

FAO Country Programming Framework for Lao PDR (2013-2015)

The CPF for Lao PDR outlines the joint Government of Lao PDR and FAO medium-term priorities for FAO's technical assistance over the period 2013-2015. It was formulated by a joint national and international team through a process of literature review, semi-structured interviews with key resource persons from Government, FAO, other UN agencies, other development partners and civil society. Successive drafts of the document have benefited from the comments of GOL and FAO's national, regional and headquarters offices.

Agriculture dominates the economy, and while the agricultural growth rate is higher than that of population, this is largely explained by rapid expansion of concession agriculture. Eighty percent of farmers are still subsistence producers, and their production is dominated by rice. Rice has in fact been an important success story in Lao PDR, with rapid growth transforming the country from a net importer to a significant exporter during the past two decades. However other developments have had negative consequences for dietary balance. Concession agriculture has denied local populations access to traditional sources of income and nutrient-rich foods from open-access resources, particularly forests. Diversion of water resources, especially for electricity generation, has had seriously negative impact on the aquatic environment, which has in turn has reduced popular access to a wide range of nutrient-rich aquatic foodstuffs. The horticulture, livestock and fisheries sub-sectors all suffer from low productivity. Some vegetables are grown under irrigation, but most available water is used for rice. In aquaculture there are problems such as lack of access to high quality fish feed and fingerlings outside of the most accessible areas. Veterinary provision is low, animal disease outbreaks are common, animal mortality rates are high and feed provision is problematic.

The Government has adopted a wide range of policies at national, sectoral, sub-sectoral and cross-sectoral levels in response to these challenges. The country's overarching development goal is to reduce poverty, achieve growth with equity and meet the MDGs, with the aim of graduating from the 'Least Developed' category of countries by 2020. Key challenges recognized in the current five year plan include the need for a "more visible shift" of employment from farm to non-farm sectors, addressing environmental issues and mitigating the impact of climate change. One of the seven 'directions' of the Plan addresses rural development and poverty eradication, the aim being to reduce income inequalities between rural and urban areas, between geographical areas and between rich and poor. In 2011 the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry adopted a Strategy for Agricultural Development to 2020.

FAO has a global and regional mandate to both to address problems such as those outlined above and to assist government in areas such as policy formulation, capacity building and policy implementation. It has been operational in Lao PDR since 1975 and has had an in-country Representative Office since 1980. During this period it has worked closely with Government and other development partners to implement a wide range of interventions in agricultural development (including livestock, fisheries and forestry), food and nutritional security, natural resource management, and improving information flows. The CPF aims to build on this platform in close collaboration with GOL.

The CPF formulation process has identified four priority areas in which FAO should work with government in the medium term. These are based on a careful balancing of (i) the issues identified, (ii) Government policy, (iii) FAO's comparative advantages and its global and regional priorities, and (iv) the UN Development Assistance Framework for Lao PDR. Areas such as gender and youth employment are not listed as such among the priority areas, because they are overarching themes which will be central to activities, outputs and outcomes of all priority areas. Similarly, capacity development is not listed as a separate area, as it will form a key part of all outputs and activities under CPF implementation. The priority areas are:

Priority 1. Improved food and nutritional security by means of enhanced land and labour productivity for food-insecure farm households

- Outcomes:
1. Effective policy instruments for attaining national food and nutritional goals are designed and deployed; and
 2. Food and nutritional security are improved through enhanced land and labour productivity for vulnerable farm households.

Priority 2. Environmentally sustainable production for the market by small farmers using the value chain approach

Outcome: Environmentally sustainable production for the market by small farmers using value chain approach is mainstreamed.

Priority 3. Sustainable natural resource management for crops, forests, fisheries and livestock

Outcome: Natural resources for crops, forests, fisheries and livestock are sustainably managed.

Priority 4. Enhanced capacities for disaster risk reduction and management to reduce risk exposure and vulnerabilities and to natural and other disasters and to improve post-disaster reliance

Outcome: Risk and vulnerability to natural and other disasters, including those induced or intensified by climate change, reduced by linking prevention, preparedness, response and resilience.

