participation** | **Additional rice** |
|  |  |  | **(% HH)** | **consumption** |
|  |  |  |  | **(days)** |
| LANN | 10 | 674 | 97 |  |
| Water supply | 10 | 698 | 100 |  |
| Pig raising | 25 | 112 | 6.2 | 240 |
| Chicken raising | 25 | 213 | 11.9 | 16 |
| Vegetable production\* | 25 | 277 | 15.4 |  |
| Market oriented producers | 25 | 31 | 1.7 | 160 |
| Home gardening | 25 | 246 | 13.7 | 38 |
| ***Total beneficiaries (agricultural production activities)*** | ***25*** | ***566*** | ***31.5*** | ***79*** |

### Other findings from case studies

**AGRISUD villages context in Luang Prabang.** Viengkham belongs to the 47 poorest Districts of Laos. 9 villages amongst the 25 AGRISUD target villages are classified amongst the poorest in the District. The area is mountainous with very few lowlands and few opportunities for irrigation. Food insecurity can go up to 6 months. Access to land is decreasing with the population pressure. The land rotation for shifting cultivation is continuously accelerating, with mainly 2-3 years, to 5 years. Most of the forest is secondary forest in all villages. Pressure on forests is increasing with collection of NTFP, quite new for some villages, which perceive the resources as unlimited and don’t realise the need for a sustainable management. Depending on the villages, access to market is more or less easy, by road or by boat. Limited market opportunities are offered in Viengkham. For most of the products, Luang Prabang is too far to justify travelling cost. Traders from the villages or collectors coming to the villages concentrate on NTFP and livestock, which are the main sources of cash for households, given the few opportunities for wage labour[[33]](#footnote-33). They are easy to sell. Vegetable production is practiced for household consumption, but has become a cash crop too, even for small producers within the villages, with the neighbouring villagers or to Viengkham when access to market is easy enough.

Access to the market has proven not to be the only key for development, as shown by the case of Phonkham village which decided to relocate themselves along the road 13 years ago. Now, their lands and the forests are further away, which means that more time is now needed to reach their fields, cultivate and gather forest products[[34]](#footnote-34), while the expected improvements (opportunities to produce something which could be easier marketed thanks to the road proximity) are actually very limited. They feel poorer than before.

Everywhere: the population looks motivated, actively involved in the activities, pro-active and innovative (ex: searching for ideas to commercialize vegetable production from the extension centre, adding a personal touch to the pig pens models). This contributes to the project efficiency.

During the evaluation field mission, various topics have been discussed and highlighted as lessons learned:

1. **Some key factors for food security:**

***Access to land and natural resources versus access to the market*.** Access to market has proven not to be the only or major key for food security as shown by the case of Phonkham village. They still face poverty and food insecurity.

***NTFP sustainable management, an unperceived need***. In many villages, households still rely on NTFP for food and, more recently, for income. However, NTFP resources are often considered as unlimited by villagers although the pressure on forest resources is regularly increasing. The demand is higher than the offer and NTFP are always easily sold. Current practices hamper the sustainable use of NTFP in the project area. As an example, the situation in Phonkham has been found similar to the one described by TABI project[[35]](#footnote-35) :

*“Peuak meuak[[36]](#footnote-36) commercial harvesting started in 1997, since when destructive harvesting practices have started to occur. Villagers cut stems or strip all bark from stems or roots. If some above-ground parts are left intact and plants are not uprooted, regeneration is possible from the roots of the parent clump”.*

... which also underlines possible action to be taken: *“Planting of peuak meuak will ensure regeneration and sustainability”.*

1. **A few lessons learned regarding the project approach** have also been mentioned during the field mission, reflecting the capacity building strengthening:
2. “***The more important in a project is not giving money but build capacities***” (PAFO staff).
3. “***Awareness raising*** ***is a very important first step***” (DAFO).
4. If the village is characterised by a low social cohesion (ex of a relocated village or one cut in two by a river), the project doesn’t force them to work together.
5. In order to support a ***sustainable link between farmers and extension workers***, business cards were designed and printed for the extension workers. Farmers have their telephone number (which they used to lose before, when written on a small paper) and ask questions by phone.
6. Some activities encourage the development of others. For example: vegetable gardening is not possible without water and intensified animal raising facilitates fertilisation.

This highlights the interest of proposing in each village and possibly for each family a ***package of activities supporting each other***.

1. ***PLUP[[37]](#footnote-37) did raise villagers’ awareness and contributed to empower villagers towards concessions proposals***. PLUP objective is not to deliver land certificates, but rather agree on land allocation and use. People understand the objectives of protecting forests, even if they acknowledge it might be difficult to apply it. They have agreed and officially signed to respect the land use with District Authorities and are willing to try. People are now prepared to better analyse offers for land concessions, based on an objective profit analysis. Most of them won’t probably accept to rent their land, not only because of the low profit they are now aware of, but also because land become scare.
2. ***Training location has an impact on attendance and gender***. The first trainings were organised in the technical centre. But it was time consuming for farmers (3 day training + travelling) and few women could attend training sessions. Then, the project decided to change and the trainers went to the village. The centre is kept as a farmers’ demonstration for neighbouring villages. As a result, men and women are more likely to attend training sessions.
3. The project left a ***great autonomy for decision-making*** to population. For example, each group management might differ: for example, pig raisers in groups of 5 decide how the common pig (male) will be managed. The person who takes care of it might ask for money or piglets after the male has been borrowed by another farmer for mating.
4. Finally, ***agro-ecology techniques have been promoted for vegetable production***:

* The *liquid compost[[38]](#footnote-38)* preparation is quick (3 weeks), requires very little space, improving soil quality and increasing yields. Farmers who never fertilized the soil use it now.
* *Bio-repellents* were successfully tested. Based on an assessment of pests, adequate home-made preparations with local ingredients available in the Northern uplands have been selected. The information is currently translated into Lao language.

1. ***DMC***s (Direct Sowing Mulched Based Cropping Systems), with Vigna[[39]](#footnote-39) associated with food crops like rice or corn contributes not only to soil fertilization and protection, but also to human and animal nutrition.

# Conclusions

**About the indicators**. A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system based on 88 indicators is too exhaustive. Some of them were found inappropriate. Indeed, on one hand, there could be no visible impact for most of the health indicators in two years, since improvements regarding malnutrition remain behind the indicators expected precision. One the other hand, some data would also have been difficult to collect. The programme partners have agreed on revised indicators. National surveys (a WB survey and MICSV survey) mentioned as substitutes for providing data as in ToR mission appendix are hardly used for assessing project impacts. First, such large surveys take much time to be implemented and data analysed. In this case, data are not available yet. Secondly, detailed data at household level for the target villages would have probably been very difficult to access, even at data village level[[40]](#footnote-40).

For future projects, some indicators can be easily reformulated to give a clear idea of the project impacts, while keeping a light and effective M&E system as developed in the recommendations.

**About the expected process: comparison of the baseline survey and endline surveys for assessing the project impacts**. In practice, the baseline survey has been a time consuming step, providing unreliable or inaccurate information for various reasons. Therefore, replicating this operation for an endline survey would not have provided information on actual changes. On the contrary, little time would have been available for the qualitative analysis and some interesting points would have been missed. It was agreed during the kick off meeting to keep whenever possible a quantitative analysis based on the available data, and complemented it with a qualitative analysis.

The agreed **methodology** consisted in working through case studies, each village corresponding to a case study. This approach has provided very interesting information.

**Impacts on food security** of agriculture activities give a clear idea of the improvements resulting from the projects, with data on additional production and income, while the lack of data regarding health and nutrition did not allow much analyzing the programme from this perspective. Globally, this programme evaluation aimed at focusing on findings, lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations.

**Situation, strategy and achievements**. The endline survey highlighted how the three projects, implemented by GAA, CARE and AGRISUD in the Northern uplands, respectively in Oudomxay, Phongsaly and Luang Prabang Provinces, all implementing a multisectorial programme, have adopted different paths. The proposed development models and activities were adjusted according to the context, constraints and opportunities:

* **In Oudomxay (Xay and Namor Districts - GAA),** the villages already entered the market economy thanks to access roads. Namor is further away from important market, but still much more into the market economy than the other two projects. In all villages, the availability of lowlands where intensification opportunities (SRI, small irrigation infrastructures) still exist corresponds to a very favourable context to enhance food security, with a possible increased yield by 15 to 40%. Despite an increasing competition for land use results from fields’ expansion, forest cut and from plantations development, additional lands[[41]](#footnote-41) have also been cultivated too. All together, an additional 500T of paddy have been produced yearly, enough to feed all population in the 16 target villages during 81 days. Many different other accompanying activities contributed to improve food security situation. Galanga plantations had a major impact for 8% of HH, with an average income of almost 3 million kip per year, corresponding to 6 months of rice consumption. Corn and animal raising also provided much cash, while peanuts, pineapple and conserve bamboo mainly contributed to improve the family diet in quantity and quality. The general evolution influences time use: families are much more involved in agricultural activities during the dry season than before: time previously spent to hunt, relax but also to support disadvantaged families is shortened, which to a certain extent, is negatively affecting the traditional system of mutual assistance. Village development funds now contain 560 million kip, representing a potential loan of 625 000 kip per household. In 09/2011, 46% of this amount was available in cash. The average annual additional income resulting from project activities is lower (468 000 kip/HH).
* **In Luang Prabang (Viengkham District, AGRISUD),** the food insecurity is high, as a result of a high pressure on arable and forest lands, with a rotation shortened to two-three years[[42]](#footnote-42) only, the access on forests decreasing[[43]](#footnote-43) although population still rely on them for food and most of their income. The local market in Viengkham is limited and Luang Prabang distant (198 km), which implies high travelling cost. NTFP -collected for a few years only and mainly bought for export to China- and livestock are the easiest products sold by the villagers. The project accordingly emphasized vegetable production, mainly for self-consumption, but also as a market oriented gardening[[44]](#footnote-44) (60% of the production sold, providing yearly 2.3 million kip, as of 160 days of rice consumption and 120g self-consumed per person per day), introducing new species and techniques (liquid compost, organic home-made repellents). Animal raising was also supported as a package (revolving fund, VVW training to improve health, fodder production and pens models for intensification). Animal sales provides on average 16 and 240 days of rice consumption per family, respectively for chicken and pig raising. Participatory land use planning raised awareness on land use and on the objective analysis of potential offers for plantations. Others training developed awareness on hygiene, women rights, family planning and nutrition, contributing to lighten the workload and improve health, but remain difficult to quantitatively assess. Water supply systems[[45]](#footnote-45) also have had an impressive effect, freeing up to four hours a day for other purposes. With family planning, there are the project activities which **impacted most** the population life, according to them. One third of the target population (just less than 11 000 heads) is involved in a productive activity while 10 out of 25 villages have now a new or improved water supply. The District does definitely needs additional funds for building more water supply (snow ball effect), and included it in its top priorities, actively looking for funds.
* **In Phongsaly** **(Khua District), CARE** supported two types of villages. (a) Most of them (21 villages on 23) are poor and remote. Access to land is sufficient, with a rotation duration of 7-8 years. The forest still plays a major role in the family diet (collected vegetables, bamboo shoots and worms, leaves and small animals hunt) and in income (broom grass, mulberry paper, benzoin). There, infrastructures have been built during a previous project: water supply and sanitation; an access road enables an easier marketing and access to services. Kitchen gardens have complemented the family diet. Animals raised were partly self-consumed, partly sold. Galangal provided income to one third of target households, with an average 2 million kip/HH/year equivalent to the value of 171 days rice consumption. NTFP logically had a role to play, with cardamom with 1.15 million kip/HH/year, providing an equivalent of 99 days rice consumption for 47% HH and, to a minor extend, broom grass plantations (b) Two villages on 23 only have easy access to market, cultivate lowlands and can grow rice twice a year. But lowlands attract people and availability of arable land is decreasing. Emphasis has accordingly been put on SRI, which provides the higher intensification potential.

Honey production by 4% HH was partly self-consumed, partly sold, providing on average 620 000 kip/HH, corresponding to rice for an additional 53 days consumption. In all cases, market networking supported farmers to sell their products at the best price. Health activities raised awareness on human vaccination, with the set up of medicine box in all villages.

# Recommendations

This report’s recommendations focus on M&E. Other recommendations regarding the programme arrangement and projects will be found in the corresponding final evaluation reports.

**In the case of a programme, the monitoring and evaluation systems should not necessarily be totally similar**. In this case, different contexts and activities do not allow a totally homogeneous M&E system. However, common indicators can and are to be found, highlighting the project impacts on food security, health and nutrition : in this case, the evaluation has been based on estimated food shortage *reduction*, based on estimated additional production and additional income (not to be asked but calculated), complemented by qualitative assessments on general trends and changes. More data on nutrition and hygiene (Knowledge Attitude and Practice –KAP- and FCS surveys) would have brought a complementary perspective and a broader picture, including actual quantified changes in nutrition.

In the future, the **choice for the monitoring and evaluation system and the selection of indicators in particular will be optimized if**:

* In any case, the right balance has to be found between implementation and M&E. In development projects a successful implementation, supported by M&E findings remains a priority, in contrast to research projects, where the analysis is favoured as compared with field results. A well designed monitoring and evaluation system will allow a close follow up and quality learning process, not hampering the implementation itself.
* Small size surveys (on specific activities) are implemented at the end of an activity.
* Thematic surveys -included within the baseline or out of it- will provide another type of valuable information regarding the project impacts (for example on nutrition, health, evolution of knowledge, habits...)[[46]](#footnote-46).
* If the budget and human resources allow it, baseline and endline surveys will complement the data provided by the small size and thematic surveys. The baseline/endline survey approach requires that the baseline survey is implemented at the project start, that the collected data are proven relevant in the light of activities implemented later on (the panel of activities is not always very clear at the project start), that the data are reliable[[47]](#footnote-47) and clearly organised in a way allowing further comparison. In practice, those conditions are hardly filled, and this is why implementing small size surveys is so important too.
* Some indicators could be very interesting, but their collection requires disproportionate time and human resources, or are difficult to be collected in a reliable manner (asking for income for example). The choice of indicators will be guided by assessing if the information is really required, and if there is no other direct or indirect indicators which could provide similar evidences, that would be easier to collect. Relevant indicators are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound.

**Indicator formulation**. As a typical example of possible improvement, the existing indicator “*decrease of rice deficit of 10% in the target villages*” could be transformed into “*the project activities allow the population in target villages to produce or buy the equivalent of 2 additional months of rice consumption*”.

The second indicator objectively measures a similar result, the achievement is even clearer. The big advantage is that it is useable, even if the initial situation is not well known or precisely assessed.

