

Strengthening Agro-climatic Monitoring and Information Systems (SAMIS) to improve adaptation to climate change and food security in Lao People's Democratic Republic

**(GCP /LAO/021/LDF)
GEF ID 5462**

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
Lao People's Democratic Republic, 2021**

Response by recommendation

In this section, Management should address each recommendation, discussing them in the order presented in the executive summary of the MTR report. This should be done in the format of the Management Response matrix below and include:

- a. The recommendation number and text copied from the MTR report;
- b. Indication of whether the recommendation is accepted fully, partially, or rejected;
- c. Description of the actions to be taken, with comments as required on the conditions to be met during implementation, or on reasons leading to a partial acceptance or rejection of a recommendation;
- d. The responsible party or FAO unit for implementing the action/s;
- e. The time-frame for implementation and/or an implementation schedule, if required;
- f. Indication if further funding from FAO or a resource partner is required for implementing the recommendation.

Management response matrix¹

Management response to the [Title]					Date
Evaluation Recommendation (a)	Management response (b) Accepted, Partially Accepted or Rejected	Management plan			
		Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection (c)	Responsible unit (d)	Time frame (e)	Further funding required (Y or N) (f)
<p>Recommendation 1: More Training / Capacity Building</p> <p>Considering that some of the technical training was imparted by the international specialists in English language, the receptibility of the training imparted was low. The situation got further complicated as some of the training has to be imparted using online platforms. It is recommended that a rapid assessment be carried out to identify the training gaps and further training and capacity building sessions be organized. To the extent possible local language be used for training, in</p>	Accepted	<p>Trainings at local level and center level, to the extent possible, will be arranged at the local language. Specifically as below:</p> <p>Local level training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TOT training materials will be finalized in English and Lao languages by November 2021. - The SAMIS team trains the NGO staff from SNV and CCL as TOT, the NGO staff later train village-level experts. 	Local level SAMIS staff under C3	<p>Local level training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NGO training ongoing since April 21, see PPR June 21 - TOT training material is being prepared to be finalized by November 21 	N

¹ Each column is cross-referenced to the bullet letters above.

<p>case it is not possible at least the training material be prepared in the local language. During the mission it was emphasized by the stakeholders that more technical training is needed particularly on agro-met.</p>		<p>Central level training The online training continues due to several lockdowns with translation between Lao and English and vice versa being arranged to ensure translation quality at all sessions. A rapid training need assessment will be carried out to verify the training gaps and future trainings. The opportunity of a second training assessment will be discussed at the PSC.</p>	<p>Central level SAMIS Staff: Training Manager (TM) and Project Coordinator (PC)</p>	<p>Central level training plan Training continues regularly with translation until PSC</p>	<p>Y One day translation in Zoom costs \$600/day Rapid TNA minor cost</p>
<p>Recommendation 2: Prepare knowledge products It is recommended to prioritize the development of case studies and knowledge products from the success of the SAMIS project. Actions may also be initiated to disseminate the case studies and knowledge products to larger audiences.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>SAMIS project will support the government counterpart in their efforts to cover a wider audience of the dissemination of knowledge products from the SAMIS projects. Specifically, 1) DALAM is exploring the possibility to make a regular Facebook page; 2) DALAM is exploring the option to participate in weekly agriculture TV shows and prepare weekly shows; 3) DMH has a weekly TV meteo show on LaCSA; 4) DALAM will start soon communicating regularly with the LaoFAB mailing list. Besides, multiple case studies have been published on the project web page after the end of the MTR. At least another studies/success stories of SAMIS project will be developed with the communication specialist. The case studies will also be made available in Lao language and shared widely.</p>	<p>SAMIS staff under C3</p>	<p>Booklets Atlases - Nov 21 TOT LaCSA – Oct 21 Manual in small scale planning – June 22 LaCSA functionality (field lessons learned) – March 22 Booklet on AEZ development – June 22 Policy storyline – March 22 One video– June 22 App on LaCSA – June 22 Other media DALAM Facebook page – Dec 21</p>	<p>N</p>

