

Progress Report 3

1. General information

- Name of organization: Sustainable Agriculture Forum (SAF)
- Project title: Promotion of sustainable agriculture in Lao PDR
- Project number: 326 - 900 - 1004 ZG
- Period under review: April 1st – September 30th , 2005
- Methods used for planning, monitoring and evaluation: Participation approaches
 - Collect information from members' organizations to have ideas, comments and the suggestion
 - Follow up of the post training/ workshops to find out the strength and weakness in order to improve the weak points and to promote the strength ones.
 - Meeting with members to evaluate the management of SAF and activities

2. Developmental context

There are not any changes or new developments in the political or economic context of the project occurred in the period under review.

3. Implementation of the project/programme

3.1 objectives

The project aims to strengthen the capacity of SAF members and partners in the promotion of sustainable agriculture in Laos. Specific anticipated outputs for the project are included:

1. To provide a forum to coordinate and exchange lessons and experiences between organizations and individuals (SAF members, model farmers and government officials that have interest to promote and/or apply sustainable agriculture).

2. To upgrade the knowledge and ability of Lao development workers on sustainable agriculture and rural development.

3. To promote food production by introduction or promotion of environmentally sound, low cost and participatory approaches and techniques in agriculture, forestry and rural development.

4. To assist and study the field works of member's projects to find out the strength and weakness in order to improve the weak points and to promote the strength points.

5. To coordinate and to exchange lessons and experiences with organization and networks in other countries that are promoting sustainable agriculture.

3.2 Activities and achievement (in period under review)

3.2.1. The planned activities for the period of 1/4//05 – 30/9/05:

F1 Share and exchange lessons and experiences:

aa. Training/exchange workshops

- Training/exchange workshops will be organized 3 times on the following topics:

- The production of native animals
- The promotion and conservation of local seeds (rice, beans, starchy crops ...)
- The production of mushrooms

bb. Promotion of organic agriculture

The promotion of organic agriculture will be provided generally to farmers, government staffs and interested government organizations in the provinces at least 6 times and also for farmers in the project's areas of SAF members one time a year upon the request of members.

cc. Exposure visits for farmers

The exposure visits for farmers will be organized in January 2006 to share and exchange lessons and experiences with farmers in NE of Thailand

F2. Networking

Networking is the heart of SAF to share and exchange lessons and experiences on sustainable agriculture and rural development. Two levels of networks are distinguished:

1. Networking in the country

- Coordinate with member organizations
- Organize training/workshops with Government Organizations and farmers
- Attend activities of local networks

2. Networking with the region

- Liaison with regional networks and organizations in SEA countries working on sustainable agriculture and rural development.
- SAF staffs and members attend regional workshops/conferences of the regional networks

F3. Information resource center

- Visit member organizations to collect information
- Print out information on sustainable agriculture upon request of members, interested individuals and organizations.
- Produce visual aids on the impact of chemical products
- Translate document (sustainable agriculture for the upland) from English version into Lao version.

F4. Organizational strengthening

aa. Capacity building of SAF staffs

- Development of English language

bb. Administration

- General office management

- Maintenance of air conditioner, motorcycles and computers²

3.2.2. The activities implemented

F1 Share and exchange lessons and experiences

aa. Training/Exchange workshops

The training and exchange workshop have been organized 3 times on the following topics:

1. Training on native animals production (pig and poultry)
2. Exchange workshop on the conservation of traditional seeds
3. Exchange workshop on soil and water conservation

bb. Promotion of natural agriculture

The promotion of natural agriculture or organic agriculture has been organized for farmers and government staffs 5 times and follows up of the post training 2 times:

- Farmers and staffs in Ban Phosy Phaxay District
- Farmers and staffs of Rural Women Project VangVieng District
- Farmers of Ban Nong Bouatha Songkhone District
- Farmers of Ban Tha Oudom Songkhone District
- Farmers and staffs of LKA Project Songkhone District
- Follow up of the post training 2 times in Khamkeut and Vangvieng District

F2. Networking

Local networks:

SAF staffs have attended the activities organized by local networks:

- Annual meeting of Gender Development Group on 5/4/05
- Steering Committee Meeting of GAA on 8/4/05
- Meeting with MCC on 14/1/05
- Meeting with Lao Service Consulting on 12/5/05
- Gender Development Group meeting on 15/6/05
- Meeting with MCC on 17/6/05
- Meeting with JVC on 24/6/05
- Exchange workshop on organic vegetable organized by PROFIL on 28/6/05
- Stakeholder consultation workshop on organic rice organized by PROFIL on 8/7/05
- Meeting with Village Focus on 3/8/05
- Steering Committee Meeting of GAA on 5/8/05
- Gender Development Group meeting on 9/8/05
- Meeting with SIAF on 25/8/05
- Stakeholder consultation workshop on Biomass organized by STEA on 12-13/9/05