If it is true that a quantitative analysis is important to objectively assess the project impacts, the importance of the **qualitative analysis** should not be under-estimated, it will thus be fully and clearly integrated to the evaluation process.

The **use of case studies at village level** is recommended as a qualitative approach for further evaluations, investigating the general context and general and recent changes, summarizing which activities the project implemented in the village, including testimonies and detailing some activities. Each case study includes highlights, possibly giving an overview on project tools/methods, impacts, difficulties met, choices, good practices, lessons learned, success stories, opportunities, etc.

**To facilitate and orient the evaluation mission**, it is also recommended in the future that, for each of the evaluation criteria mentioned in the final evaluation ToR, some comments are made about expected analysis, adding specific questions. Indeed, an evaluation mission could investigate so many aspects -especially in multisectorial projects covering so many types of activities- that all potential topics cannot be discussed and covered. Orient the mission will lead to a report corresponding more to the client expectations. For example, some of the main questions commenting this draft report, highlighting that they were donor and/or NGOs major expectations could have been included in the mission ToRs:

* Under “efficiency”: Were the target groups (poor and women) appropriatly and sufficiently addressed? Did the programme appropriatly and sufficiently address the needs regarding food quality (protein, fat)?
* Under “effectiveness”: Could LANN approach effectiveness possibly be improved. If so, how?

On top of those main concerns detailed in ToRs, the first briefing of course orients the mission on what to investigate too. Some examples are given below, corresponding to CARE expectations expressed during the briefing:

* Under the efficiency criteria, one could add “*the consultant will investigate why some groups are functioning well while some others don’t appear as active*”.
* In the sustainability chapter: “*Is an exit strategy recommended for the revolving funds (animal banks in particular)?”*

# References

AGRISUD, 2009. Grant application form - Food security for women and rural poor in Viengkham District. 41 pp.

AGRISUD, 2011. Annual report (November 2010- October 2011) - Food security for women and rural poor in Viengkham District. 46 pp.

CARE, 2009. Grant application form. 72 pp.

CARE, 2010. Phongsaly food and nutritional security project, first narrative report (June 2009-December 2010). 17 pp + annexes.

CARE, 2011. Phongsaly food and nutritional security project, interim narrative report (June 2010-December 2010). 7 pp.

EC, 2009. Support for food security for women and rural poor in Lao PDR. Guidelines for applicants. Food security budget line: 210201. Reference: Europaid/127415/L/ACT/LA. 23 pp + annexes

German Agro Action, 2009. Grant application form. Integrated Community Based Rural Development Project in Xay and Namor Districts, Oudomxay Province, Lao PDR, Phase II

German Agro Action, 2010. Narrative report December 2010 for the European Commission. Integrated Community Based Rural Development Project in Xay and Namor Districts, Oudomxay Province, Lao PDR, Phase II – LAO 1027. 68 pp.

GAA, June 2011. Second informal narrative report. 47 pp.

German Agro Action, 2011. Narrative report December 2010 for the Europena Commission (draft version). Integrated Community Based Rural Development Project in Xay and Namor Districts, Oudomxay Province, Lao PDR, Phase II – LAO 1027. 68 pp.

NAFRI, 2009. NTPF handbook.

<http://www.nafri.org.la/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=80%3Alao-ntfp-handbook-now-available&catid=82%3Anew-reports-and-materials&Itemid=75&lang=en>

Piechotta J., 2010. Report of the baseline analysis for the EU food security operation (budget line 210201). 29pp.

Rigg J., 2005. Forests, marketization, livelihoods and the poor in Lao PDR. land degradation & development. Land Degrad. Develop. 17: 123–133 (2006)

TABI project online information at http://tabi.la/

WFP VAM (Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping), 2008. Food Consumption Analysis, Technical Guidance Sheet. 24 pp.

For food consumption score (FCS) standards, the following link was also used: http://110.34.31.156:8080/neksapdocs/Food%20Sec%20Bulletin/Tech%20Notes/FoodConsumptionScore.pdf

# Annexes

The respective field calendars are found in each project final evaluation reports. The lists of persons met are available upon request.

Annex 1 – Programme initial and revised global indicators (09/2009)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Consultant comments: All comments discussed in 09/2009 on indicators as in the table below, and decisions made for indicators changes, compared to the call for proposal are quite relevant.  However, a key element which is not taken into account here is the low reliability of the baseline survey results (not known at that time most probably) and thus the relevance of comparing endline survey data with available and not much reliable baseline data.  Comments below regarding result 3 objectives are not very user-friendly. | |
| **Indicators** | **Comments and agreements 10/2009** |
| ***Result 1 - Local communities are empowered to develop and pursue their own food and nutritional strategies.*** | |
| 1.1 Number of months of rice deficit | All of the 3 indicators are relevant and feasible. In addition, the M&E activities can even be expanded to include wild foods, which is a major food resource in rural areas and often the defining factor when households are trying to cope during periods of food scarcity. |
| 1.2 Annual Household food production |
| 1.3 % of households with no medium or large livestock |
| ***Result 2 - Local food and nutrition strategies are developed and pursued for household and community levels that include diets based on culturally and locally adapted food and nutrition composition tables. Strong emphasis will be put on the health and food and nutritional security of women and young children.*** | |
| 2.1 Food Consumption Score (FCS) | Used as proxy for nutritional status, stunting and malnutrition. Data disaggregated by age and gender useful and relevant in theory, not feasible in practice. Comparison between baseline and endline survey. |
| 2.2 % of population with sustainable access to an improved water source | To be included, straight forward indicator. |
| 2.3 Incidence of diarrhoea by women and children in the past one month | To be included in the form of KAP questions included in the household survey; to be incorporated to the overall survey instruments along with the FCS. |
| 2.4 % of stunted boys and girls aged 6-59 months | Not measured. FCS used as proxy for nutritional status. To be excluded[[48]](#footnote-48). It is more reasonable for the project to measure changes in actual food consumption patterns (2.1). A WB survey and a nation-wide MICS(V?) survey will collect large samples on stunting levels. Surveys can be used to evaluate the targeting decisions of the call. |
| 2.5 % of malnutrition of women of reproductive age (15-49 years) | Not measured. To be excluded (same rationale as 2.4). FCS used as proxy.  To gauge the benefit women gain from the intervention, and to ensure the project target women beneficiaries, the projects will include several **gender-focused nutrition questions** in the household survey, allowing measurement of women’s participation in food consumption diversity gains. The *nutrition training planned for the projects will also involve women-led assessments, providing qualitative and anecdotal evidence of women’s participation in any improved food consumption.* |
| 2.6 % of mothers practicing exclusive breast-feeding for six months after childbirth | A question on breast feeding to be included in the overall survey instrument along with the FSC. |
| ***Result 3 - Local communities empowered and able to engage with government institutions relating to nutrition and FS strategies*** | |
| 3.1 Degree to which Women participate in community development and organisational decisions | Included as an “umbrella indicator”[[49]](#footnote-49).  7 of specific objective,  8 of result 1,  4 of result 3 |
| 3.2 Technical capacity in local government institutions to support action in Food Security and nutrition | Included as an “umbrella indicator”.  8 of specific Objective,  10 of result 10,  8 of result 2,  4 of result 4 |
| 3.3 No of integrated or mainstreamed Food Security & Nutrition issues in local programs/projects and local planning process. | Included as an “umbrella indicator”.  6 of specific objective  2 of result 3 |
| 3.4 % of population aware of the right to food and related rights | To be excluded because it is conceptually included in the other indicators and activities; this indicator is too abstract and is not measurable. In fact the concept of “right to food” is incorporated in the overall project approaches, activities and indicators. |

Annex 2 – Project achievements, per result: GAA

**Project achievements, per result** : GAA project in Oudomxay. The table below summarises set objectives and status after 24 months.

Table : Project achievements per result, GAA.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Progress Monitoring Chart based on updated log-frame approved by the EU on the 09.09.2011** | | |
| **Intervention logic** | **Objectively verifiable indicators of achievement** | **Status after 24 month** |
| **Result 1: Local communities are empowered to develop and pursue their own food and nutritional strategies** | 1. After 24 months at least 20% of all households in 6 villages are enabled to practice SRI or plant a second crop in paddy and can apply their knowledge to gain higher yields and income | * 223 households in the 16 target villages in Namor and Xay district practice SRI (=19,63% of all households in all villages with peaks of 80% in Houay Dam or 63% in Pakham and lows of only 1% in Houay Thong). The low rates are due to few villagers having access to paddy. Choosing 6 selected villages the average rate of adoption is 40.65%. Training in seed quality assessment, bio-fertilizer production and an exchange visit for farmers in Namor have been carried out. |
| 2. After 24 months approximately 250 families in the target villages are trained and enabled in sustainable upland techniques and have received planting material | * A total of 912 families have been supported with planting material in the previous and current project and all were further enabled until the end of the project (In 2010 and 2011 107 families received 29,929kg galangal planting material, 145 families received 799kg of Maize seed, 85 families were given 22,833 pineapple seedlings, 76 families received 492kg of peanut seeds, 6 families from 3 villages received 14kg of cotton seeds, 9 families from 2 villages received 1,230kg of turmeric and ginger rhizomes) |
| 3. At the end of the project all interested target families are trained in nutrition-friendly agriculture and have received planting material putting them in position to apply their skills. | * 344 farmers (some had received fruit trees under the previous project) were further supported with orchard management advice (direct training was provided for 61 interested farmers) and 2,338 fruit trees have been distributed (91,250 in 2010 and 1,088 in 2011). * Vegetable seeds of many varieties were provided to 433 interested families who up to now harvested almost 10.000 kg of fresh vegetables of which some was sold and the major part improved the nutritional status of the family members. |
| 4. After 24 months the interested estimated 500 beneficiaries in all target villages are trained and enabled in livestock and fodder production and have received relevant inputs. | * 22 poor families received 283 chickens (In 2010 8 families received 111 chickens and in 2011 14 families received 172). * 23 families received 80 goats (7 families got 28 goats in 2010 and in 2011 16 families got 52 goats). * 426 villagers were trained in poultry and goat raising. * One follow-up training session per village on pig rearing was provided for a total of 118 participants. * 38 piglets were given to 19 poor farming families. Those plus the 65 pigs provided by the previous project produced 381 offspring of which 176 were sold. * 29 people from 8 villages (20 in 2010 from 7 villages and 9 in 2011 from 4 villages) were trained in frog raising and 7 families were provided with 3,500 frogs * 159 families in 13 villages planted 19 ha with fodder grasses and leguminous plants (e.g. Stylosanthes). 109 families in 8 villages planted 12 ha in 2010 and amended their plots in 2011. A further 50 families planted on new plots in 2011) * 287 farmers were trained in large livestock care. |
| 5. After 24 months at least 300 families are trained and enabled in fish farming | * Until now 9,781 kg of fish have been produced by 525 fish farming families that have been trained and supported by the project with 505,426 fish fingerlings and 33,800 cat fish fingerlings. * The hatchery in Houay Dam has been expanded with a second basin and the farmers have received 20kg of parent fish. The hatchery in Pakham village has received 65kg of parent fish. Training on hatching techniques was provided to 99 people from 6 villages. All hatcheries have so far produced 1,913,463 fingerlings (912,663 fingerlings in 2009, 483,560 fingerlings in 2010 and 517,240 in 2011). |
| 6. More NTFP planted by an estimated 300 families, and rules and regulations for sustainable use of NTFP established in at least 10 villages by the end of the project life. | * 515 families from all 16 villages were given 163,650 kg of cardamom planting material and planted them on 145 hectares (106,650 in 2010 and 57,000 in 2011 of cardamom single suckers of the Guangdong and Paksong variety). * Rules and regulations for NTFP previously introduced in all villages have been enhanced by the marketing trainings for the NTFP groups (see below). |
| 7. At least 35 % of all women (15 to 45 years of age) in the villages take part in the initiation of income-generating activities | * In 2010, women in 744 families (54%) have produced more than 23 tons of conserved bamboo, of which a percentage has been consumed and the remainder sold on the local market. * Besides this many women took part in a large variety of activities and continue on their own today (e.g. herbal tea production, natural dying, cotton and peanut production, weaving and tailoring, mushroom production) |
| 8. Marketing groups established in 5 key villages and market links established | * 6 village marketing groups for bitter bamboo and other NTFP marketing have been set up (1 in 2010 and 5 in 2011) and 393 villagers have been trained in 2011 in addition to the 132 trained in 2010. All groups have so far earned 313 million LAK approximately. |
| 9. Assigned district extension workers trained in extension and communication skills and are enabled to apply their skills | * A formal workshop on participatory output, outcome and impact monitoring and evaluation and participatory extension methods was held for all staff in mid- July 2010 conducted by the expert seconded from the German Development Service (DED). * Due to the amount of activities carried out, no formal training session has taken place but project input is provided on a continuous basis to GoL staff. |
| **Result 2: Local food and nutrition strategies are developed and pursued for household and community levels that include diets based on culturally and locally adapted food and nutrition composition tables. Strong emphasis will be put on the health and food and nutritional security of women and young children** | 1. During the first semester of the project one survey on village food habits and forest foods carried out in 2 strategic villages. | * CKSA has researched the village environment of three villages (Akha, Khamu and Hmong villages) in January 2010. |
| 2. At least 70% of all women (15 to 45 years of age) attend appropriate health and nutrition training courses and can practice water safety, personal and household hygiene, use of latrines and consume various foods of high nutritional value | * 937 people (514 women = 35%) in all 16 villages were directly trained in nutrition basics and hygiene during LANN ToT1. * In 2011 focal points for nutrition have been created and 4-5 village nutrition volunteers trained individually coaching the remaining families. * Training sessions in all schools in the target area have been conducted reaching 1,268 students of all ages, half of them girls. |
| 3. After 24 months at least 75% of all women (15 to 45 years of age) have attended appropriated courses on food processing, breast feeding and child care and are able to apply the newly-gained knowledge | * 753 people (348 women = 24%) were directly trained during LANN ToT 2 in subjects focusing on food hygiene and child nutrition and care. * In addition to the above 286 villagers in Namor have been trained and sensitized on the importance of breast feeding and dietary requirements during pregnancy and after birth. * In 2011 refresher training on pregnancy and child care issues has been provided for 137 people/ 123 women. * In 2011 focal points for nutrition have been created and 4-5 village nutrition volunteers trained individually coaching the remaining families. |
| 4. After 24 months at least 80% of all women (15 to 45 years of age) have been trained on the general classification of food groups, food items and their nutritional value and are enabled to revalue traditional forest foods and reconsider traditional food beliefs | * 840 people (507 women = 34%) in all 16 villages have been directly trained in nutrition basics and the value of forest foods during LANN ToT3. The others were instructed by family members attending or the village volunteers. * In 2011 focal points for nutrition have been created and 4-5 village nutrition volunteers trained individually coaching the remaining families. |
| 5. After 24 months all existing village water supply systems are consolidated, providing at least 20 litre of fresh water to each person per day, and water committees are functioning according to the established ToR | * At the end of the project all villages possess functioning gravity fed water supply systems and committees maintain according to the ToR provided (2 new gravity fed water supply systems were built and in 12 other villages the existing systems were improved by adding needed water taps or enlargement of water tanks resulting in all systems being consolidated. |
| 6. By the end of the project the remaining 100 village households will be provided with flush latrines and are enabled through training to use and effectively maintain them | * 161 new latrines have been built in 12 villages (135 in 2010 and 26 in 2011). Latrine maintenance training was offered to 173 villagers from the 6 villages in Namor enabling them to use and maintain them. Villages in Xay had received training during the previous project. |
| 7. After 24 months 70% of all villagers are sensitized on sanitation issues through a sanitation campaign and can practice village and personal hygiene | * Two hygiene campaigns (one per district) have been carried out for all 16 villages involving 1,149 heads of households (100%) and the impact has been assessed. About 84% of all households were found to be hygienic according to the indicator in each year. |
| 8. Assigned 21 government staff trained in two sessions on cultural specifics, locally adapted foodstuff, diversified diets, nutritional intake and other dietary guidelines enabling them to apply their knowledge. | * 13 staff has been trained during three LANN ToT exercises. |
| **Result 3: Local communities are empowered and can engage with local and relevant national government institutions and local level decision-making processes affecting their food and nutritional security strategies** | 1. Village committee members, village volunteers, male and female, and all assigned government staff are trained in participatory village development planning, monitoring and evaluation, basic hygiene and nutrition and are enabled to consequently apply the life skills acquired | * Two leaders from each village, one male and one female, were trained during the annual participatory planning and monitoring exercises. * On-the-job and formal training in NTFP propagation and care, sedentary upland farming, livestock, nutrition, health and hygiene, maintenance of village infrastructure, etc. was provided and villagers enabled to practice the learned. * 107 village committee members have participated in a capacity building training. |
| 2. Annual participatory village development plans are established, the development process and impact evaluated annually at village level and future plans adjusted according to the findings | * Annual participatory village development plans were drawn up, discussed and implemented. * Progress, processes and impact have been assessed and plans adjusted |
| 3. At least 15 men and 15 women per village attend one general gender sensitivity training within 24 months and are enabled to understand the content and apply it in daily life | * 440 people, 243 of them women, took part in gender workshops in 2010 and refresher courses in 2011 carried out in all 16 villages. * 86 people (75 women) from all 16 villages participated in workshops for the strengthening of women (more detailed gender training). * Refresher training for 18 participants from Namor was given in 2011. |
| 4. At the end of the project at least 15 women are either members of the village development fund committees or the village administration | * All fund committees have at least 2 female members and one woman is the deputy village head(wo)man summing up to 33 women in responsible positions. |
| 5. At least 50% of all illiterate women (15 to 45 years of age) in each of the villages took part in standardized 340 hour basic literacy courses at the end of the project and 80% of the attendees pass the exams successfully | * 113 people (46 of them women) from 5 villages in Namor have taken the exams and passed successfully. 61% percent of all illiterate women had started but only 42% of the attendees have passed the exams (one village however has not yet done the exams) |
| 6. After 24 months all Village Development Funds are consolidated in all interested villages, committees trained and enabled to carry out their task without further assistance, and funds are monitored. | * A last tranche of funds has been released by WHH to further support the self guided village development process and all village development finds are consolidated at the end of the project. |
| **Result 4: Development and application of global monitoring indicators that will measure the achievements and sustainability of the actions as well as process and output monitoring. Indicators will be age, gender, and ethnicity specific.** | 1. Initial gender-sensitive baseline surveys carried out and project baseline revised | * Baseline surveys were carried out at the end of 2009 and the baseline analyzed by the consultant. The final report has been sent to the EC Delegation in Vientiane. |
| 2. Project progress is continuously monitored with beneficiaries, including women, using logical framework and global indicators | * Constant monitoring is carried out for all activities. |
| 3. One external evaluation carried out at the end of the action | * Under authority of the EC Delegation an external evaluation of the project has been carried out. |
| 4. All technical staff is trained in participatory output, outcome and impact M&E and can apply the new skills | * Staff members are continuously trained on the job. Formal training was conducted in July 2010. |

