



NORTHERN RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT SECTOR PROJECT (NRIDSP) NEWS LETTER No.1

November 2011

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Greetings from National Project Director!



I'm Phaythoune Phomvixay, a National Project Manager of Northern Rural Infrastructure Development Sector Project (NRIDSP). As a Project Manager as well as a publisher, it is my greatest pleasure to

send you this NRIDSP News Letter No.1 (November 2011).

NRIDSP is implemented by the Department of Planning (DOP) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), financially assisted by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) (ADB Grant No. 0235-Lao SF) commencing from August 2011. The key project objectives are to increase rural productivity and subsequently rural incomes in the northern region which covers 4 provinces consisting of Oudomxai, Bokeo, Luang Namtha and Pongsaly Provinces.



Project Site of NRIDSP

The technical challenge of NRIDSP is "Promotion of value-added agriculture through a combination of rural infrastructure and its associated initiatives." On this basis, the Project encompasses 4 major activities to materialize project outcome and impact.

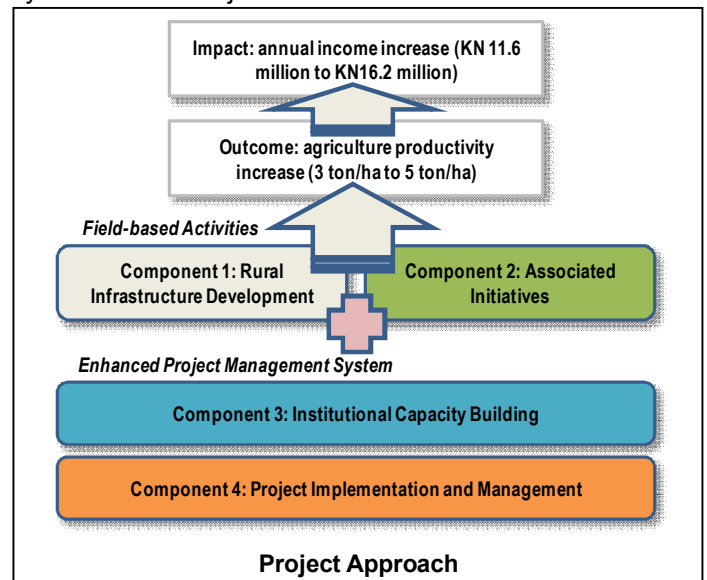
Component 1: to rehabilitate and upgrade rural infrastructure consisting of irrigation facilities and rural access road to ensure irrigation water supply to its command area and to improve market access

Component 2: to enhance the impact from rehabilitated and developed facilities through (i) O&M Improvement, (ii) agricultural extension, (iii)

contract farming facilitation etc.

Component 3: capacity building at the national level (within MAF) as well as the implementation capacity for staff at national, provincial and district levels

Component 4: to support project management system by enhancing relevant staff's capability in project management as well as establishment of workable PBME system for the Project



At present, in parallel with various field activities including community development, land use planning, environmental study, engineering, we're preparing to start feasibility study for candidate subprojects.

In this news letter, we would like to regularly deliver a vivid voice not only from National Project Management Office (NPMO) and Provincial Project Offices (PPOs) but also from District Coordination Officers (DCOs) and communities. Useful project information is also available from website (<http://www.nri-lao.org/>). Our dear readers, any feed-back and comments will be much welcomed! Finally, we would like to express our sincere appreciation again from the bottom of our heart to those who has been continuously supporting NRIDSP and we hope that this paper will be able to contribute to collaborating more closely as a NRIDSP family!



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Technical Orientation Workshop

As one of the activities in institutional capacity building under component 3, technical orientation workshop was organized in October 24th to 26th at Houay Xai (Bokeo Province) and October 27th to 29th at Luang Namtha (Luang Namtha Province). The purpose of the workshop is to provide orientation to PPO and DCO Staff about the project particularly on the project background, concepts, objectives, components, strategies and project plan of activities on (i) irrigation and road, (ii) environmental impact assessment and mitigation plan, (iii) gender, indigenous people and community development, (iv) land use planning, (v) extension and marketing and (vi) project benefit monitoring and evaluation (PBME). The number of participants of 2 workshops are tabulated as follows, which included 37 numbers of female participants (35 %).