				<p>DALAM weekly agriculture TV shows – December 21</p> <p>DMH TV meteo show –ongoing since 2020</p> <p>DALAM LaoFAB communications – Dec 21</p>	
<p>Recommendation 3: Increase geographical coverage by including villages in the neighborhood of the pilot villages</p> <p>The project is using the Lao National Radio and loudspeaker system for dissemination of the agroclimatic information/bulletin to the farmers in the villages where pilot activities are being carried out. It is recommended that the geographical spread of the dissemination of the agrometeorological information/bulletin be increased (even if it means a marginal increase in the overall cost for this activity).</p> <p>Some of the initiatives which are suggested are as follows:</p> <p>1. Wherever possible and practical, take the signals from the amplification systems working</p>	Partially accepted	<p>In collaboration with SAMIS staff, the geographical coverage on dissemination of the agroclimatic information/ bulletin to farmers will be extended to some target villages in Attapeu, Luangprabang and Oudomxay provinces under other FAO implemented emergency and resilient projects. Trainings will be done for the local technical staff and village authorities on how to read the script and disseminate the agro-climatic bulletin.</p> <p>The option of using 'Community Radio' will be explored either through pilot in the target villages or in collaboration with local NGOs for SAMIS publications dissemination.</p> <p>Exploring the possibilities of Toll-free call back service provided by the mobile phone service companies.</p> <p>LaCSA is seen as a community development tool that should be distributed with the collaboration of the village authorities, in line with the Law on Disaster Management approved in 2020. LaCSA bulletin is in Facebook for these that have a scarce web connection.</p>	SAMIS staff	November 2021 – March 2022	Some travel cost of SAMIS staff if possible-

<p>the pilot villages and feed it to the loudspeaker system of the neighbouring villages.</p> <p>2. Wherever required, the location and orientation of the loudspeakers in the villages be optimized to maximize the geographical coverage by the agroclimatic bulletin.</p> <p>3. Explore the possibilities of using 'Community Radio' for broadcasting the agroclimatic bulletin. This has the potential to increase the geographical coverage exponentially. For such an initiative the possibilities of getting required permission/license from concerned authorities needs to be explored. However, wherever Community Radio is existing, it may be utilized for broadcasting the bulletin</p> <p>4. Explore the possibilities of Toll-free call back service provided by the mobile phone service companies can be provided. Under this a farmer can call a phone number and listen to the pre-recorded agro-climatic information/bulletin. Server menu can provide the choice to a farmer to listen to the information which is specific to</p>		<p>However, the tool-free LACSA app connect could not been done within the project timeframe because there are not enough resources for the activity and the process is highly centralized and will take much longer to implement.</p>			
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<p>his/her location, crop and other such parameters. Based on discussions with the officials of the mobile telecom service providers it is assessed that this service can be made upstream within a month's time in the pilot locations. Such a service will enable a farmer to listen to the agromet information at the time of his/her choice. Further, a farmer will be able to listen to the information again in case she/he is not able to understand the complete bulletin in one go. The good thing about it is that this service can be accessed even by someone using a very basic mobile phone instrument and in locations where the mobile network speed is low (2G and 3G services).</p>					
<p>Recommendation 4: Initiate the process of provision of budgetary support by DMH to ensure operations and maintenance of AWSs Establishment of AWSs under Component 1 of the project is one of the highlights of the SAMIS project. The real time information feed from the AWSs facilitates generation of Agromet</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The sustainability of the stations related to institutional inertia in various government departments and financial constraints. However, SAMIS has taken the following steps on budget.</p> <p>Completed activities. LaCSA has been under operational guarantee for 10 years. An LRMIS guarantee contract is also under preparation.</p>	<p>- Done</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>-</p>

<p>information and advisory for the farmers. Going forward the continuation of the provision of the Agromet services will depend on the continuation of operations of the AWSs. For this it is necessary to ensure maintenance (including the need to replace the sensors as and when required) and service of the weather stations. It is recommended that the process be initiated to make provisions in the budgets of the respective department towards this end. This needs to be taken on priority as the project is going to end over next the six months.</p>		<p>The cost of the station SIM card service will be covered by DMH state budget (total \$2.500 per year).</p> <p>Weather stations are under guarantee, and spare parts were procured and are stored in DMH.</p> <p>Under implementation The cost of travel for the repair/ maintenance of stations will be discussed in the next PSC. The SOP policy is under finalization. Training on management is planned and should be undertaken before the end of the project.</p>	<p>NPC and PC</p>	<p>PSC December 21 SOP approval by March 22</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>Recommendation 5: Support the initiation of the process of development of Crop Insurance products</p>	<p>Rejected</p>	<p>The DMH collaborates with the CIAT De-RISK project "Applying seasonal climate forecasting and innovative insurance solutions to climate risk management in the agriculture sector in SE Asia", which also co-finance SAMIS. For this, De-RISK has not worked in insurances in Lao PDR. During the inception workshop held on 12 October 18 in Hanoi, the Director-General of DMH, Mr. Khanmani, explained that insurances are not priorities in Lao PDR. The MTR team was informed about the activities organized by CIAT in Lao PDR.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>-</p>