Annex 3 – Project achievements, per result: CARE

Table : Project achievements, par result, CARE

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Indicators** | **Available data and comments** |
| ***Result 1 - Local communities are empowered to develop and pursue their own food and nutritional strategies.*** | |
| **R1.1** Annual household food and income production increased by 10% of household rice deficit, measured by wealth cohort, by end of project over baseline. *(Global Indicator 1.2)* | See S01 for rice production  Additional income and production are assessed in detail whenever possible in table 10 p14. |
| **R1.2** 10 % decrease in the number of households with no productive livestock (small, medium, or large) asset ownership, by EoP, by wealth cohort and gender (*Global indicator 1.3*). | Not available. |
| ***Result 2 - Local food and nutrition strategies are developed and pursued for household and community levels that include diets based on culturally and locally adapted food and nutrition composition tables. Strong emphasis will be put on the health and food and nutritional security of women and young children.*** | |
| **R2.1** At least 50% of women, when asked, in 23 villages can list diverse, nutritious, locally-available food, in appropriate categories. | During mid-term review, villagers were asked about their knowledge on nutrition and food groups. Most of interviewees were able to repeat the 6 food groups and informed the relevant food available in their locations. One woman even emphasizes that people should produce food themselves for food security. *(“If we want to eat vegetable, we should grow vegetable; if we want to eat pig and chicken, we should raise them.”)* Sometimes the trained women tend to overestimate the value of specific issues in healthy nutrition, e.g. the value of boiled water, as pointed out in the following statement of a poorer woman at Viengkham: *“Drinking boiled water is good, even if an illness comes up, the illness won’t be so severe”.*  In another village, however, traditional attitudes and beliefs are very strong and might sometimes be a barrier for behaviour changes towards improved food production. “*Children should eat useful food that is clean for the children’s body, such as meat from forest animals (squirrel and rats), other animals’ meat is too oily and would weaken the body of children.*” |
| **R2.2** 10% increase in the number of mothers reporting exclusive breast feeding for six months after childbirth by wealth cohort (*Global indicator 2.6*), by EoP | Not available. |
| **R2.3** Trained female health volunteers lead at least one activity in each of 15 villages over last three months of project, including dissemination of three key health and/or nutrition messages to women in their villages. *(Global indicator 3.1)* | The follow up training held with health volunteers visit on 7th November during the mission led the provincial coordinator to conclude that about half of the health volunteers have not been active in their respective village. This is most probably related to their profile. Indeed, according to the local culture, the villagers are not likely to listen to young women. The other half of older women raise more attention and perform better. |
| **R2.4** Village Medicine Cabinets (VMCs) in 18 villages are stocked in line with DPHO protocols, with records demonstrating regular utilization by villagers. | This activity has been undertaken in all 23 villages. |
| 2.3 Incidence of diarrhoea by women and children in the past one month | Not available. |
| ***Result 3 - Local communities empowered and able to engage with government institutions relating to nutrition and FS strategies*** | |
| **R3.1** Six villages, 2 per Kumban, elaborate long-term food and nutritional security plans (FNAPs) including arable and forest-land-access requirements (*Global indicator 3.3*) by EoP | Done (see overall objective). |
| **R3.2** PCC and DMIC officially receive village FNAP as input into the local development planning processes (*Global indicator 3.2*) | Not done yet, but will be before the project’s end. |
| **R3.3** Women’s interests are represented by full participation of women in development of six village FNAPs: at least 50% of all village women participate; around 40% of all participants in village process are women (*Global indicator 3.1*). | At village level, the Food and Nutrition Assessment Plan process was attended by 593 men and 688 women (total amount of participants in 6 villages), which corresponds to 86% of women, which is far beyond the minimum set of 40%.  The next step has not been taken place, but will soon. |

Comments about indicators:

* The Food Consumption Score (R2) requires a time consuming household survey, which cannot be undertaken during the mission.
* Incidence of diarrhoea by women and children in the past one month (R2): idem.
* The national wide WB survey is on-going. Surveys’ results are not available yet (same for MICSV). However, it is usually difficult to access information at village level collected by large scale surveys. The project impacts would anyway have been impossible to assess on the basis of higher level results (District level).

NB. The project did not support water supply during the current phase. All the villages but one (3.7% of the population) already have an improved water source. The latest is located on top of a hill, which explains why (technical reasons).

Annex 4 – Project achievements, per result: AGRISUD

Table : Project achievements, par result, AGRISUD

The set objectives per indicator were usually too ambitious as shown in the table below. However, the project managed well to achieve as much as possible given the limited time available.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Expected results** | R1: Food availability and accessibility increased, additional food sources are available and food sources are more diversified (25 villages) | - 80% of the beneficiaries have no rice deficit at the end of the Action according to vegetables, fruits and pork meat selling,  - 70% of beneficiaries households have developed small scale livestock (pig raising and poultry)  - 20% of the beneficiaries have decreased their rive deficit from 6 months to 3 months through vegetables, fruits and pork meat selling  - 250 kg of vegetables and fruits are available at each households level per year,  - 210 kg of pork meat are available at each farm level per year (for farms with pig raising activities)  - 25 monographs are realized at villages level (population, economic activities, focus on agriculture)  - 1 environmental survey is realized (1st semester - statement about natural resources potentiality, threats and practices)  - 25 Villages action plans are built (objectives, activities to be promoted, timetable, means for implementation, responsibilities, assessment process)  - 10 irrigation systems are built or rehabilitated  - 100 families have access to irrigation facilities and area is used for vegetable and fruits cultivation under irrigation systems (500 sqm per family, 10 ha total irrigated area)  - 508 farmers trained and supported (socio-economic status and gender will be taken in account) in order to be able to: master good farming practices, technical itineraries for vegetable, fruits growing and pig raising, and to develop sustainable farming systems at technical and economic level (average 15 families per village),  - 70 Master-farmers are selected (average 2 per village), trained and able to provide training and follow-up to others  - 25 professional organisations are created to facilitate access to production means and access to market  - 1 Market and value chains survey is conducted during the first semester (markets localization, products, actors, prices and origin)  - 1 Market Information System is running well : evolution of marketing situation (products diversity, prices and origin of the products), 1500 households in the targeted villages are involved in the process  - 4 Inter-professional workshops realized (2 per year) to valorize the market information system results, and to promote contact between all stakeholders | The objectives set were too ambitious.   * The baseline survey mentions 7.7 months of self produced rice on average. Beneficiaries produced enough to buy an additional 79 days of rice consumption (2.63 months). * 18% beneficiaries developed small scale livestock. * Pig raisers and market oriented vegetable producers (8% beneficiaries) produced enough to buy an additional 222 days of rice consumption (7.4 months). * HH practicing home gardening (14% HH) produce on average 818 kg vegetable per year. * HH practicing pig raising (6% HH) produce on average 308 kg pig per year. * 25 monographs done. * Bibliography review planned for 12/2011. * 21 completed, 2 more will be finished at the project end. * 3 irrigation systems (no potential for 10). * 27 families – vegetable production only. Fruit production has not been promoted. * 566 farmers have been trained and supported, corresponding on average to 23 families per village. Activities include pig raising (6% HH), chicken raising (12% HH), home gardening (14% HH) and market oriented vegetable production (2% HH). * On-going - 70 master farmers will be selected in December. * Created for the management of common tools, not for access to market. * Done. * Found useless. Villagers prefer to sell to their neighbours or neighbouring villages than in Viengkham. There is few homogeneity for prices at village level. * Not justified yet, too early. |
| **Expected results (next)** | R2: 10 villages are water supplied and population trained in hygiene, food safety and nutrition basic principles | - Food Consumption Score (FSC),   - 580 families - 100 % of population in 10 targeted villages - have sustainable access to an improved water source,   - Incidence of diarrhoea by women and children is reduced of 80% in the targeted villages for water access at the end of the Action  - Decreasing of 80 % of stunted boys and girls aged 6-59 months in direct beneficiaries families at the end of the Action  - Decreasing of 80% of malnutrition of women reproductive (15-49 years) in direct beneficiaries families,   - Decreasing of 50% of mothers practicing exclusive breast-feed for six months after childbirth in direct beneficiaries families  - 10 Feasibility studies realized for water supply systems devices: technical and financial level, local management, maintenance and sustainability - (5 during the 1st year)  - 10 villages have water supply system constructed or improved - (5 during the 1st year)  - 10 training session realized and evaluated; 20 villages technicians (2 per village) are trained about management and maintenance of water supply systems - (5 during the 1st year)  - 10 water committees created and trained on management and  maintenance - (5 during the 1st year)  - 10 maintenance funds are established - (5 during the 1st year)  - 10 contracts between provincial services and villages are established for cooperation in water supply system technical management - (5 during the 1st year)  - 1 survey (accessment) about knowledge, attitudes and practices  (sanitary conditions and nutrition) is realized (1st semester)  - 10 training sessions organized at village level (hygiene, food safety, and nutrition basic principles) - (5 during the 1st year) | * NA * 698 families in 10 villages have sustainable access to an improved water source * NA * NA * Found inappropriate (too early to impact nutrition) and anyway far too ambitious. * Found inappropriate (too early to impact nutrition) and anyway far too ambitious. * NA * 10 done as planned + one study to Viengkham Town. * Done + works to increase water supply capacity in Viengkham completed (11 currently – 13 foreseen before the project completion). * 26 village technicians trained in 13 villages. * 9 water committees created and trained (13 foreseen before the project completion). * 9 maintenance funds established (13 foreseen before the project completion). * 13 contracts signed between provincial services and villages. * Not done * 35 training sessions implemented. |
|  | R3: 25 Villages and Viengkham District institutions are strengthened | - 25 training 3 days workshops for villages committees are conducted on villages development action plans orientated on Food Security and Nutrition  - Committee villages members and participate in community development and organisational decisions,  - 25 action plans are built at villages level orientated on food security and nutrition local planning process,  - 100% of population in the 25 targeted villages aware of the right to food and related rights | * 23 training conducted (10 days each – LANN + other workshops) * OK * 23 action plans are built before the project completion. * 100% population is aware of women’s rights related to girls schooling, household violence, task sharing within the family, women empowerment. |
|  | R4: An effective and well-functionning Monitoring & Evaluation system is applied to measure the achievements and sustainability of the actions | - 1 set of indicators is available for an efficient internal monitoring system  - 1 baseline survey is realized at the beginning of the Action (1st quarter)  - 1 monitoring system is settled at the beginning of the Action (1st quarter);   - 9 staff members are trained for M&E system implementation and training session is evaluated (1st quarter - 5 project team / 4 DAFO staff)  - 1 database is created and regularly updated for M&E system implementation  - 2 annual M&E surveys are realized and results are valorizated   - 2 Reports linked with the annual M&E surveys are diffused for partners information | * Done for all. |
|  | R5: The project is well manage | - 5 project staff members are recruited and operational at the beginning of the Action;   - 1 Project office is open (district headquarters)  - Equipment acquisition is done at the beginning of the Action (1st quarter)  - 1 methodological training workshop is organized about M&E system by external consultant for project staff and DAFO staff (1st quarter)  - 8 Coordination meetings and field assessments are realized (1 per quarter)  - 27 Internal monthly workshops are organized  - 2 Information workshops are organized with local government, other projects and local organisations (information and coordonation with others) (1 per year)  - 3 Steering committees are conducted: reporting about project running and information exchanges (started phase, mid-term, final)  - 3 Project coordination internal committees are realized: project planning, project results, strong and weak points, remediations (started phase, mid-term, final)  - Visibility actions (organized workshops, office visibility, actions in villages visibility...)  - 8 project quarterly reports are written up: assessment of running  activities and results, budget balance  - 500 project flyers are produced and distributed to partners  and authorities | * 5 project staff recruited * Office open in Viengkham * Equipment bought * M&E training organised * 6 coordination meetings (at the end of each season) + 1 to be held before the project end. * 27 workshops organised. * 2 information workshops organised. * 2 steering committees conducted (1 to be held in December 2011) * 3 project coordination internal committees held. * Visibility actions undertaken: participation in CIFOR project completion workshop, Food day in Luang Prabang, Panels and logos on each infrastructure built, tee-shirts for the staff and to be distributed to master farmers. * 4 project quarterly reports written (year 2). * 250 flyers have been distributed. |