Number of Participants attended in the Workshop

Workshop	Date	Participants (PPO and DCO)	Number
At Houay Xai (Bokeo Province)	October 24 th to 26 th	Oudomxai and Bokeo Provinces	45
At Luang Namtha (Luang Namtha Province)	October 27 th to 29 th	Luang Namtha and Pongsaly Provinces	60
Total	-	-	105

The workshop commenced from opening speech by the director of PAFO (Bokeo and Luang Namtha Provinces respectively) followed by the presentation of general information about the Project and technical explanation from each subsector as shown in the following table.



Opening Remarks by Director of PAFO in Bokeo Province (October 24th 2011)

Irrigation and Road

- ✧ Data collection of present irrigation practices
- ✧ Identification of measures to solve current problems together with PAFO, DAFO and beneficiary farmers
- ✧ Formation of development plan under F/S including engineering design, calculation of work quantities, cost estimate, benefit and economic feasibility
- ✧ Establishments of village maintenance committees (VMC)
- ✧ Maintenance planning and budgeting

Environmental Safeguards

- ✧ Review of environmental conditions, environmental impact

anticipated through project implementation under initial environmental examination (IEE) of NRI

- ✧ IEE cycle
- ✧ Preparation of environmental monitoring plan during operation and maintenance period

Gender/Indigenous People and Community Development

- ✧ NRI project-wide gender action plan
- ✧ Indigenous people's planning framework (IPPF)
- ✧ Social impact assessment (SIA) procedure
- ✧ Framework and process of WUG/WUA and farmers' production groups (FPGs) establishment and development
- ✧ Involvement of beneficiaries during implementation and O&M phase

Resettlement

- ✧ Resettlement process
- ✧ Establishment of resettlement committee
- ✧ Resettlements process, methodology and implementation

Land Use Planning

- ✧ Policies and guidelines on land use planning
- ✧ Participatory land use planning (manual and practices)
- ✧ Activities and overall work plan on land use planning under associated initiatives

Agriculture Extension and Marketing

- ✧ General plan on agricultural extension activities under associated initiatives
- ✧ Introduction of marketing, marketing strategies and procedures
- ✧ Preparation of action plan

Project Benefit and Monitoring and Evaluation (PBME)

- ✧ Concept and principle of PBME of NRI
- ✧ Methodology of PBME
- ✧ Indicators to be applied for PBME
- ✧ Key stakeholders and their roles in PBME
- ✧ Project website to facilitate information sharing among stakeholders

After the orientation, the action plan toward implementation of the Project was formulated by the participants through small group discussion. Such stepwise capacity building programs, to be carried out in the course of the Project, is an important impetus to implement the Project. The program for PPOs and DCOs will, we are sure, contribute to smooth implementation as well as sustainability of developed facilities.



Explanation of Gender Impact Analysis by Dr. Soumountha Yountitham, Grant Implementation Consultant (October 29th 2011)

(PBME Specialist Shigeya Otsuka / Youngyer Kongchi)

NRIDSP Main Activity in December 2011

- Preparation of commencement of detailed design for 3 subprojects: (i) Nam Haad Irrigation Rehabilitation, (ii) Nam Dai Irrigation Rehabilitation and (iii) Mong Chao Rural Road Rehabilitation.
- Feasibility study for 6 candidates subproject under Year 1 including engineering, land use planning and socio-economy

From the Editor

How did you find the NRIDSP News Letter No.1? In this number, project director's greetings and Technical Orientation Workshop is reported. We wish that we gradually develop this newspaper through expanding topics as project is carried out.

As Project Manager mentioned, your contribution to this newsletter is highly appreciated. Please send us your comments, opinion and request at all times to our editorial board either by Fax or E-mail.