Implementation of the CPF will be guided by a set of principles, namely, alignment with national priorities, adoption of a programming approach in collaboration with government and other development partners, mutual accountability and transparency, centrality of overarching themes of capacity building, gender mainstreaming, decent employment and poverty reduction, and the incorporation of sustainability and a viable exit strategy into all interventions. CPF implementation will be under a Steering Committee co-chaired by MAF and FAO and drawing its membership from relevant stakeholders. A short-term implementation plan will be developed, an important focus of which will be resource mobilization. All activities under the CPF and the CPF itself will be carefully monitored, while mid-term and end-of-programme reviews will learn key lessons to be incorporated into the next CPF.

Funding arrangements: FAO and the Government will adopt the funding modalities that are most suitable to implement the CPF. This will include using existing national and FAO modalities as well as the new modalities that may be useful in tapping into external resources. In line with the emphasis on a programmatic approach, suitable avenues for resource mobilization will include programme umbrellas such as the EU's NUDP, as well as the World Bank's Forest Investment Program, UN-REDD.

This document, co-owned by the GOL and FAO, presents the broad commitment of FAO, subject to the availability of the required funding, to assist the GOL in its efforts to achieve development objectives as articulated in recent strategy and national policy frameworks for agriculture. It also complements and contributes to the strategic objectives of the UN common system as expressed in the current UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Lao PDR.

By endorsing the CPF, the GOL is committed to providing collaboration, to the fullest possible extent with regard to available capacity and resources, to facilitate the achievement of the objectives and actions proposed in this document.

The implementation of the CPF will be pursued in partnerships as broad as possible and in alignment with the joint efforts of the GOL and its development partners for enhanced coordination and aid effectiveness. The Lao PDR and FAO look forward to seeking collaboration and support from concerned partners *vis-à-vis* the successful implementation of the CPF 2013–2015.

(CPF document is finalized and endorsement and approval by the Government is awaited.)

Annex: Results Matrix

LAO PDR - FAO Country Programming Framework

PRIORITY OUTCOME 1. Policy analysis and design of policy instruments to support improved decision making in food security					
Priority Output	Indicator(s)	Baseline (2011)	Target (2015)	Means of Verification	Assumptions
1.1 A National Food Security Strategy and Plan of Action are developed	a. Strategy is agreed and ready for approval b. PoA is agreed and ready for approval	Previous Strategy is inadequate and outdated	New strategy designed and ready for official approval	- Inspection and evaluation of documents - Interviews with key stakeholders	- Key stakeholders approve Strategy and/or Plan of action - A practicable strategy and implementation mechanism is developed for multi-ministry coordination on food security
1.2 National Food Balance Sheets prepared for improved assessment of progress towards food security and nutritional goals	a. Balance sheet is prepared and ready for approval	No NFBS	NFBS designed and ready for official approval	Evaluation of documents	- Key stakeholders accept outputs of project and use them in planning
PRIORITY OUTCOME 2. Food and nutritional security are improved through enhanced resource productivity for vulnerable farm households					
Priority Output	Indicator(s)	Baseline (2011)	Target (2015)	Means of Verification	Assumptions
2.1 Sustainably increased production and consumption of fish and other aquatic foodstuffs	a. % increase in consumption of fish and other aquatic foodstuffs (including by women and children)	(Available data is insufficiently comprehensive, reliable or disaggregated to be of use for this purpose. A baseline needs to be conducted in project areas.)	(To be derived from baseline survey.)	- Baseline survey - Semi-structured interviews with sample of beneficiaries dietary composition - Anthropometric measurements	- Fish production increases - Increased production results in increased consumption - Intra-household discrimination does not prevent access by women and children Increased access not negated by poor food utilization
2. Sustainably increased production and consumption of livestock and livestock products	a. % increase in consumption of meat and other animal produce (including by women and children)	(Available data is insufficiently comprehensive, reliable or disaggregated to be of use for this purpose. A baseline needs to be conducted in project areas.)	(To be derived from baseline survey.)	- Baseline survey - Semi-structured interviews with sample of beneficiaries dietary composition - Anthropometric measurements	- Livestock production increases - Increased production results in increased consumption - Intra-household discrimination does not prevent access by women and children Increased access not negated by poor food utilization