Regional networks:

SAF staffs, farmers and members attended the activities organized by regional networks:

- Exchange workshop on alternative agriculture with Thai farmers on 5-7/4/05
- SEACON Meeting in Malaysia from 27/4 - 1/5/05
- Consultation Meeting with Regional Networks from 28 - 30/9/05

F3. Information resource center

- Reprint and distribute documents related to sustainable agriculture to members and interested individuals and organizations
- Copied and provided VCD on sustainable agriculture to members and interested individuals and organizations
- Data collection on the impact of the use of chemical products (pesticide)
- Taking VDO on organic rice in Nongbok District

3.2.3. Expected results

aa. Training/exchange workshops

The expected outputs from the training and exchange workshops:

1. Training on native animals production (pig and poultry)

After the training/workshop participants are able to:

- Use the lessons learnt to improve and develop their animal production
- Increase food security of the household and generate income of the families
- Provide lessons of animal production to other farmers in the community

2. Exchange workshop on the conservation of traditional seeds

After the workshop the participants are able to:

- Understand the importance of local seeds in term of external inputs of agricultural production and the exchange of seeds among farmers
- Understand the methods and techniques of in-situ and ex-situ conservation

3. Exchange workshop on soil and water conservation

After the training/workshop participants are able to:

- Understand techniques and methods of the soil and water conservation of the different topography of land

bb. Promotion of Natural Agriculture (organic agriculture)

After the training/workshop participants (farmers, development workers) are able to understand the basic principles of natural agriculture. They can practice and extend easily this kind of agricultural production because the inputs of the production are mostly the local resources that they can find in their places such as the ingredients to make bio-extract, bio-compost, soil-compost for fruit tree and plant nursery, compost of rice straw, dried grass and leaves of tree,

bio-pesticide, hormone for the fast growing of plants, juice of local fruit for human health.

The target groups participated in the project through the coordination of SAF (SAF sent invitation letter, e-mail, telephone, and fax to the target groups). In the invitation SAF usually mentioned that the women will be attended at least 30% of the participants.

Most of farmers are from the remote areas and all groups of ethnicity from 19 to 56 years old. The participants attended the project activities are:

Items	Total	Men	Women	Farmers included	GO staff included
Training /exchange workshops	109	76	33	85	24
Promotion natural agriculture	202	102	100	181	21
Total number of participants	311	178	133	266	45

3.3 Impact (in period under review)

The effects of the project activities could be observed:

- Training, visit and practice system makes farmers to understand well the lessons learnt from the project's activities.
- Farmer to farmer extension is appropriated methodology to promote agricultural production.
- Sustainable agriculture helps farmers to improve the soil structure and its fertility
- Farmers are not dependent on the external inputs (chemical products...)

- The activities of the third parties that had an impact on the project are the demonstration plots for the field study of participants because in the end of the activities SAF has organized the field visits for them in order to find out the strengths and weaknesses of the field works of the other farmers and government projects.

There are something changed within the targets that mean men and women have understood their task and role in term of agricultural production as well as in the decision making when they buy big things such TV, motorcycle ... the husband and wife have to discuss and agree together before buying.

The target groups view the project work and the results achieved through the low cost of their production, the soil structure, the yield of their crops and finally the healthy foods for producers and consumers.

4. Overall assessment and outlook

4.1 The assessment of the progress made by the project:

- There are available documents and visual aids on sustainable agriculture currently being used by GOs staffs and farmers

- There are demonstration plots on sustainable agriculture of model farmers in order to be used as the exchange places of lessons and experiences among them.

- There are funds available to support SAF activities.

- Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has some programs related to sustainable agriculture:

- JICA supports the construction of bio-fertilizer factories in main provinces

- FAO supports IPM programs

- Cuba and Vietnam governments support organic and integrated agriculture

- Department of Agriculture in cooperation with Helvetas of Switzerland set up a project (the promotion of organic farming and marketing)

- Sustainable agriculture is widely accepted by many farmers and GOs officials

- Majority of the NGOs working in Laos promotes and supports sustainable agriculture

- Local and regional networks share and exchange lessons and experiences on sustainable agriculture with SAF and SAF members

4.2 Planning for the reporting period to come (1/10//05 – 31/3/06)

F1 Share and exchange lessons and experiences:

aa. Training/exchange workshops

- Training/exchange workshops will be organized 3 times on the following topics:

- The production of mushrooms
- The National Conference on ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA)
- The exchange workshop on the community development fund
- The generation income activities

bb. Promotion of organic agriculture

The promotion of organic agriculture will be provided generally to farmers, government staffs and interested government organizations in the provinces at least 6 times and also for farmers in the project's areas of SAF members one time per year for one member's organization upon the request.