Annex 5 - Houaydam village case study

(Oudomxay Province, Xay District – GAA project)

**Village characteristics in a glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name | Houaydam village |
| Province | Oudomxay |
| District | Xay |
| Ethnic group | Khamu |
| Type of economy | Entering the market economy |
| Access to land | More difficult than before but there are still spare lands to be distributed to families just married. |
| Access to forests | Decreased since 2005 when rubber plantations were seen as compulsory alternatives to poppy cultivation. But still limited in the village. |
| Access to market | Numerous collectors for NTFP (demand for export to China higher than production). |
| Other background information | The village decided to relocated 30 years ago, for an increased access to paddy fields. It was far away from the road. The grid reached the village 2 years ago. Hand tractors also appeared at the same time. A limited number of Chinese rubber plantations are found in Houaydam area, but no land grabbing is recorded. Land allocation took place in 2008. |

**Project activities**

GAA is active in this village for 5 years. The project implemented a large panel of activities during the last two years:

Activities to decrease waste of time and energy

* Water supply
* Hygiene awareness, latrine construction and mosquito nets.

Agricultural production and animal husbandry

* Pig raising
* Poultry raising
* Fingerling and fish production
* SRI: trial for new rice varieties,
* Other crops: seeds and techniques for corn, soy beans, organic vegetables including chilli and eggplants, Job’s tears, peanuts.

Local added value

* Ginger tea group combined with plantation of yellow, black and hot ginger.
* People have been trained to fix motorbikes.

Access to credit

* A Village Development Fund was set.

**Testimonies - Evolution in the village**

*“The most important changes for us are new rice techniques (SRI), water supply and sanitation”.*

Work alleviation: *“Before, women fetched water 20 minutes from the village”.*

Hygiene and health: *“Animal now live outside of the houses. Hygiene practices improved, we have much less diarrhea and diseases.”*

*“Every year, 4 or 5 kids died. Now, all of them stay alive.”*

VDF *“I just borrowed in the VDF to buy rice”(female headed household).*

*“Poor families can borrow to buy rice and to send their kids to school.”*

Nutrition: *“Before, we used alot of seasoning powder”.*

*“Sweet potato leaves, papaya leaves were not consumed before. Now, we know how to prepare them”.*

Food security: *“Before, we went to the forest for hunting and collecting food every day. Now, we have ducks and pigs in the village for eating meat”.*

*“SRI techniques require less labour and produce more. Before, I used 13 bags of seeds for 1 ha. Now, 3 are enough.”*

*“Before, we had not always enough to eat, now we can sell. With this money, I buy spoons and bowls, salt, cloths and send kids to school.”*

Income generation activities*: “Before, we had buffaloes to earn income. Now, there is few space left for them. Now, I earn seasonal income from rice, cardamom, galangal, fish and peanuts”.*

*“We could hardly sell the produced ginger. Now, we transform and sell it to Densawan company in Oudomxay. We want to plant more next year and will go and discuss with them to renew the contract”. We earn 17 000 kip/day. With other jobs one can earn 30 000 kip but they are few and the work is more intensive”.*

Empowerment: *“Before, women had to wait to their husbands for selling products to the middle men. Now, we can sell them on our own.”*

*“Before, women had no chance to attend high school or informal education. I (a women) have attended literacy courses. I can now calculate when I sell something”.*

*“The District authorities came to ask collecting the fees for the water supply. We did not want to and finally agreed to keep the responsibility.”*

**Highlights**

The village benefits from numerous and diversified activities.

Hygiene, health and water supply, a major factor for food security. The families gained a lot of time thanks to water supply and family planning. Health improved as a result of hygiene awareness and latrine construction. All inhabitants have better health, and more energy for the field works, especially the women who don’t have a child every year.

Soil protection. Here, slopes are can reach 25-30%. Terracing is too labour intensive, people don’t have time to invest in this. Instead, we promote crops along the contour lines.

Natural resource management. Cardamom is sold 100 000 kip/kg, bringing valuable income to the families. It is planted in the forest. Each family is allocated with a plot to take care of. The forest committee set rules and regulations, checking that they are respected, for a sustainable use of natural resources.

Synergies between activities are favourable and to be encouraged:

Fodder production enriches the soil and benefit to animal husbandry.

Ginger tea production allows selling the ginger which was difficult to market.

Organic production: Because of rubber plantations, the main challenge for organic production like ginger for ginger tea, will remain preserving the ginger fields chemicals free.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Ginger plantation small | Harvest SRI small |
| Picture : Ginger plantation (yellow, black and hot ginger) | Picture : Harvest of paddy field using SRI techniques |

Annex 6: Nammong village case study

(Oudomxay Province, Namor District – GAA project)

**Village characteristics in a glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name | Nammong village |
| Province | Oudomxay |
| District | Namor |
| Ethnic group | Hmong |
| Type of economy | Entering market economy |
| Access to land | Agricultural land is limited in the new village. They should go to the old fields to cultivate (6 km). People stay there overnight village during the rainy season. |
| Access to forests | Some rubber plantations were established. They mainly belong to the families. |
| Access to market | Marketing is not too difficult: a small is located in the next village nearby. Sugar is produced for a company which comes to collect the production. |
| Other background information | The project supports this village since 2007.  Nammong is a resettled village: 28 families moved in 2004 from the uplands 6 km away. Now, 77 families (448 inhabitants) in the village. Most of the fields and large livestock are still in the “old village”. Before, they went by foot. Last year, a small road was built (still under construction). To go there, they can now use the hand tractors, present in the village for 5 years. They require less labour, don’t get sick and can be amortized within 5 years farmers say. Nowadays, one family only still plough the field with buffaloes only.  18 families are now connected to electricity. |

**Testimonies - Evolution in the village**

**

Picture : “2 years ago, the houses were smaller and all roofs in natural material only”

Health-hygiene: “ *We used to drink the water from the well. Now, we always boil the water from water supply before drinking it”.*

Family planning: *“I have ten kids. If I could have chosen, I would have had 5. We lack time for the fields.”*

*“I have two kids, not in school yet. I had an injection”.*

Water supply: *“Water supply is the most important change for women. Before, it took 1 hour a day to fetch water”.*

*“We have seen that, when the project is finished, we might not receive the support of the Government to maintain the water supply. So, we have established our own fund and were trained for maintenance.”*

Food security: *“Before, some families had no rice and no land.” NB Land allocation provided land according to the family labour.*

*“Thanks to irrigation and SRI techniques, the yield in my paddy field increased from 3 to 5 T/ha”.*

Sewing group: *“We produce dresses, shirts and trousers. We are afraid to borrow money to buy fabrics and not being able to repay. We produce upon request only. Embroideries are easy to sell in Oudomxay (25 000 kip each). Each women produces 10 per month.”*

Village development fund: *“Before, we borrowed from each other. Now, the village development fund is used for buying livestock, pig raising, health, for building a new house...”*

*“I borrowed money to buy corn seeds and for health”.*

*“Women mainly borrow money for going to the hospital for delivery”.*

*“ I borrowed to buy cotton for weaving”.*

Women empowerment: *“Before, the women took care of the fields, of the kids and of the house (cleaning, cooking, fetching water and collecting wood). Men were not interested in agricultural work. They decided what to plant and where. The women did it. The village head men went for a study tour and convinced the inhabitants to share the tasks within the family and family planning. Now, the women who have young babies can stay at home. Family planning is widespread.”*

**Project activities**

Activities to decrease waste of time and energy

* Water supply
* Hygiene awareness, latrine construction.

Agricultural production and animal husbandry

* Pig raising
* SRI and irrigation
* Equipment for establishing new paddy fields
* NTFP plantation (galangal, cardamom)
* Fruit trees

Income generation activity (off-farm)

* Women sewing group

Access to credit

* A Village Development Fund was set.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Latrine & satellite antenna small | Embroidery small |
| Picture : Latrine | Picture : Embroidery |

**Highlights**

***Targeting the poorest***. More favourable subvention rates have been applied for the poorest: pigs have been distributed for free during the last 2 years.

The ***village development fund*** replaced in this case the informal credit system, offering a low rate of interest. No formal credit is however easily accessible.

***Production and nutrition***. Planting 10 fruit trees next to the house has more effect on the family nutrition than 20 fruit trees far away.

***Intensification techniques***. Yield increase in the 12 ha irrigated generates an additional production of 24T of paddy. This provides enough to feed the 448 inhabitants during 56 days[[50]](#footnote-50). Food security increased by 2 almost months as a result of intensification only.

***New paddy lands***. 5 more ha of rain fed rice are now cultivated, providing 2 T/ha. This feeds the village for 23 days.

***All together, the project intervention allowed an increase of rice production by 34T, which corresponds to an additional 2.5 month of rice consumption for the whole village population. Adoption rate of SRI in Nammong is currently below 25%. Since it does not involve additional investment, we can guess that the other families will follow in the coming years, but it would be ensured by a longer project duration.***

Annex 7: Phakham village case study

(Oudomxay Province, Namor District – GAA project)

**Village characteristics in a glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name | Phakham village |
| Province | Oudomxay |
| District | Namor |
| Ethnic group | Leu |
| Type of economy | Entering market economy |
| Access to land | Becomes more limited but still fine. Akha families from next villages ask to cultivate vacant plots in Phakham during the dry season. |
| Access to forests | Increases: Akha families who practiced shifting cultivation cannot anymore. Since the forest regenerated, stream water is available for irrigation. Few families have planted rubber 3 years ago. They now stopped because they were told the temperature might be too cold here. |
| Access to market | Many middle men come from the District to collect rice, garlic, onion, chicken, duck, fish and NTFP. The quantities sold are however limited. |
| Other background information | Villagers decided to relocate 30 years ago.  Agricultural production is limited: rice, vegetables.  A tobacco production is bought by a Chinese company providing seeds and pesticides.  Another Chinese company made an agreement to plant sugar came. They never came back to buy the product. Families self-consumed it. There are no off-farm income opportunities.  3 poorest families in the village include a disable and 2 newcomers who have limited land.  There is still potential for new paddy field. VDF will be used therefore. |

**Testimonies - General evolution in the village.**

Family strategy. *“Before, we had no idea of producing more than for self-consumption and there was no road access to easily sell anyway. We had more time, we helped the poor families with free labour. Now, we produce more for self consumption and sell for getting income. Our current objective is to get more production, more income. Each family would like to have money. We don’t help the poor families so much nowadays.”*

Food security *“30 years ago, we followed the river together with 40 families. There was no access road at that time. Before the project 12 families were not self-sufficient in rice. Now, thanks to SRI, we went from 4 T/ha up to 5 or 6 T/ha. All of us have enough rice. About 70% of the families can sell extra production.”*

*“We can irrigate with the stream water: since the forest is protected, there is more water in the stream.”*

*“Cultivating onions and garlic on rice fields during the dry season provides a second income per year. Now the demand is increasing, we can produce more.”*

*“We did cultivate some vegetables before, for self consumption only. Sometimes we even had not enough. Now we do and can sell extra”.*

*“Stylosanthes does not require much work, just plant. It expands quickly; we weed once in 2-3 months. Mixed with rice husks, we give it to feed the pigs. They are bigger, healthier and provide more piglets.”*

Animal breeding. *“We have less buffaloes than before (now 2 or 3 per family). We have few space left for them. They could damage dry season cultures and we have few time to look after them”.*

Nutrition - Use of natural resources. *“Before, we went every day to the forest, collecting vegetables, hunting. Today, we only collect some products.”*

*“Before, we only had wild mango from the forest as fruits.”*

Hygiene-Health: *“I had 13 kids, 3 died. Currently, no kid die.”*

*“This child is 14 months old. She walks and begin to talk. Before, kids began walking and talking later on, up to 3 years old.”*

Women empowerment. *“2 or 3 times a year, we attend a training about gender. We discuss how the family work is shared. It reduces conflicts in the houses”.*

*“Before, the women had to take care of collecting firewood, water, cooking, of the house and kids. Men came back home after a day in the field and just wanted to eat. Meal was not ready because the women had too much work. We had fights almost every day. Now the men also take care of the kids, help in the house. Once a year, after the rice harvest, men and women go together to cut firewood and carry it back to the house using a hand tractor.”*

Poor *“The poor families were able to participate in all activities (NTFP plantation, SRI, fish fingerlings...). They received fruit trees and pigs for free.”*

The villagers did not think of any example of empowerment.

**Project activities**

Activities to decrease waste of time and energy

* Water supply
* Hygiene awareness, latrine construction.