2.3 Sustainable crop diversification	a. % increase in consumption of nutrient-rich vegetable foods (including by women and children)	(Available data is insufficiently comprehensive, reliable or disaggregated to be of use for this purpose. A baseline needs to be conducted in project areas.)	(To be derived from baseline survey.)	- Baseline survey - Semi-structured interviews with sample of beneficiaries dietary composition - Anthropometric measurements	- Production of nutrient-rich foods increases - Increased production results in increased consumption - Intra-household discrimination does not prevent access by women and children Increased access not negated by poor food utilization
2.4 Small scale irrigation lengthens the growing season for nutrient-rich crops and reduces vulnerability to drought for smallholder farmers	a. % increase in consumption of nutrient-rich crops	(Available data is insufficiently comprehensive, reliable or disaggregated to be of use for this purpose. A baseline needs to be conducted in project areas.)	(To be derived from baseline survey.)	- Baseline survey - Semi-structured interviews with sample of beneficiaries dietary composition - Anthropometric measurements	- Production of nutrient-rich foods increases - Increased production results in increased consumption - Intra-household discrimination does not prevent access by women and children - Increased access not negated by poor food utilization
PRIORITY OUTCOME 3. Environmentally sustainable production for the market by small farmers using value chain approach is mainstreamed					
Priority Output	Indicator(s)	Baseline (2011)	Target (2015)	Means of Verification	Assumptions
3.1 Regulations on registering farmers' associations and cooperatives are simplified and made more appropriate and accessible to small and vulnerable farmers, including women and youth, and small farmers are assisted to form sustainable marketing organizations	a. Number of new smallholders farmers' associations formed b. Number of new smallholders farmers' cooperatives formed	seven	700	- Baseline survey - Inspection of regulations - Interventions to assist small farmers to join	- Sufficient official commitment to simplifying regulations - Markets exist for the produce farmers produce or could produce - Farmers persuaded of benefits of membership - Farmers organizations able to negotiate favourable terms with traders
3.2 Food Safety is	a. Food safety laboratory	No FSL in	FSL constructed,	- Physical inspection of	- Funding secured to cover

enhanced through and improved inspection and testing regime at all points in agricultural value chains so as to meet Codex standards	constructed, equipped, staffed and funded b. Inspection and testing regime established c. Number of unsafe foodstuffs being rejected	existence	fully staffed, equipped and testing food samples	laboratory - Inspection of laboratory records and reports - Inspection of records and reports of inspection team	laboratory construction and other start-up costs System can be made financially sustainable in longer term
3.3 Legal and regulatory framework for agricultural inputs is strengthened to promote Organic Produce and Good Agricultural Practice, including occupational health and safety	a. Relevant legislation enacted b. Regulatory framework established c. Regionally/ Internationally recognized certification system in place	Legal and regulatory framework inadequate to ensure certified OP or GAP	New framework in place to meet internationally-accepted standards	- Examination of legislation and regulations - Inspection of certification agency - Evidence of international accreditation	- Sufficient official commitment to improving legislative and regulatory environment - International traders will accept certification
3.4 Reduce losses in order to add value in AVCs	- Cost of agricultural produce to consumer is reduced; farm-gate prices for agricultural produced increases	Levels of loss known to be high, but few accurate measurements (on-farm post-harvest grain losses estimated at 15%)	Baseline losses estimated and reduced by 50%	- Baseline survey - AVC analysis	- Envisaged savings materialize - Market failure does not prevent savings being passed on to consumer and producer

PRIORITY OUTCOME 4. Natural resources for crops, forests, fisheries and livestock are sustainably managed

Priority Output	Indicator(s)	Baseline (2011)	Target (2015)	Means of Verification	Assumptions
4.1 Productivity of agricultural resources in upland areas is increased to provide economically and environmentally sustainable alternatives to shifting cultivation	a. % reduction in area under shifting cultivation b. % increase in area under sedentary agriculture (SA) c. % increase in incomes of those who have switched from shifting cultivation	(a) SC practised by 17 percent of population and dominates on 29 percent of the land area. (c) No baseline data available: baseline study to be conducted in intervention area(s)	(a) SC stabilized. b) SA dominates in areas where SC was previously dominant (c) 50% increase in incomes of participants	- Baseline surveys - Sample surveys in year x - Household survey using techniques of participatory rural appraisal	- Viable alternatives to shifting cultivation can be identified - Ability to assist farmers with safety net provision during transition phase - Farmers do not return to SC when transition phase is complete

