

Strengthening of WUG to WUGA

Table of Contents

Page: App-6.3-

1.	Approaches	1
2.	Implementation Procedure	2
3.	Progress to Date	2
Annex: Photos of Strengthening of WUG to WUGA Activities		4

1. Approaches

1 WUG is an organization for operation and maintenance of an irrigation scheme within a village boundary. WUG collects ISF from its members for the O&M activities. Sub-component of 'Strengthening of WUG to WUGA' aims to strengthening of WUGs' capacity and then to establish a WUGA, which is composed of several WUGs in an irrigation scheme. Each irrigation scheme in an irrigation scheme will be assisted to form one WUGA. These WUGAs will not replace the WUGs that already exist but will be overarching agencies that coordinate and manage irrigation activities on each subproject. The WUGs shall be continued to operate once the WUGA are formed as the WUGs are responsible for the specific irrigation sectors on each scheme.

2 WUG has no legal right open bank account and perform as a business unit. Each irrigation scheme of the project must have a WUGA that is registered to the relevant district financial office and provide their services to the members including efficient water delivery, planning for dry season crop production, procurement of input goods and marketing activities for the harvested products, and management of the use of the fund in the bank account. One of the biggest advantages which WUGA has registered with District Financial Office is that the district authorities such as District Governor Office, DAFO, and District Commercial Office recognize WUGA as a business unit and permits the WUGA to sign a contract with private investors to produce agricultural products as well as to purchase agricultural products for trading purpose. With the size of a WUGA covering several to dozens of villages, the bargaining power against the private sector has considerably increased.

3 Collection of ISF is undertaken by WUG/WUGA, but the collected amount is not enough for operation and maintenance of the irrigation schemes because wet paddy production generates low income and dry season high-value crops (HVCs) production area is very limited. Therefore, the project promotes HVCs production during the dry season to enable WUGs to recover the O&M costs of irrigation scheme.

4 The strengthening of WUG to WUGA of NRI-AF Project takes following approaches for the implementation.

- (1) Capacity development of WUG through trainings and incorporation of village authority members and leading farmers into the executive committee
- (2) Registration of the strengthened WUGs to the relevant District Financial Office as one WUGA to coordinate and manage irrigation activities on each subproject
- (3) Supporting to open a bank account and to have business functions including marketing of agricultural products
- (4) Promoting high value crops (HVCs) production during the dry season to enable WUG/WUGA to recover the O&M costs of irrigation scheme

2. Implementation Procedure

5 At first, evaluation criteria are set through full consultation with various agencies such as NPMO, PPO, DCO, WUGAs well as GIC specialists. Then current situation of all the WUGs of NRI and NRI-AF Projects are evaluated by the criteria. Through the evaluation by using the criteria, issues of each WUG and the solutions are identified. Based on the result, the PPO and DCO provide necessary instructions and trainings to each WUG. One year after the first evaluation, second evaluation will be implemented to measure achievement of the instructions and trainings provided by PPO/DCO. When WUGs in an irrigation scheme meet all the standard set as criteria, the project supports registration of the WUGs as one WUGA to the relevant District Financial Office.

6 After registration as a WUGA at District Financial Office, the Project will support to open a bank account and to have business functions including marketing of agricultural products. The Project promotes HVCs production during the dry season by market-led approach. The Project supports farmers and agribusiness to strengthen and develop existing market connection and agribusiness relationship. For all 22 subprojects of NRI-AF Project, the meetings among agribusiness, farmers and PAFO/DAFO to discuss about the crop types and area to be planted in coming dry season.

3. Progress to Date

7 **Strengthening of existing WUGs:** In 3rd Quarter 2020, the PPO and DCO continues providing trainings on WUG administrative management, financial management and O&M for 28 WUGs of 7 Phase II subprojects.

8 **Registration as WUGAs:** In September 2018, NPMO/GIC Community Development Team supported the registration work to the relevant District Financial Offices, and the eight (8) pilot subprojects were registered as three (3) Water Users Group Associations (WUGAs) to the Financial Offices in Pha Oudom, Sing and Bountai Districts respectively.