Agricultural production and animal husbandry

* Pig raising
* Beekeeping techniques and marketing group
* Fingerling production group and fish raising
* SRI, rice seeds and irrigation
* Equipment for establishing new paddy fields
* Vegetable production
* Onion and garlic in paddy fields during the dry season.
* NTFP plantation (galangal, cardamom)

Income generation activity (off-farm)

* Women sewing group

Access to credit

* A Village Development Fund was set (different than elsewhere: saving and credit group).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Bee keeping small | Onion and garlic small |
| Picture : Beekeeping | Picture : Rice fields used for shallots and garlic production during the dry season |

**Highlights**

***The research of income has generates additional work and, as a result, hindered the traditional systems of mutual support***. The Government and Red Cross for example offer special support like free medical care to the poorest. However, those supports are limited. There is a real risk for the poor and poorest to remain behind the development process.

***Project policy for risk management and material diffusion***. If something is not found in project area (plant, seeds...), they project provides it for free but the family engage to diffuse to others. Example of grafted fruit trees (pomelo, longane, litchee, plum and mango). Material was given; 6 people were trained to grafting.

***Saving and credit group***. Only members can borrow. Being member implies that the family has savings. This system self excludes the poor families, which means that only the better off access this credit system.

***Side effects***: Before neighbouring Akha villages did sell chilli. Now the villagers produce enough, selling chillies and vegetables to the Akha.

***Land allocation*** in 2006-2007 based on labour availability per family. But Akha families have many kids, so need more land already. If they see a land not cultivated during the dry season in the Leu village of Phakham, Akha come and negociate its use.

***Marketing***. Numerous examples of marketing agreements with Chinese companies that have not been respected were mentioned. They ask to produce something and never came back or did not buy because the price went down and transportation costs were then too high. Sometimes, the prices set were not respected too. This suggests the high risk of concluding such agreements without having other marketing opportunities.

Annex 8: Nambout village case study

(Phongsaly Province, Khua District – CARE project)

**Village characteristics in a glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name | Nambout village |
| Province | Phongsaly |
| District | Khua |
| Ethnic group | Khamu on one side of the river and Thai on the other one. |
| Type of economy | Entering market economy |
| Access to land | Decreasing. Lowlands attracts more people. |
| Access to forests | Decreasing |
| Access to market | Easy: many collectors from Luang Prabang |
| Other background information | Village already involved in a previous CARE project.  One of the two villages which have lowland rice production.  Bamboo and rattan are collected in the forest. |

**Testimonies - General evolution in the village.**

Food and nutritional strategies. *“Because of our land resources, we can grow rice twice a year on low lands. We never buy rice. We only buy what we cannot produce. Produced vegetables and pigs are eaten and sold”.*

Marketing information. *“Collectors buy pigs, chicken, ducks, chilli,... They come from Khua by motorbikes. But traders from Luang Prabang come by truck and offer better prices. We have their telephone numbers and call to check the prices. ”*

Pig bank group. *“The bank chooses poor families as first beneficiaries. Before, cousins received the pigs.*  *We have a new leader in the group (a women) and the rules changed. Our group meets monthly and it is the occasion to change the leader if things are not properly done.”*

*“Pig raising is a new activity for our family. Producing enough food is a challenge. Feeding pigs requires labour and we are busy, especially during the rainy season. We help each other in the family: the husband collects and carries cassava and banana trees while coming back from the fields, the women cooks”.*

*“If we could choose, we would prefer to split the group in two” (according to the two parts of the village separate by the river, Thai and Khamu).*

Targeting the poor and women. *“The pig bank experience was very successful for me (a poor women): I can buy food and drugs.”*

**Project activities** are very similar in all villages supported by CARE:

Activities to decrease waste energy

* Women group: hygiene awareness, nutrition / LANN, kitchen garden, waste collection, birth control, women empowerment.
* Medecine box
* Saving energy cooking stoves

Agricultural production, animal husbandry and marketing support

* Intensification methods: animal health – vaccination, fodder production, fencing...
* Depending on the village: goat bank, pig bank, cattle bank or chicken bank
* Seeds banks
* Fingerlings and fish production
* NTFP plantation (galangal, cardamom)

**Highlights**

***Groups’ set up and management***. The pig group is much more successful with the new leader. The choice of the group leader is a crucial factor regarding the group management and success. His/her management and communication skills will influence the group energy and orientations/strategies (like targeting poor households in this case). It is worth for the project team to pay much attention to it as a first step. Other rules will enhance the ***group sustainability***, like formalised occasions to elect the group leader (each year or so). Creating a culture of communication and transparency is also of major importance.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| nourriture cochon small | Rizières Phongsaly small |
| *Picture 8: Feeding a pig with rice husks* | *Picture 9: Lowlands allow a second rice season* |

***Mixing ethnic group in the same village might decrease the social cohesion: let’s adjust the project strategy.*** In this case, the two ethnic groups don’t like to work together; each has its own leader (one is village head men on one river bank and the other is deputy village head men on the other bank). The project could adjust its way of working accordingly. In this case, it is clear that the villagers would prefer having two pig banks instead of one.

Although this was done outside of the EU-funded food security project, a very simple and cheap tool (about 10 USD) was introduced in Nambout. This is another example of appropriate technology contributing to saving much time at household level, contributing to food security:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Picture 073 | *Picture 10: Corn sheller* |

Annex 9: Na village case study

(Phongsaly Province, Khua District – CARE project)

**Village characteristics in a glance**

*The limited time spent in this village does not allow looking at it as a “full case study”. Therefore, during the discussions, emphasis has been put on waterwheel and pig raising. Some lessons learned are highlighted for intensive rice cropping with 2 harvests per year.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name | Na village |
| Province | Phongsaly |
| District | Khua |
| Ethnic group | Khamu |
| Type of economy | Entering market economy |
| Access to market | Improved alot since the road was built. Collectors from Khua and Luang Prabang (the village is near the border of this province). |
| Other background information | Na is one of the two villages in the project target area accessing low land for rice cultivation.  Trade to Luang Prabang slowed down because of taxes set last year for products sold in neighbouring province. Collectors from Luang Prabang stopped coming for a few months. The check points are now removed. Collectors were updated and come back. |

**Testimonies - General evolution in the village.**

Waterwheel and food security. *“I have met many difficulties for the last year. My 8 pigs have all died, my 3 buffaloes too. The rainy season came too early and we had no time to prepare the rice fields (for rain fed rice) and we won’t have enough rice for the coming year. But I just bought a 1 ha land next to the river. If I could install a waterwheel and plant rice during the dry season, I trust I could have enough to eat.” (a women)*

Waterwheel technology diffusion. *“We are three people in the village knowing how to build the waterwheel. We are going to make one more in December after the harvest and are ready to support those who would be interested”.*

Women empowerment*. “Women who never had any opinion before now speak out during the meeting. We like listening to them.” (a men)*

**Project activities**

Like elsewhere + water wheel. 8 different types of tools were also distributed here to expand rice fields.

**Highlights**

***Waterwheel, an appropriate technology for irrigation***. Initially tested in CARE project in Xayabuly Province, the water wheel technology has been applied here with locally available material only, by the villagers and with the project technical support.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Water wheel small | Cassava for pigs small |
| *Picture 11: Waterwheel* | *Picture 12:Rice irrigated with the waterwheel; cassava production on the slopes* |

***The second rice season on lowlands brought pests and disease.*** If future target villages are in this situation, it might be interesting for the staff to be trained in IPM (Integrated Pest Management).

***Pig farming intensification and soil protection***. Intensification of pig raising requires an increase of the food production. Cassava has been planted therefore, sometimes in the hurry. Here again, time constraints have put high pressure and have had some negative impact. A two years project is very short for this type of achievement, but a particular attention should be paid to conciliate field expansion and soil protection, especially on steep slopes, in order to develop a sustainable model of intensification. A few technical options are feasible, like intercropping following contour lines (cassava with fodder or other crops). In any case, labour intensive methods like terracing are not appropriate in the local context.

Annex 10: Senlath village case study

(Phongsaly Province, Khua District – CARE project)

**Village characteristics in a glance**

*The limited time spent in this village does not allow looking at it as a “full case study”. Therefore, during the discussions, emphasis has been put on pig raising and medicine box. Some lessons learned are highlighted for the vegetable production.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name | Senlath village |
| Province | Phongsaly |
| District | Khua |
| Ethnic group | Khamu |
| Type of economy | Self-sufficiency oriented |

**Testimonies - General evolution in the village.**

Households strategy. *“We want to have cash in order to buy fruits that we don’t have here, cloths, school fees and vaccines.”*

Medicine box and vaccination. “*Before, people used herbs.* *I was trained three times on the use drugs included in the medecine box. I earn 2% of the drug sales, which means 30 000 to 40 000 kip for the whole medicine box. This is not enough because I have to buy gasoline to go to Khua buy more drugs. I thought many times to stop; but I have to continue for the villagers. On top of the basic set of drugs designated by the Ministry of Health, I also include more drugs especially for adults and make profit with those (prices are not ruled on those products). Public health services monitor the medicine box once a year”*

*“Now everyone knows what vaccination is, for young kids under 5 and for adults. ”*

Pig raising. *“We faced important difficulties with pigs raising. Many pigs died. We fed them with rice husks, taro, pumpkin, squash, boiled banana trees.”*

LANN *“We had 3 training sessions. We learned the 6 groups of aliments and new recipes, including how to make tofu, but we were not successful producing the seeds. Still some of the 6 groups are not enough, like fat. We produce more peanuts and sunflowers.”*

Women empowerment . *“We listen to our husbands and they listen to us. Both husbands and wife may sell some products for the family. It is now new to us.”*

**Project activities**

As elsewhere + beekeeping + broom grass plantation.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Broom grass small* | **Bee keeping small** |
| *Picture 13: Broom grass plantation at the village entrance* | *Picture 14: Beekeeping* |

**Highlights**

***Beekeeping****.*

* Most of the hives were empty during the field visit. The person involved in this activity explained that the bees were old and died. Not a major threat for sustainability probably, since bees could be found in the forest quite easily. But the technical skills might need to be refreshed.
* The honey quality improved thanks to technical advises and marketing was very successful: everything is sold in November. The project is supporting the packaging. Plastic bottles give an unsuitable taste to honey. On-going CARE support aims at finding glass jars.

The dead pigs in this village highlight ***different difficulties linked to the intensification of pig raising****:*

* Instead of looking around for their own food, pigs live now in cages and now might not have received enough food, especially during the rainy season when people are very busy in the field. A hungry and weak pig is more susceptible to becoming ill.
* One type of vaccine only is currently available for pigs: the white fever. Is the disease a new disease?
* ***Government staff usual behaviour is not very pro-active***. They rather come to count the dead pigs than to understand why, how to cure them or prevent the disease expansion. ***Integrating Government staff in the project team requires a switch in their mind-set. A close monitoring of Government staff is needed.*** For that reason, CARE has regularly challenged them and decided to compose mixed teams(1 CARE staff + 1 Gov staff)*.*
* Observing the symptoms, very similar to a human cold, the medicine box responsible have tried injecting human drugs, saving the life of some pigs. On one hand, this is a great achievement; on the other hand, it might be unsuitable to use human drugs for animal health. But what else could he do in this context?

***Follow up and building local capacities***. The project pays much attention to follow up activities and set a system in this objective, involving villagers whose capacities are built at the same time. In this village, some families applied the techniques for pigs feeding before stopping. It is always good to investigate why and possibly adjust the techniques proposed to constraints faced.

***Intensifying vegetable production*.** Despite demonstrations in the past, the acceptability of mixing manure and soil for vegetable production is low for the Khamu who do not want to eat the vegetables. The visit in this village shows that pig manure is however used for peanuts production. Two options are then possible to promote organic fertilizers:

* Promote composting, possibly produced without manure;
* Alternate fertilized peanuts and vegetable production.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Planting peanuts small** | *Picture 046* |
| *Picture 15: Planting peanuts after adding some pig manure in each hole* | *Picture 16: Custard apple tree* |

Annex 11: Kunglith village case study

(Phongsaly Province, Khua District – CARE project)

**Village characteristics in a glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name | Kunglith village |
| Province | Phongsaly |
| District | Khua |
| Ethnic group | Khamu |

*As agreed with CARE team, the limited time spent in this village does not allow looking at it as a “full case study”. Therefore, during the discussions, emphasis has been put on resettlement and fruit trees.*

**Testimonies**

Resettlement.*“The village is more than 30 years old. We are now 28 families and 144 persons in Kunglith. New populations are not allowed to come settling here. As the rule was set that villages with less than 200 inhabitants should move to bigger clusters, we are asked for two years by the authorities to move. With the project’s support, we have built latrines, planted fruit trees, including tamarind and mango trees, we have water supply. We can move the animals, but not the houses and all that. We will lose much if we leave here.*

*We know that the village where we are supposed to move to will not be able to provide enough water for all. Because families from other villages were already resettled there, increasing the population, water begins to be scarce. Access to land will also be more difficult, and we’ll have to come back in this area to cultivate.*

*What we have discussed with the authorities is that we are ready to move if the water shortage is solved in the other village. But if they say we anyway have to move, we will.”*

Fruit trees. *“We grow fruit trees: Pomelo, orange, goyava are available now in November. After, jackfruits and tamarind begin. We also have passion fruits and banana available all year round.* *The fruit availability is limited from December-January to March.*”

**Highlights**

***Resettlement remains a real threat which might affect the sustainability of the project support***. Although CARE officially agreed with the local authorities in MOU to support villages which would not be resettled only, a few villages are now asked to move by the authorities. The District reports that they are planning to merge 7 villages in the 3 kumban, including 4 project target villages: Ommok, Kunglith, Omthap and Pakguan.

While deciding that villages under 200 inhabitants would merge for a better access to services including education, water and possibly electricity, the goal set was clear: improve the quality of life of rural villagers. It seems in this case that the process has been kept while the objective was forgotten. In this case, the situation of the villagers would be worse if moving.

***Possibility to extend fruit availability during the year with banana, passion fruit or grafted fruits***. Banana trees have been promoted by the project and produce fruits almost all year round and banana trees can be used to feed pigs. Indeed, it is a good policy.

Passion fruit appear to be another fruit also productive all year round, which does not take place and could be grown in the villages.

Early or late varieties of grafted fruits could also be investigated to further contribute extending the period to access fruits locally grown by the villagers.