4.2 Concession Agriculture Rationalized within a General Land Tenure Policy Framework	Legislative and regulatory framework that balances the benefits of concession agriculture with community rights	Legislative and regulatory frameworks inadequate and open to abuse	New legal and regulatory framework drafted and ready for approval	- inspection of laws, decrees, regulations - discussions with senior officials of relevant ministries	- Voluntary guidelines are accepted by Government
4.3 Village Communities within and around Conservation, Protection and Production Forests are fully engaged in forest planning, protection and management and benefit from resulting income opportunities	a. Forest management groups established b. Inclusive membership of groups c. Members' livelihoods enhanced	Forest management groups only on pilot basis	New groups established with inclusive membership and incomes increased by 50%	- Baseline surveys - Inspection of records at village level - Survey to establish extent of livelihood gains	- Sufficient official commitment to creating/simplifying regulations - Community persuaded of benefits of membership - Forest degradation halted and/or reversed
4.4 Participatory management successfully protects wetland ecosystems	- Enhancement/reduction in deterioration of biodiversity - Increase or stabilization of wildlife populations - Livelihood enhancement of community members	- IUCN baseline survey of baseline biological situation; - FAO survey of socio-economic conditions (to be conducted)	- biodiversity indices increased by x% - Incomes increase by 50%	- Baseline surveys of wetland condition and of community livelihoods - Socio-economic surveys - Biological surveys	- Community embrace involvement - Adequate revenue generated - conservation efforts prove successful
PRIORITY OUTCOME 5. Risk and vulnerability to natural and other disasters, including those induced or intensified by climate change, are reduced by linking prevention, preparedness, response and resilience					
Priority Output	Indicator(s)	Baseline (2011)	Target (2015)	Means of Verification	Assumptions
5.1. Enhanced capacity to generate and analyse data on a range of possible impacts of climate change on the agricultural sector, particularly as it impacts on food security	a. Improved agro-meteorological data in place b. No of action plans formulated at local level c. Increased range of responses to the impact of climate change on agriculture	a. Important agro-ecological data gaps b. No local-level action plans	a. Systems for collecting missing data in place b. Local level action plans formulated in pilot areas	- Baseline survey - Inspection of data outputs from upgraded agro-meteorological stations - Analysis of local action plans and role agro-met data played in developing them	- Data generated by agro-met stations is analyzed and reported on in a user-friendly format - Local planners and communities are capable of, and willing to, use data in formulating action plans - Action plans are effective and 'doable'

<p>5.2 The enabling environment (legal, policy and institutional systems plus regulatory frameworks) for disaster and crisis risk management in agriculture, nutrition, food security and food safety is enhanced</p>	<p>a. Legislative, institutional and regulatory frameworks improved b. Enhanced enabling environment for disaster and crisis risk management</p>	<p>Legislative and regulatory frameworks inadequate</p>	<p>New legal and regulatory framework drafted and ready for approval</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inspection of new legal and regulatory framework on a 'before-and-after' basis - Institutional assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Correct assessment has been made of the changes needed in the existing enabling environment - Relevant agencies are willing and empowered to make the necessary changes
<p>5.3 Known and emerging food, nutrition and agriculture threats are forecast, identified, analyzed and monitored, triggering appropriate decisions and actions</p>	<p>a. Adequate forecasting system is in place b. Capacity in place to monitor and analyze data, recognize threats and issue warnings as appropriate c. Authoritative warnings of this type trigger appropriate and timely decisions and actions</p>	<p>(Available data is insufficiently comprehensive, reliable or disaggregated to be of use for this purpose. A baseline needs to be conducted in project areas.)</p>	<p>(To be derived from baseline survey.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Baseline survey - Physical inspection of forecasting facilities - Analysis of adequacy of response to past emergencies - Time lines of stages in emergency response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Necessary qualified staff, equipment and other facilities for forecasting are available - Decision-making process is rapid and non-bureaucratic - Qualified staff, equipment and other facilities are in place to take actions on decisions
<p>5.4 Food security and agriculture crises are effectively and accountably managed from disaster preparedness through emergency response to post crisis recovery</p>	<p>a. Disaster preparedness provisions are appropriate and adequate b. Disaster response is rapid and effective c. Disaster recovery and rehabilitation is efficient d. Disaster response and rehabilitation are linked to development (LRRD)</p>	<p>(Available data is insufficiently comprehensive, reliable or disaggregated to be of use for this purpose. A baseline needs to be conducted in project areas.)</p>	<p>(To be derived from baseline survey.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Baseline survey - Analysis of preparedness plans - Analysis of response times and their effect on crisis-hit populations - Examination of links between response, rehabilitation and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Necessary structures and institutions are put in place - System of emergency management is fast-acting and non-bureaucratic - Concept of LRRD is fully appreciated