

Project Evaluation Series

[15/2024](#)

**Terminal evaluation of the project
“Strengthening agroclimatic monitoring
and information systems to improve
adaptation to climate change and food
security in the Lao People’s Democratic
Republic”**

Project code: GCP/LAO/021/LDF
GEF ID: 5462

Management response

Terminal evaluation of the project “Strengthening agroclimatic monitoring and information systems to improve adaptation to climate change and food security in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic” – Management response					07/2024
Evaluation recommendation <i>(The recommendations are directed at the FAO BH, FAO RAP and the LTO. They are also directed at FAO’s Office of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment (OCB) in Rome and the SAMIS PMU in Lao PDR.)</i>	Management response Accepted, Partially accepted or Rejected	Management plan			
		Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection	Responsible unit	Time frame	Further funding required (Y or N)
Recommendation 1. With the positive results of the SAMIS project towards the delivery of agrometeorological information to the farmers at selected locations, the planned follow-up project – SAMIS 2 – should scale up climate-responsive planning and decision making for resilient agriculture and livelihoods in Lao PDR. The SAMIS 2 Project should seek to institutionalize the successful decision-making tools developed and piloted under SAMIS. (See section on effectiveness) in close collaboration with MONRE.	Accepted	The SAMIS project established information systems continue to be operational after the closure of the activities, with consistent data input from government staff, resulting in ongoing production of planning recommendations for farmers. This signifies the project’s institutionalization. The SAMIS2 project will scale up climate-responsive planning and decision making for resilient agriculture and livelihoods at the national level. In addition, the SAMIS2 project will further institutionalize the use of the agrometeorology and planning tools, including a new collaboration with the Ministry of Social Welfare to cover 100% of the rural villages through loudspeakers and the development of a trigger system for anticipatory actions.	FAO Lao PDR	Planned starting date of the SAMIS2 is 2025	Yes
Recommendation 2. In order to strengthen sustainability, future project designs should: i. Ensure a more integrated implementation approach (of project components and complementary work of others) in order to strengthen tackling Lao’s most immediate and prominent climate change challenges - the recurrent droughts and floods. (See conclusion 2).Plan and budget for Operations and & Maintenance as part of a sustainability plan (and adapted as needed). (See Finding 4.6)	Partially accepted	While FAO acknowledges the significance of prioritizing sustainability in future SAMIS2 activities and is actively addressing this aspect in the preparation phase, it’s important to note that, at the time of the management response, all project-implemented tools remain operational and are maintained by government staff two years post-project. Nevertheless, we accept the recommendations with some decisive notes as follows: The project has successfully established complementary activities between the different government partners and between the central and local government levels. The project has also developed a drought alert system that is at present	FAO Laos and FAO RAP	Ongoing during SAMIS2 preparation	No

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. Carefully consider prospects for government (or other) for continuation of essential activities iii. Invest in environmental and social safeguards expertise, and gender expertise to help ensure that the cross-cutting issues are properly designed and proactively feeding into implementation. (See Finding 6.2; 7.2). 		<p>online within the LaCSA system. Management therefore disagrees on the assessment that drought was not considered sufficiently in the activities. The flood monitoring system wasn't created due to the MONRE's is still finalizing the historical hydroclimatological database required for flood estimation calibration.</p> <p>FAO Laos and FAO RAP are actively considering the role of the private sector and financial intermediaries in SAMIS2 while also carefully evaluating prospects for government or other entities to sustain essential activities</p> <p>There were no significant environmental or social impacts expected from the project at the time of the project’s design. As a result, the project was rated as a Category C project. This rating was retained and confirmed throughout the life of the project during annual project reporting exercises. As part of the preparation of the SAMIS2 project a substantive environmental and social impact assessment was prepared and the findings of this assessment confirm the rating of the original SAMIS project with no significant expected environmental or social risks expected. In line with the evolving requirements of donors on safeguards and the increased emphasis FAO is placing on proactive use of safeguards, and FAO Laos and FAO RAP are actively including gender cross-cutting issues in the design of the SAMIS2 project.</p>			

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<p>Recommendation 3. In order to strengthen learning, monitoring and evaluation, future project designs should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Ensure a theory of change is developed at design stage within the overall design and M&E development. This should be deeply embedded in the context that reflects the mechanisms that influence changes sought locally and in policies and practices. Its logic should be revised and revalidated over time to ensure that either the project is on the right track or that outputs and outcomes require adjustments. (See Finding 5.2). ii. Build in an M&E Plan into their design with baselines, SMART indicators at the earliest stage possible, and avoid M&E becoming an “add on” during the implementation phase. (See Finding 5.1). 	Accepted	<p>The SAMIS project did not include a theory of change because this was not required by the donor at the time of project preparation. Emphasis on developing a theory of change during the SAMIS2 design stage, ensuring it is deeply rooted in the local context and reflective of the mechanisms influencing desired changes.</p> <p>The SAMIS2 team will be requested to integrate an M&E Plan into the earliest possible project phase, incorporating baselines and SMART indicators at the earliest stages. The importance of preventing M&E from being an “add on” during implementation aligns with FAO Laos PDR commitment to ensuring robust monitoring and evaluation processes that contribute to the project’s success.</p>	FAO Lao PDR and LTO	Planned starting date of the SAMIS2 is 2025	Yes

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