Annex 12: Yangteuy village case study

(Phongsaly Province, Khua District – CARE project)

**Village characteristics in a glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name | Yangteuy village |
| Province | Phongsaly |
| District | Khua |
| Ethnic group | Khamu |
| Type of economy | Self-sufficiency oriented |
| Access to land | Easy access, plenty of land. |
| Access to forests | Very easy |
| Access to market | Remote village but access road now arrives |
| Other background information | Yangteuy village exists for a long time. It was bombed during the war. The villagers make knives with the metal.  Rotation for shifting cultivation is of 8 years.  After attending primary education in the village, about half of the kids in age to attend secondary school leave for temples Vientiane, which is cheaper than paying for dormitory in the head of District. They usually don’t come back living in the village. Agroforex, a French company buying benzoin supported the village to build a secondary school, but the Province has no budget to pay teachers. The school is empty. This means the ratio of dependants is much likely to increase and the labour availability to decrease.  In this area, people know how to sustainably harvest benzoin.  People try to save money and buy a second hand Chinese motorbike for about 2 million kip, in order to be able to go to Khua, selling, buying and accessing medical care.  There is no rice for sale in the village. When a family is too short in rice, they usually borrow to another one until the next season. |

**Testimonies - General evolution in the village**

Food security and households strategies. *“If we know the season is going to be hard, we plan and manage in advance, eating two meals per day, so that we are not hungry. We give rice to some families who don’t have enough and they come to help us, cleaning the galangal and cardamom fields”.*

*“Finding vegetables is easy. It is more difficult to eat enough meat and oil. Soy bean production did not succeed, but we grow peanuts and increase the production of long beans, yellow beans and sesame seeds, now sold 1 USD/kg. We also collect mak ku in the forest, big tree producing tasty and oily seeds.”*

Role of the forest in nutrition and income. *“The access to the forest is easy. Even if no tree can be cut, if you are not lazy, you can collect food to eat or sale (like bamboo worms, bamboo shoots and other vegetables) and broom grass, mulberry paper for sale, which are easy to find in the forest.*

*“If you cut broom grass this year, it grows again for next year.”*

Kitchen garden. *“We want to continue because we eat the vegetables every day because our food is tastier.* *Before we just grew lemon grass and chilly. When vegetable in the kitchen garden are finished (mainly during the rainy season), we go collect vegetables in the forest.”*

*“I did much appreciate discovering new recipes to cook.”*

Fingerling and fish production enriching the family diet. *“The fishes don’t grow quickly here, because of the cold weather.* *People in Nambout succeed better than us. They can sell part of the production. Here, we eat the fishes, but don’t have enough to sell them”.*

Cattle. *“Fox sometimes come from the forest and kill some animals even with the fence we have installed. Animal health is much better. Everybody is now afraid to eat the meat because of the foot and mouth disease.”*

Feeding animals. *“We produce fodder for cows (the project gave the seeds). We grow cassava to feed pigs. We were told how to prepare them, peel, cut and cook cassava. Pigs died, probably because some people did not peel the cassava. The work is shared between men and women: the men collect the plants, women cook them.”*

Cardamom. *“We have received 200 seedlings. We are very happy but it is few; we wish we could have more.”*

Galanga price fluctuation and family strategy. *“Last year, we sold galangal for 23 000 to 27 000 kip/kg. This year, traders offer us 16 000 kip/kg only. We would like the project to support us finding better prices. Anyway, we see we should avoid relying on one product only.”*

Medecine box. *“People come to buy the medicine they already know. When the medicine box is empty, the responsible goes to Khua to renew the stock.”*

Food cabinet and poor households. *“Labour shortage for female headed households might be a constraint for them to build a food cabinet. Indeed, they cannot go cutting the wood.”*

Cooking stoves. *“We don’t know how much wood the stove will save. The first three families just received the cooking stove today.”*

Women’s empowerment. *“When the wife is pregnant, the husband helps her to carry heavy firewood and to cook back at home”.*

Villager’s empowerment. *“Two years ago, Chinese businessmen and the Government staff came to ask us planting rubber plantations. We said no, adding that we are too lazy to take care of the trees days and nights”.*

Road maintenance. *“We wish the project could help us to clean the road and improve it.”*

**Project activities:** same as elsewhere, with fingerlings production.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Kitchen cabinet small* | **removing rice seeds small** |
| *Picture 17: Kitchen cabinet* | *Picture 18: Removing rice seeds by hand* |

**Highlights**

**The forest clearly appears as a major safety net** **providing food and income for those poor quite remote communities which still have an easy access to land and forest**. If the forest is cleared for planting rubber, the biodiversity decreases, no more hunting no more gathering can take place. As a result, the safety net disappears with all gathered forest products, food and small animals previously hunted. Income for the villagers (if any) arrives after 7 years only. Surely, this means waiting far too long, especially for the poor families.

The **sustainable use of natural resources** is of major importance for a sustainable development and livelihood. It is already the case for the benzoin collection here, but could be another interesting topic elsewhere.

Although the health services and intensification techniques were introduced (fodder production, preparation of wild or grown food), **raising animals like cows, chicken, and pigs remains a challenging activity**. The project idea to replace chicken by ducks seems excellent. Fish also appear as a promising alternative to provide proteins.

**Producing grated fruit trees** appear as an opportunity which could be further developed. Many fruit trees were planted by the villagers and succeed in Yangteuy: longane, mango, orange, jackfruit, goyava, pomelo. They could be multiplied for neighbouring villages facing similar weather conditions. If people are locally trained on grafting, the production of fruit trees could provide income generation and increase the availability of vitamins for a balanced diet.

The road became of major importance for the villagers. The **road proper maintenance** will support the local development. A system has been set at village level to take care of the maintenance and people look quite energetic, but mastering the techniques is another pre-requisite in the long term. The project did not involve in this, but the service in charge of roads at the District level. Villagers know some easy ways to fix minor problems but don’t feel comfortable with some others. ***Technical training for road maintenance could be offered to villagers in further projects in similar situations.***

In order to ***associate the poorest families as far as possible*** in the project activities, it was discussed that the products of demonstrations, such as the first wooden cabinets built during the training could be allocated to the poorest families who cannot easily find the wood.

Annex 13: Dapkachok village case study

(Phongsaly Province, Khua District – CARE project)

**Village characteristics in a glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name | Dapkachock village |
| Province | Phongsaly |
| District | Khua |
| Ethnic group | Khamu |
| Type of economy | Self-sufficiency oriented |
| Access to land | Not so wide, but OK. |
| Access to forests | Still fine to collect many different types of vegetable, but they should go far to find timber. |
| Access to market | 1 day by foot, 1.5 hour by motorbike. The earth road is maintained by the villagers. |
| Other background information | The village moved here in 2007, the road was built in 2008. Since that time, the population has much easier access to Khua, which means that access to the market improved alot too. They now sell and buy and access health care much easier. A few houses have small turbines for lightening the house at night. |

**Testimonies - General evolution in the village**

Food security *“We used to get hungry. Thanks to the project, we have received seeds, animals. Fruit trees do not produce much fruits yet. Thanks to the road, we access Khua to sell galangal, cardamom, mulberry paper, broom grass bamboo worms, bats and goats. We can buy oil, salt, meat and pay for medical care. The quality of life improved alot.”*

Marketing skills. “*Many collectors come in Dapkachock to buy cardamom, galangal and other products, but prices are higher in Khua.”*

Kitchen garden *“We grew vegetable already, but now we know more vegetables”.*

Hygiene. *“Before, we went far to take a bath and our husbands did not want to stay close by. Now, people are cleaner, not only washing themselves, but also washing the dishes and boiling water before drinking it.”*

Women empowerment. *“When there is a meeting with the Government, we have turns between men and women to attend the meeting.”*

*“We have discussed how the workload was shared within the family. Before, the women collected firewood. Now, the men help and can carry it with motorbikes.”*

Villagers’ empowerment*. “Many Chinese businessmen came to ask us to plant rubber. We have refused because we don’t have enough agricultural land.”*

**Project activities**

Same as elsewhere + tea plantation (previous project) + white tea production and support for packaging.

**Highlights**

***Cash crops, an opportunity for income in a context where wage labour is very limited***. Population look for income and very limited opportunities exist for wage labour. Cash crops are thus highly appreciated. However, the price of cash crops evolves with ups and downs. It is true for tea (see below), galangal and cardamom. Broom grass was sold 4 000 kip/kg last year and 8 000 kip/kg this year.

Therefore, to try optimising income and decreasing risks, ***most families undertake different activities, adjusting their strategies to the current price***, collecting broom grass when the tea price is low for example.

The project has also raised their attention on the usual ***yearly price cycle***. If farmers don’t sell the product right at the beginning of the season, they can usually get higher prices. But this is not always true. Cardamom price dramatically decreased from the beginning of the season (almost by half).

|  |
| --- |
| Vegetable garden small |
| Picture : Kitchen garden |

***Opportunities for quality products and higher prices***. Some families are working on quality, looking at increasing the prices. For example, cardamom picked at the right time and properly dried is sold at higher price. A simple cardamom dryer model was introduced by the project in order to increase quality... and price. Broom grass, if all seeds carefully removed, are also sold at higher prices. Honey quality was also improved. These are examples of potential local added value, generating employment and income.

***The mission proposes to investigate the possibility to produce galangal essential oil*** ***as another opportunity,*** because galangal roots will not always be used for expanding the plantations.

***Cash crops and potential local added value: example of the white tea***. Tea price was high in Phongsaly in 2007, reaching 10 USD/kg and tea trees were planted during the previous project. Unfortunately, the price is much lower now. The project introduced the technique for producing white tea. The production has a bitter taste. Instead of looking for a market far away, the project is now looking to support sales in the District, working on a nice packaging. Further support for marketing is expected from the villagers.

***Marketing network, a very useful activity***. CARE support for linking farmers to market is a highly needed activity. In the case of broom grass in Dapkachock, additional support is expected from CARE since one collector only comes here for broom grass. It pushes the prices down.

***Fish raising, targeting the poor***. Here, 3 or 4 kinds of fishes are doing well. Because of the unusual abundant rains, all fish ponds were destroyed before having collected the fishes. Further assistance from the project is expected by the villagers to rebuild stronger ponds and provide fingerlings again. Even the poor are able to practice fish raising, asking for the family support for building the ponds.

***Opportunity for agriculture local tests hampered by the short project lenght***. Tofu was appreciated and soy beans planted. However the plants grew very well, the culture was not very successful since seeds are quite small. This highlights the opportunity to test new crops in local conditions before a large diffusion. However, it is hardly feasible during a 2 year project.

***Kitchen garden and the risk of hybrid seeds***. Vegetables grow slower in altitude because of the low temperature, but still it works. The beneficiaries receive subsidized seeds for the first year (different levels of subsidies according to poverty). They might either buy new seeds the following year -a system with private suppliers is setting up- or produce their own seeds. Hybrid seeds begin to appear on the local market that cannot be multiplied (100% of Chinese cabbage seeds). The project explains the specificity of those seeds, but much people appreciate eating Chinese cabbage. It is indeed very important to raise farmers’ attention on this question and highlight the risk to become dependent from the seeds suppliers.

***Goat bank, an evolving approach highlighting CARE’s follow up and M&E efforts***. The project has been waiting that candidates to raise goats did organise to grow the appropriate food before distributing the goats. Follow up has shown that the group of 10 people did not allow optimal grazing and that the goats were not well fed. The project then agreed with the goat owners to organise groups of 3 families in order to allow rotating the grass lands. The situation has improved alot and is now satisfactory.

***Animal health remains a huge challenge***. Considering the presence of foot and mouth disease and that the chicken died after vaccination in this village, the effectiveness of the vaccination system is questionable. Animal raising (at least chicken, beefs and pork) seems an activity at high risk in the present context, which makes it unsuitable for the poor families especially (according to the “4L rule” see evaluation report).

***Cardamom***. Some farmers report that cardamom is more successfully grown after rice field than during the first year after cutting the trees.

Annex 14: Omtruen village case study

(Phongsaly Province, Khua District – CARE project)

**Village characteristics in a glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name | Omtruen village |
| Province | Phongsaly |
| District | Khua |
| Ethnic group | Khamu |
| Type of economy | Self-sufficiency oriented |
| Access to land | Decreasing: increasing population and rubber trees plantation |
| Access to forests | OK |
| Access to market | Very difficult |
| Other background information | The village is one of the most remote belonging to the project area. Access is possible by motorbike only.  This is the only “new” village CARE began to work with under the project currently evaluated. |

**Testimonies - General evolution in the village**

*“The more successful activities are the galangal and cardamom plantations and the pig bank”.*

Food security. *“ Two year ago, the situation was worse. It improved with the project, but this year because of violent winds, the rice felled down.”*

*“I moved here one year ago. I have received rice and vegetable seeds, including spring onions and Chinese cabbage. It is growing well but I did not eat them yet. I also have planted galangal and cassava.” (a poor old lady)*

Income. *“We sell galangal and benzoin to get cash. The price offered for benzoin by collectors in the village is very low (20 000 kip/kg) but if we go to Khua, we can get around 10 USD/kg”.*

Marketing remain highly dependent on access road. *“Last year, trucks could come to buy benzoin. The road is broken; they cannot arrive up here anymore. Only motorbikes can.”*

Marketing network*. “We contact buyers in Khua and Luang Prabang and wait for the one offering a good price.”*

Kitchen garden. *“We produce for ourselves, but access to the market is too difficult to sell the vegetables”.*

*“We try to grow new varieties: big garlic, lettuce, spring onion. Soy beans are hard to grow in a cold area.”*

Pig bank. *“The poor can receive pigs. They usually have limited labour to produce the pig food, but it is possible. We stay in the village when it is full moon, it is an occasion to take care of pig food.”*

Hygiene. *“Most of the families now boil the water before drinking. Some take it while going to the field.”*

Women empowerment. *“Sometimes, men come to help carrying the firewood.”*

*“If the woman is pregnant, her husband will help carrying heavy loads.”*

*“Women also have the right to drink rice whiskey all night (haha)”*

*“If we share the work too much with our wives, we will die before them (haha).” (a men)*

*“We want maximum 3 or 4 children.” (a women)*

*“We need many kids because we need labour” (a men)*

Villagers’ empowerment*. “We have planted rubbers trees three years ago, next to the village upon the request of Chinese businessmen. Access to land decreased.”*

**Project activities**

Same as elsewhere.

**Highlights**

The example of this village working with CARE for two years only clearly shows that ***time is needed to build up a mutual understanding and confidence***.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Waste basket small | Sesame seeds small |
| Picture : Baskets for waste | Picture : Sesame |

***Language and communication***. The two heads of women group have been chosen according to their Lao reading and speaking skills, and based on their communication skills. The choice has been very limited since few demonstrate such skills. CARE team made the effort to learn Khamu language, which facilitates the collaboration much.