cc. Exposure visits for farmers

The exposure visits for farmers and GOs staffs will be organized in March 2006 to share and exchange lessons and experiences on the topic of sustainable agriculture and rural development with farmers of the NE of Thailand

F2. Networking

Networking is the heart of SAF to share and exchange lessons and experiences on sustainable agriculture and rural development. Two levels of networks are distinguished:

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F4. Organizational strengthening

aa. Capacity building of SAF staffs

- Development of English language

bb. Administration

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5. Changes within the implementing organization

There are not any changes occurred in SAF in term of the project management team, administrative responsibilities and activities because the activities of SAF are running by 3 full Lao staffs and members under its frameworks.

6. Your final comments and remarks

The target groups of SAF appreciated MISEREOR that provides fund for SAF to promote sustainable agriculture because most of the Lao farmers are small farmers and the agricultural production in Lao PDR is predominantly by the subsistence in nature.

The fund was transferred on the appropriated time. SAF and its members highly appreciate MISEREOR that has policies to assist for the development works in rural areas to improve the livelihood of rural poor people.

The promotion of sustainable agriculture is an alternative way for small scale and poor farmers to produce healthy foods and ensure the food security of the families.

The results mentioned above are the achievement of SAF in promoting sustainable agriculture. Sustainable agriculture production helps farmers and GOs staffs to ensure food security of the families because in the Lao context the salary of GOs staffs is not enough to cover the expenditure of their basic needs such as lodging, food, cloth, medicine... so they have to produce their foods by introducing of low cost and internal inputs in their small scale production

Financial Reporting

1. Structure

The project of SAF is a member's project. The activities of SAF are running by 3 full Lao staffs and members under its frameworks. The responsibility of the SAF Board Committee (SBC) is to supervise and advise the staffs of SAF on the current affairs and strategy.

All expenses of SAF have to be conducted by SAF under the planned activities and expenditure that are authorized and approved by the SAF Board Committee and members

There are two signatures to withdraw money from the bank; the two signatures are the signatures of SAF Coordinator Mr. Khammalounla Lexayavong and Assistant Coordinator Ms. Innakhone Vorachak (financial staff)

A. Income:

a. The expected income of the period under review:

- Balance from the previous disbursement	6,124,321 kip
- MISEREOR	275,078,310 kip
- Local contribution	53,198,699 kip
The total amount of expected income:	334,401,330 kip

b. The real income of the period under review:

- Balance from the previous disbursement	6,124,321 kip
- MISEREOR	283,776,959 kip
- Difference of the currency exchange rate	2,429,191 kip
- Local contribution	53,505,500 kip
The total amount of real income:	345,835,971 kip

B. Expenditure:

Major variances between planned and actual expenditure for all main activities of the organization are the planned expenditure is 334,401,330 kip and the actual expenditure for all main activities of the organization is 309,719,972 kip

The planned overall expenditure for entire organization has been achieved because the disbursement of the budget for the previous period from MISEREOR is higher than the budget requested for the period and the budget contributed by SAF 53,505,500 kip is quite higher too.

a. The expected expenditure

- Staff costs	120,509,700 kip
- Recurrent programme expenditure	166,734,750 kip
- Other recurrent expenditure	30,352,350 kip

- Reserve	16,804,350 kip
The total amount of expected payments	334,401,330 kip

b. The real expenditure in the period under review:

- Staff costs	123,642,600 kip
- Recurrent programme expenditure	157,668,201 kip
- Other recurrent expenditure	28,409,171 kip
- Reserve	000 kip
The total amount of real expenditure:	309,719,972 kip

C. Financial position at the end of the report period

The financial position at the end of the reporting is remained 36,115,999 kip and this remained budget will be contributed in the budget of the project for the coming period:

- Total of real income	345,835,971 kip
- Total of real expenditure	309,719,972 kip
Total amount of the balance:	36,115,999 kip

2. Start of the project activities

The project activities are implemented since April 1st 2004

3. Budget plan (October 1st 2005 - March 31st 2006)

a. The expected income:

- Balance from the previous disbursement	36,115,999 kip
- Local contribution	37,135,001 kip

- MISEREOR	286,536,208 kip
The total amount of expected income:	359,787,208 kip

b. The expected expenditure:

- Staff costs	135,975,560 kip
- Recurrent programme expenditure	165,221,700 kip
- Other recurrent expenditure	31,459.948 kip
- Reserved budget	27,130,000 kip
The total amount of expected payments	359,787,208 kip

4. Local contribution

The budget contributed by local contribution for the period of April 1st 2005 to September 30th 2005 has been 53,505,500 kip