Table App 6.1: Three pilot WUGAs registered to the relevant District Financial Offices

No	WUGA name	No. of WUG to associated	District/ province	Gov. Agreement No./ Date issued	Total Committee member	female	% of female
1.	Nam Lan – Nam Ngene	2	Boun Tai/ PSL	03/BT DG 12/09/2018	5	2	40%
2	Nam Dai 5 - 6	2	Sing / LNT	447/ BT DG 20/09/2018	7	3	43%

No	WUGA name	No. of WUG to associated	District/ province	Gov. Agreement No./ Date issued	Total Committee member	female	% of female
3	Nam Haad Right, Nam Haad Left and Houay Lieng ¹	4	Pha Oudom/ BK	713/POD DG 26/09/2018	8	3	37.5%
	Total	8			20	8	40%

9 **WUGA Offices:** Construction works of WUG offices in Nam Beng and Nam Oun subprojects of Phase I were completed in March 2019. Construction of WUGA office in Nam Haad Right - Nam Haad Left and Houay Lieng (Pha Oudom District, Bokeo Province) was completed in May 2019. WUGA Offices for Nam Dai 5 – 6 (Sing District, Louang Namtha Province) and Nam Lan-Nam Ngene (Bounthai District, Phongsaly Province) were also completed in January and February 2020 respectively.

10 **Promotion of HVCs during the dry season:** In July 2019, the national community development specialist visited 3 pilot WUGAs for training on (i) contract farming and (ii) marketing of agricultural products. In September 2019, the national agricultural extension specialist respectively visited 3 PPOs of Luang Namtha, Phongsaly and Bokeo to instruct them to hold WUGAs meeting on planning of commercial crop production for the coming 2019/20 dry season. The national community development specialist and the national agricultural extension specialist conducted fieldwork for supporting HVCs promotion in October 2020 and November 2020 respectively for the coming 2020/2021 dry season cropping.

11 At Nam Lan - Nam Ngene WUGA in Boun Tai District of Phongsaly Province, the WUGA started its own marketing for the crop production in 2019/2020 dry season. The WUGA introduced and sold agricultural products to Chinese investors, middlemen and traders through the international border at trial basis. There is no communication issue for the WUGA EC members as many of the lowland farmers in Boun Tai District is Lue tribe, and they have relatives of the same tribe speaking the same language at the Chinese side of the border.

12 In September 2021, the GIC national community development specialist visited 4 northern provinces to monitor progress of strengthening of WUGs at Phase I to III subprojects. The members of WUG Executive Committee of Nam Kha subproject (total 8 WUGs, Phase III) in Pha Oudom district and Nam Satone subproject (total 8 WUGs, Phase III) in Houayxay district been reelected in order to strengthen the WUGs' management during her field work.

13 The remaining assignment period of the GIC national community development and gender specialist is rather limited. Therefore, during her fieldwork from 6 to 20 September 2021, the specialist discussed and agreed with the relevant PAFO/DAFO on handing-over of WUGA strengthening work.

14 11 – 14 May 2022, WUGA review and training / partial for Irrigation O&M was conducted in Pha Oudom district for Nam Haad WUGA. Total Participant is 26 persons/ 8 females.

¹ There are 4 WUGs; Nam Haad Right, Nam Haad Left (Namkha), Houay Lieng 1, and Houay Lieng 2

Annex: Photos of Strengthening of WUG to WUGA Activities

	
<p>Review progress works including strengthening of the WUGs for Phase III and IV subprojects with PPO/DCO officers at Bounneua DCO office (Bounneua, PSL, 8 Sep 2021)</p>	<p>Meeting with WUG members of Nam Ngai sub scheme of Nam Ngai – Nam Boun subproject (Phase IV) (Bounneua, PSL, 9 Sep 2021)</p>
	
<p>Meeting with PPO BKO and DCO Houayxay on various topics including strengthening of WUGs of Phase I, II and III (Houayxay, BKO, 13 Sep 2021)</p>	<p>Meeting with DCO Beng, ODX Prov. on various topics including strengthening of WUGs of Phase I and II at DCO Beng Office (Beng, ODX, 15 Sep 2021)</p>
	
<p>Review/ training of O&M Nam Haad WUGA 11-14 May 2022</p>	<p>Practical of field work on O&M training of Nam Haad WUGA 11-14 May 2022</p>