Annex 15: Bouamvanh village case study

(Luang Prabang Province, Viengkham District – AGRISUD project)

**Village characteristics in a glance**

In agreement with AGRISUD, given the limited time and individual meeting with market oriented vegetable gardener, this file is focusing on this topic and does not present the village as a whole.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name | Bouamvanh village |
| Province | Luang Prabang |
| District | Viengkham |
| Ethnic group | Lao |
| Type of economy | Entering market economy |
| Access to land | Limited. |
| Access to forests | NTFP not collected. |
| Access to market | Easy: 10 minutes by road to Viengkham District, although limited market opportunities there. |
| Other background information | Resettled village (year?)  Collaboration with the project since 2010 (2 years).  Bouamvanh is not the more motivated village (because of the relative wealthy situation)  Vegetable garden along the river and pig raising were already existing before the project arrival. Currently, some farmers doing so benefit from the project support, some not.  The population submitted a requested to support setting up an irrigation system for market oriented vegetable production. |

**Testimonies - General evolution in the village.**

Nutrition strategy: *“Now, we don’t have time anymore for going into the forest collecting vegetables”.*

*“We have more income, can buy rice and pay for school.”*

Vegetable marketing*. “Last year, I earned 2 million kip selling vegetables. Chinese mustard is cut and grows again. It is easy to sell”*

*“Hmong are serious competitors for vegetable production. My strategy if cannot sell my vegetables in Viengkham: I put them on my boat and visit the villages along the river for marketing vegetables there or exchange them against rice. I take also this opportunity for fishing, buying or selling rice.”*

Training for vegetable production. *“I have learned how to fertilize the soil, grow vegetables better and grow more vegetable varieties (lettuce, Chinese cabbage).”*

*“We have received free seeds for trying producing new vegetables.”*

*“We knew morning glory from the ponds, but now we are growing it. Only people supported by the project produce it.”*

*“I don’t go to the training, my husband does. He teaches me how to do”.*

Seeds supply. *“We are going to produce some seeds ourselves like beans, tomatoes, kale, lettuce, onion, garlic, but we need to buy some”.*

Irrigation for vegetable production. *“Before, we took much more time to fetch water and water vegetables.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AGRISUD 001 small | AGRISUD 005 small |
| Picture : Market oriented vegetable production in Bouamvanh | Picture : Vegetable production generates valuable income for this lady who lost his sun and whose husband is very sick. |

**Highlights**

The land is used as rice field during the rainy season, and for vegetable production during the dry season. Many different types of vegetables are produced (up to 14 per family, with cucumbers, tomatoes, two types of beans, lettuce, mint, coriander, garlic, holy basil...). 40% of the vegetable production is self-consumed, 60% sold. The producers naturally rotate, not always using the same plot of land.

When water is accessible and inputs provided, the ***main constraints*** become labour availability and marketing.

***Gender***. Activities benefit to families. For some activities like gardening here, men might attend the training, while men and women are active in the fields. Men are expected to transfer their knowledge to women.

***Liquid compost production*** with local ingredients (leaves and manure) has been demonstrated and is applied, saving time and space. It answers a difficulty faced before: some families did not fertilize the soil at all, some others mixed few manure with the soil, because it had to be transported from the houses.

After year 1, pests and diseases have been identified and corresponding ***adequate bio repellents,*** possibly homemade and using locally available ingredients (chilli, papaya leaves, garlic, ginger, tobacco leaves, etc.).Training have been organised and one spray distributed per group of producers (5 producers).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Livre maraîchage small | Picture : AGRISUD handbook on organic vegetable production is also available online (in English or French) |

All those ***information on agro-ecology[[51]](#footnote-51)*** and their adaptation to the local context (Northern uplands in Laos) could benefit many other villagers and could be spread through projects.

Advises on ***seeds conservation*** might be a useful complement to the current package for vegetable production.

***Marketing*** is not always easy, even for this village close to town, because the demand is limited. The vegetables are sometimes used to feed animals (chicken and ducks) and transformed (fermented).

Annex 16: Chakkang village case study

(Luang Prabang Province, Viengkham District – AGRISUD project)

**Village characteristics in a glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name | Chakkang village |
| Province | Luang Prabang |
| District | Viengkham |
| Ethnic group | Khamu |
| Type of economy | Self-sufficiency oriented |
| Access to land | Large amount of land in mountainous area. Low fertility. |
| Access to forests | Easy (1-2 hours walk). Many vegetables to eat and NTFP. |
| Access to market | Easy: 1.5hour to Viengkham District by boat (no road access), although limited market opportunities there:   * NTFP, Pig, chicken, goat and buffaloes collectors come from Viengkham. * Collectors from the village go also to town. |
| Other background information | Resettled village created from 7 villages grouped together (14 years ago). Low social cohesion between 112 households settled in two areas separated by the river. Low level of energy of the village leader. Low level of education/ literacy. |

**Testimonies - General evolution in the village.**

Food security strategy. *“We are short of rice about 3 months per year. We need money to buy rice, so we clean fields for other families (30 000 kip/day), collect NTFP, collect wood for construction. We try growing Job’s tear for the first year. Someone said it is worth it and can be sold between 3 000 and 5 000 kip/kg. All animals and NTFP are easy to sell to outsiders. Vegetables not, we sell them in the village.”*

*“We don’t know how the project will affect food security yet: we just start vegetable garden; for animal raising, we don’t know yet if we will succeed better than before.”*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Job tears drying small* | AGRISUD 024 |
| Picture : Job’s tears, drying | Picture : Vigna, just harvested |

Vegetable production and food security. *“Before, I had some but very few vegetables. I am just starting this year and have already earned 100 000 kip* *selling vegetables in the village. I will use the money to buy rice and medecines” (old women on the picture below)*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Veg garden small* | *Vegetables small* |
| Picture : “I have already earned 100 000 kip this year, selling vegetables in the village”. | Picture : Beautiful vegetables produced. |

Chicken raising and food security strategy. *“Most of our chickens usually die in November-December, during winter time. Let’s see what happens with vaccination. I raise chicken mainly for selling, eating some at special occasions. I buy fish and squirrels to eat. After one year, the chicken weights about 1.2 kg”*

NB The chicken meat price is quite high (25 000 in the villages and 35 000 kip/kg in town).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Chicken raising small* | *Old water supply system* |
| Picture : Chicken pen with baskets for laying eggs. | Picture : Old water supply system – no tap. |

Water supply*. “We had water shortage and irregular pressure (the old system set by DHO in 2003 has no tap but running water). Now, you can get water any time at one of the 6 taps in the village. I don’t mind contributing 2 000 kip/month.”*

*“Six people are in charge of the maintenance. They have cleaned the filter.”*

PLUP. *“During PLUP, we have discussed conflicts for land with our neighbours and solved them, setting a clear border between villages. We can see them on the panel and 3D map”.*

*“The PLUP committee will check if the rules set are respected.”*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *PLUP map small* | *Unused latrine small* |
| Picture : Land use map | Picture : Unused latrine built by the Lao Red Cross |

**Project activities**

* Animal breeding (pigs; chicken should arrive soon) and fodder production, Village Veterinary Worker (VVW).
* Vegetable gardens
* LWU training: LANN, family planning, hygiene, women’s rights.

**Highlights**

***Food and nutrition strategies***. Villagers have built their nutrition and food strategy, raising chicken which has a high value for weight, in order to buy fish or squirrels.

The ***water supply committee*** is active for maintenance.

***Targeting poor families***. All communities’ contributions to implement activities proposed by the project are judged affordable (family planning, water fees, vaccination fees), even for poor families.

***Hygiene***. Hygiene awareness varies depending on the villages. While some villages are ready to build latrines on top of the few ones they already have, some others don’t use the existing ones (see picture above).

Annex 17: Thavan village case study

(Luang Prabang Province, Viengkham District – AGRISUD project)

**Village characteristics in a glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name | Tavan village |
| Province | Luang Prabang |
| District | Viengkham |
| Ethnic group | Lao-Khamu |
| Type of economy | Self-sufficiency oriented, modestly entering market economy |
| Access to land | Limited but sufficient for the moment. |
| Access to forests | Decreasing |
| Access to market | 1 hour by boat to Viengkham. No access road. |
| Other background information | Old village (year of creation unknown). On a total of 57 households in the village, 57 have microhydropower system to provide light.  NTFP are collected for the last 2-3 years, including broomgrass.  Some Lao family leave the village to settle in Vienkham are replaced by Khamu families. The two communities live in harmony. |

**Testimonies - General evolution in the village.**

Food security strategies. *“70% of the families face rice shortage during up to 5 months.*

*“We still pick vegetables in the forest but also grow vegetables next to the village. Vegetable production saves time.”*

“*We collect broom grass and other NTFP to exchange against rice or get cash. The price goes down when we collect more. We received 3 500 kip last year. Collectors come in the village, offering various prices. Two to three village inhabitants also collect NTFP and sell them in Viengkham.”*

*“Some businessmen came proposing us to grow corn. They did not come back to buy the corn”.*

*“We also sell our labour in other villages or for construction works in town.”*

The most useful activities. *“Hygiene in the family and family planning were very useful. You learn when you can sleep with your husband”. (women)*

*“Family planning was, we had no information before. Agricultural activities and animal husbandry were too”. (men)*

*“Nothing is difficult to do amongst the project activities if you are diligent. Everything is if you are lazy.”*

Family planning. *“Some have chosen pills, some intrauterine spiral or other methods. The price remains affordable (3000 kip/month)... less expensive than having a child...”*

Sharing the workload*. “Before, the women worked more than the men. We have no choice but should share the work now: since the project came, we have more work to do!”*

Targeting the poor. *“The village head men collects families interested to participate in each project activity. He is the one selecting the beneficiaries. Priority is given to poor and diligent families.”*

Fodder production: an innovation. *“Red beans grew really well. It can be used for chicken or human food. We have tasted them with the project staff, that was tasty.”*

*“I feed my pigs with Stylo, mixed with rice husks and cassava. They like it.”*

*“Pig raising is more difficult than chicken, because they eat more. You should grow crops for them, like cassava and corn.”*

*“Sorghum was not very successful, this year was too humid”.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| mais et stylo small | Mais et vigna small |
| Picture : Mixed cropping corn and Stylosanthes (AGRISUD picture) | Picture : Mixed cropping: corn and Vigna in association (AGRISUD picture) |

Vegetable marketing strategies*. “We can sell vegetable in our village to the families which don’t produce any. Sometimes, we also give them to our neighbours. Going to Viengkham for selling them is not interesting: if we bring few, we can market vegetables but it is not worth it. If we bring too much, we can’t sell all of them.”*

PLUP¨.  *“At the beginning, we did not want to group the lands in zones. Each family preferred to keep its small plots. Finally two big areas will be allocated to grazing lands. Given the surface, it will be more difficult to fence, but easier to feed them and far from agriculture land.”*

*“Poor families have few lands. It might be good if the District comes to allocate land per family.”*

**Project activities**

* Animal breeding (pigs; chicken should arrive soon) and fodder production, Village Veterinary Worker (VVW).
* Vegetable gardens
* LWU training: LANN, family planning, hygiene, women’s rights.

**Highlights**

Different food security strategies are combined here to face rice shortages:

* Trial to gain time, producing vegetable in the village instead of gathering them in the forest, using the water supply system;
* Undertaking income generation activities, such as raising chicken (which are eaten too) and pigs (mainly sold), collecting NTFP, selling labour in neighbouring villages or in town against rice or as paid labour.
* Contract farming has not been very successful since promises have not been fulfilled.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AGRISUD 046 | Trad veg garden small |
| Picture : 3D map for land use planning | Picture : Traditional small scale vegetable garden on stilts. |

PLUP objective is not land allocation, but land use planning.

*Animal breeding sustainability*: the area was infected by foot and mouth disease last year. People are not use to vaccination but seem ready to try. The link is probably not that clear yet for them between animal food and better health. The evolution of the general context (vaccines supply, VVW efficiency, availability and trust in their services) will influence the success of animal breeding and its sustainability.

*Group management:* A great autonomy is given to the groups. For example (1) pig raisers in groups of 5 decide how the common pig (male) will be managed. The person who takes care of it might ask for money or piglets after borrowing the male for mating.

*Analysis and learning – targeting the poor*.

The village head men first had the tendency to select families who would succeed in activities, excluding more easily poor families. After the project noticed this and discussed it in the village, poverty was used as a factor to select beneficiaries.

Pig breeding requires sufficient labour availability to produce food, which is not possible for all poor families.

*Family planning information* answered the population demand and was very much appreciated, either by men and women, who had no information before. Different methods were presented. The cost remains affordable for all.

Annex 18: Technical centre in Muang Mouy

(Luang Prabang Province, Viengkham District – AGRISUD project)

**Village characteristics in a glance**

Since this village does not belong to the target villages, in agreement with AGRISUD, this file is focusing on the technical service centre and does not present the village as a whole.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name | Muang Mouy village |
| Province | Luang Prabang |
| District | Viengkham |
| Ethnic group | Lao-Khamu |
| Type of economy | Entering market economy (the centre is located along the road to Viengkham) |
| Access to market | Easy 40 km Viengkham |
| Other background information | Muang Mouy hosts Vienkham District “technical centre” |

**Technical centre characteristics**

The technical centre was built with ADB support in 2009 and covers 5 ha. AGRISUD started to be supported by in August 2010. Three taps have been installed to provide water and develop vegetable gardening around. According to the signed agreement between the centre, Agrisud and 14, then 18 families, households grow their own vegetables, following the technical advises provided by DAFO technicians. Each family has its own plots and will be cultivating them for a period of 5 years. Some families used to grow vegetable on the river banks before.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AGRISUD 031 small | Liquid compost small |
| Picture : One of the 18 families growing vegetables in Muang Mouy technical centre. | Picture : Production of liquid compost |

The centre is used to train 15 villages around (7 amongst them are AGRISUD target villages). Often, two or three families together visit the centre with precise questions for the staff, about animal or plant diseases, fodder production...

The centre has also been used for fodder production demonstration and as quarantine for chicken and pigs, before distributing them to the beneficiaries. Vaccines are available at the centre veterinary pharmacy; seeds can be purchased too.

LEAP project is supporting the centre for chicken production.

**Highlights**

***Fertilization***. Vegetable producers who never fertilized the soil now do it. The liquid compost preparation is quick (4 to 6 weeks) and requires very small space.

***Creative ideas for marketing*** ***the vegetables***. Given the amount of vegetables expected to be produced soon, the group leader brainstormed and had a few ideas for marketing opportunities:

* Sell fresh vegetables, installing small shops along the road;
* Hire a tuk tuk and sell vegetables in the surrounding villages;
* Sell fresh vegetables in Viengkham;
* Produce fermented vegetables (pak som);
* Transform pak aud (or aud pak): steam cook it, let it dry and pound it into a powder to be eaten with sticky rice.

The ***Centre sustainability*** is enhanced by the allocation of plots to families for the next 5 years. If they are in a conducive environment, they will continue. The Centre management style will affect the activities sustainability, positively or negatively.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AGRISUD 025 small | AGRISUD 035 small |
| Picture : A miller was given to the entre to generate income. | Picture : Pig pen in Muang Mouy technical centre, used for quarantine. |

Annex 19: Phonkham village case study

(Luang Prabang Province, Viengkham District – AGRISUD project)

**Village characteristics in a glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name | Phonkham village |
| Province | Luang Prabang |
| District | Viengkham |
| Ethnic group | Khamu |
| Type of economy | Self-sufficiency oriented although located along the road |
| Access to land | Limited (on average 5 ha per family). The rotation duration of 5 years before is now down to 2-3 years. Spare lands for new families and migrants. Many agricultural lands are far away (2-3 hours walk) |
| Access to forests | Decreasing and far away (2-3 hours walk) |
| Access to market | Along the main road. |
| Other background information | Villagers decided to resettle near the road 13 years ago, hoping to improve their situation. In reality it did not help much: indeed access to market is easier but their production capacity is low, because land and forest are further away. 14 families live in sanaam for the moment (12/2011). This village is one of the 16 poorest villages in the District.  Animal health is a big concern. Numerous goitres are observed. |

**Testimonies - General evolution in the village.**

Food security strategy. “*With rainfed rice, you are never sure what you will harvest until the last minute.”*

*“Because we have up to 6 months rice shortage, we look for NTPF for income. Sometimes, we exchange them against rice. We also provide labour to other villages. If we carry 40 to 50 rice bags, we can have one.”*

*“The plan with the animal we grow is to feed the family first. If we have too much, we will sell them. But up to now, we even don’t have enough.”*

Women empowerment. *“I have appreciated the hygiene training and how to share the work in the household instead of the women doing everything” (a women).*

*“Pregnant women, old women share the work more fairly” (a women).*

*“Sharing the work, helping to carry firewood or other heavy loads is OK for us” (a men).*

*“Men and women attended the training sessions, but they don’t like to take the important responsibility for pig raising. More women came for vegetable gardening”(extension worker)*

Water supply lightening workload. *“We had to carry water from the river down here. It took 1 hour return each time we went, so up to 3 to 4 hours a day. We came back home late and had no time to take a shower. Now, we have water near home and the time to shower.”*

Animal food. *“I had three chicken before, now I have 5. The project trained us on how to feed animals. The traditional way is to let them gathering their food around. Being kept protects them from disease and is cleaner for the house too.”*

*“I had pigs already. We have our own way to feed pigs, with pumpkin leaves, banana trees, risks husks... Before, we released them in the forest, when we wanted to feed them, they were away. When they were back, we were in the fields. This year, we have grown cassava, corn and Stylo (which was eaten by cows). It means more work. When food is almost finished, I go to pick some. My task is to grow or collect food, my mum cooks it. Other families collect the pig manure for their garden – I have no vegetable garden” (a young male)*

*“I have prepared a small plot of Vigna and Stylo for my chicken”.*

Animal health. *“We have borrowed money from the bank in Viengkham to buy goats with 8% interest rate. Many of them died.”* NB This is not linked to the project but shows the animal health concerns*.*

*“Price for vaccination is affordable: 1000 kip per chicken, 3000 kip for pigs. We can sell one animal to vaccinate the others”.*

*“Even if the animals die, we’ll still have the veterinary worker”.*

Poor households. *“Poor households were afraid to engage, fail and not being able to reimburse.”* NB Now, the project have encouraged the village head men to focus more on poor households while selecting the beneficiaries. It is clear for them that the seeds are given, that chicken and pigs are introduced in a revolving fund. They cannot sell any animal before having contributed to the revolving fund.

PLUP. *“If someone comes to buy our land, we will not be able to produce food anymore. I will never accept, even if the price looks high. We will not allow concessions because the population is increasing and the land is not”.*

*“If problems of fertility, we will discuss with the authorities if we can change land allocation in 5 years time, for example transforming grazing land into agricultural lands”.*

Perceived needs. *“If we could restart the project again and chose activities, we would ask for a school and focus more on animal raising than vegetables. We would also ask support to build latrines (we have a few only). Access to credit is also something important for us. We wish all village inhabitants could be beneficiaries.”*

Unperceived needs: sustainable use of NTFP. *“We just started to collect peuak meuak three years ago. The demand is high. We find plenty of them in the forest. We can never be short of peuak peuak.”*

**Project activities**

* Water supply(common water supply with Samton village)
* Animal breeding (pigs; chicken should arrive soon) and fodder production, Village Veterinary Worker (VVW).
* Vegetable gardens
* LWU training: LANN, family planning, hygiene, women’s rights.

**Highlights**

***Sharing the same water source*** between two villages has generated tensions that the project managed well: access to water is organised with equity and the population are now all satisfied.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***AGRISUD 007 small*** | ***AGRISUD 018 small*** |
| Picture : House in Phonekham village | Picture : Precious water resources to be shared with the neighboring village. |

***Animal husbandry***. It is too early for an evaluation (or for the project to stop). The project has distributed chicken and pigs two months ago here. In some other villages, animals will be distributed after the final evaluation. All animal holders have prepared chicken or pig pens but the time did not allow to check if they have grown sufficient food according to training advises (fodder, associated crops, cassava, corn or whatever). Animal holders seem to know the vaccination calendar.

***Cash availability and income generation activities are very limited***. Animal holders mention the possibility to sell one animal to vaccinate the others. This is indeed an option for chicken raisers and confirms that pig raising might be more difficult to implement for poor families.

***PLUP impact.*** People understand the objectives of protecting forests, even if they acknowledge it might be difficult to apply it. They have signed by the land use with District Authorities and are willing to try. They are afraid of being taxed if they have too many plots, thus like grouping them like it was done during PLUP (?).

***People are prepared to better analyse offers for land concessions,*** based on objective profit analysis. Most of them won’t probably accept to rent their land, not only because of the low profit but also because land become scare.

***PLUP sustainability.*** PLUP provides a 5 year plan. What will happen in the future? Capacities are built within the village committee (12 members), but they are not able to achieve the whole exercise alone (surface calculation e.a.). DLMA capacity is built but will they be able to go to the field? Probably not without external funding. Other projects are planned which plan to work on land use planning (NUDP), so might provide adequate funding.

***NTFP sustainable harvesting, an unperceived need***. “Peuak meuak commercial harvesting started in 1997, since when destructive harvesting practices have started to occur. Villagers cut stems or strip all bark from stems or roots. If some above-ground parts are left intact and plants are not uprooted, regeneration is possible from the roots of the parent clump. Planting of peuak meuak will ensure regeneration and sustainability”[[52]](#footnote-52). Indeed, the picture below shows that some roots were collected (see left side), hampering the sustainable use of this NTFP. NAFRI and TABI project are excellent sources of information on NTFP for further activities[[53]](#footnote-53).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Phuak muak small | Piglets small |
| Picture : “Peuak meuak”, a NTFP collected in Phonkham and bought by Chinese traders for making incent, mosquito repellant and glue. | Picture : Distributed piglets in their pig pen. |

Annex 20

Guidelines for interviews and focus group discussions

*Note. These guidelines are used as a reference to basically collect similar information for each village. However, it was used in a flexible manner. Interesting subjects raised by the participants are further investigated and many additional questions asked.*

**Village characteristics in a glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Village name |  |
| Province |  |
| District |  |
| Ethnic group |  |
| Type of economy |  |
| Access to land |  |
| Access to forests |  |
| Access to market |  |
| Other background information |  |

**Testimonies - General evolution in the village.**

Empowerment of local community to develop and pursue their own food and nutritional strategies

Empowerment of local community to engage with local and relevant national government institutions and local level decision-making processes affecting their food and nutritional security strategies

**What did the project change at household level?**

Food security

For the women

For poor households

Others

**Review of project activities and comments** (A list of project activities is prepared for each village)

**Major challenges and recommendations for future similar projects**

1. Equivalent to 47 euro. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Galangal, also called galanga or “blue ginger”, is a plant belonging to the ginger family (Zingiberaceae), whose rhizomes and seeds are used for medicinal and culinary purposes. Rhizomes and seeds can be distilled into essential oil. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The forest remains a major source of supply during the other 7 months. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. According to interviewees, most of the chickens are indeed sold for generating income. Very few are kept for the family consumption, but for special occasions only. Chickens are raised for producing more chickens, not for egg production. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Harvest is on-going during the field visit, and data are not available yet. The interviewed farmers complain that the rains came far too early this year and that they had no time to clear enough land for upland rice. However, trials on upland rice varieties look promising. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. For the method of calculation, see the chapter on methodology. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Reference: EuropeAid/127415/L/ACT/LA, which can be found at <http://www.dellao.ec.europa.eu/en/calls_for_proposals/EuropeAid_127415.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. LANN : Linking Agriculture, Natural resources and Nutrition. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Whenever possible, the proportion of self-consumed and sold products has been estimated. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. GAA grant application. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Available data sometimes mention families, sometimes households, the report kept those terms as provided by the informant. However, it has no impact on results since, in practice, the two terms are very similar. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. First interim report, December 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. [Pueraria Phaseoloides, a local forest vine spun into threads and made into bags or cloth.](file:///C:\\Documents%20and%20Settings\\AP\\My%20Documents\\Anne\\Possibilités\\Evaluation%20EU%20Laos\\Report\\GAA%20FS%20project%20evaluation\\Assessment%20GAA%20impacts.xlsx" \l "RANGE!A53) [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Not explicitly defined in GAA documents. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Different species of common carps (in Lao language: Panai, Panin, Papark) were promoted for fish farming. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. This was observed by CCL in Phongsaly too (oral communication, Dominique Vanden Bergh). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. As detailed in 3.1.1 and 3.1.3. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Intensifying low land agriculture as a priority is a GAA strategy based on their experience in the Northern uplands, not only in Xay and Namor Districts, but also in Nga District (Oudomxay province). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. The land size allocated per family was apparently determined based on the HH size and corresponding family labour availability. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Community Knowledge Support Association [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. According to NGPES criteria. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Data are not available for all villages. The available data - representing 84% of the population- record 287 poor HH on a total of 719. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. 5 upland rice varieties have been tested in 16 villages with 65 HH on 1.6 ha, producing between 1 and 3.6 T/ha. KhaoHinsung variety’s advantage is the very quick tillering, so weeding becomes less intensive, as the rice plants develops before the weeds are coming up again. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. No data available regarding vegetable production, cultivated areas. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. . Chinese cabbage, greens, mustard, carrots, herbs and kale are much appreciated. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Sesame is already planted in some areas. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Since we are in a context of food security projects, “vulnerability” refers to food insecurity. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Such as small scale vegetable production for household use only, called “kitchen gardening”. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Avian influenza was not recorded in Laos for the last three years, vaccination is only used in case of outbreak. Other chicken diseases, important in the Lao context are fowl cholera, Newcastle, fowl pox. For more information on situation analysis and vaccine business in Laos, see ACIAR report (2008): http://aciar.gov.au/publication/FR2008-06 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. There is, in each village, an official list of poor families. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Poverty is clearly linked with low labour availability most of the time (female headed households, someone chronically sick in the family). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. For example, collecting broom grass or harvesting tea when the price is high. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Construction works in town, or loading/unloading goods for traders (payment in cash or in kind), or providing labour to more wealthy families in their fields (clearing weeds during the dry season for example, mostly against food). [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Walking to their fields and to the forests can easily take 2-3 hours. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Cf. <http://www.tabi.la/lao-ntfpwiki/index.php/Peuak_meuak> [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. This straggling shrub or climber, 1 m-5 m tall is present in the forests and fallow lands. Called Boehmeria malabarica Webb. in latin, and Tutiang in Khamu, it belongs to the Urticaceae family. In Luang Prabang Province, Peuak Meuak is bought by Chinese traders to make incense sticks, mosquito repellents and glue (in China). Local villagers use the sap for treating stomach and intestinal complaints. The durable fibres are used instead of nails in house construction, lasting more than ten years. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Participative Land Use Planning. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. AGRISUD has established a list of plants found in the project area whose leaves can be collected, then put in a bag with manure, covered by water in a plastic tank and kept underwater by a stone. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Vigna is a vine belonging to the Fabaceae family and producing beans, which can be used for animal or human nutrition. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. The available results are usually already aggregated at District or Province level. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Land previously unused. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Risks associated to this shortened rotation period are well known. They include increased erosion, decreasing fertility, as well as weed multiplication (and increasing pesticide use). [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Because the forest cover is decreasing, the average walking distance to the forest is longer and access to forest decreasing for the villagers. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Mainly for Viengkham Town, or for selling along the road, or to neighbouring villagers. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Maintenance committees have just been established before the project end and did not have any maintenance activity to take care of yet. It is thus far too early to assess whether they will last and if the water supply systems will be well maintained and used in the long term. Usually, an initial training is not sufficient for such committees. More time is needed to follow up, observe how they work and support them with additional advises (technical and financial) when needed. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Health specialists will determine whether it is worth to follow up a certain number of children who have been given an estimated age and serve as reference for the impact of the programme. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. It is unfortunate to note that, most of the time, the collection of extensive information is done by low level human resources because of budget constraints, who don’t take care of it correctly. To prevent this, an initial training, then a close follow up of their work is needed which is usually insufficient (resources should be made available therefore, a real quality check organised). Quality control is also needed for data entry. Finally, the reliability of collected data is more or less questionable most of the time. Ideally, the data collection should also be done by the same people, using the same methods, for baseline and endline surveys (sampling/households’ selection, ways of asking/understanding the questions, etc.). [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. In order for stunting to be meaningful indicator, the project duration should be longer than the current two years (annual improvements in Laos around 1% in the best cases (Milman, 2005 in mission’s ToR), meaning the change in stunting that could be expected as a result of these projects could easily be hidden by normal measurement error. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Which means that the project-specific indicators that are more detailed versions of these global indicators (but that address the same issue) are used rather than following exactly the wording of these global indicators. The M&E consultant will then compile the results of each project and provide a narrative analysis on how the projects have managed to contribute to the issues mentioned in those global indicators. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. The Government standards consider a consumption of 350 kg of paddy per person per year. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Accessible online at <http://www.agrisud.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=197&Itemid=277&lang=en> [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Cf. <http://www.tabi.la/lao-ntfpwiki/index.php/Peuak_meuak> [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. http://tabi.la/ and <http://www.nafri.org.la/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=80%3Alao-ntfp-handbook-now-available&catid=82%3Anew-reports-and-materials&Itemid=75&lang=en> [↑](#footnote-ref-53)