<p>The data from the weather stations being created under the WB project, once functional, will be used for the benefits of the SAMIS project (and beyond the SAMIS project) for the agro-met services, thereby increasing the geographical area served by the SAMIS project. The weather stations created under the SAMIS project can help the WB project by providing a dataset. As the AWS stations under the WB project will be installed after the end of SAMIS, this may require installing additional instruments at the stations and minor revision in the LaCSA system.</p> <p>As a calibration lab is being created under the SAMIS project, the weather stations created under the WB project may use this lab.</p> <p>The WB project can provide sustainability to some of the activities and results of the SAMIS project by supporting continuation of such activities beyond the implementation timelines of the SAMIS project.</p> <p>With the increase in the number of weather stations in Laos it is a good idea to replicate/upscale the good results from the pilot at the villages under the SAMIS project,</p>		<p><i>Meteorological and Hydrological Services and Enhancing the Early Warning Systems in Cambodia and Lao People's Democratic Republic.</i></p>			
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<p>to the national level. For the purpose the weather stations being created under the WB project (and may be some other projects as well) can be leveraged. Such a strategy to leverage will enable upscaling of the results at a minimal incremental cost. A new project may be proposed in Laos to upscale the results of SAMIS project, using this approach as a strategy</p>					
<p>Recommendation 7: Actions for Replication and Upscaling</p> <p>With the good results out of SAMIS project towards delivery of agrometeorological information to the farmers at selected locations, a plan for replication and upscaling the results at the national level may be initiated. This may be done as a part of a national program or a new externally funded project. In case a new externally funded project is proposed, it may leverage the good results of the SAMIS project and establishment of new AWSs under other ongoing funded projects SAMIS project has supported preparation of a concept note for</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The proposed activities are ongoing as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A plan for replication and upscaling the results at the national level will be included in the SAMIS2 project document preparation, potentially using the budget under the GCF preparation process. 2. The GCF CN proposal is still under development and should be submitted to GCF by Dec 21. 3. The TOT extension manual to capitalize lessons learned from FFS and other methods will be published in English and Lao in Oct 21. 4. A CIAT study that constitutes co-financing to SAMIS is under finalization and will allow assessing additional farmers agro-met information benefits. The booklet will be published as case study by SAMIS 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New staff under RAP, including international agro-meteo expert 2. SAMIS and RAP. 3. PC. 4. PC and CIAT. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preparation of GCF Prodoc by the end of 2022 under RAP funds 2. GCF CN to be submitted by Dec 21. 3. The Manual will be published on Oct 21 in English and Lao language. 4. CIAT study will be published on Mar 22 in English and Lao language. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Y 2. N 3. N 4. N

<p>potential funding from GCF, for a replication/upscaling activity. The government has already extended its approval to the concept note and requested FAO to take it forward. Possibilities to take it further may be explored.</p> <p>Capitalize lessons learned from Farmer Field School (FFS) through a simple extension manual which could be used by local extension workers with clear cost-benefit analysis . to analyze how much additional margin farmers could get through adopting these agro-met information and production technologies.</p>					
<p>Recommendation 8: Create a center of excellence in one of the institutions in Laos for Climate Change Adaptation for the Agriculture Sector</p> <p>A center of excellence may be created in Laos in one of the institutions to support continuation of the scientific work in the area of climate change impacts on the agriculture sector and adaptation to climate change This could be linked to the Climate Change Research Center under NAFRI. This will ensure sustainability of the results achieved under Component 2 of</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>The opportunity of sharing scientific results and planned research through the recommended process will be discussed during the PSC meeting. This TOR could be further discussed for inclusion in the Climate Change/ DRR Sub-Sector Working Group where DALAM/ MONRE, MAF, NAFRI Climate Change Research Center and MLSW are the members</p> <p>However the capacity of the project to support establishment of such a center is limited due to limited resources and time constraints. The proposal will however be floated through the PSC for consideration of the GoL before preparing the TOR.</p>	<p>NPC and PC to discuss at PSC level</p>	<p>PSC December 21 to discuss this</p>	<p>Y</p>

Mid-term review of the project 'Strengthening Agro-climatic Monitoring and Information Systems (SAMIS) to improve adaptation to climate change and food security in Lao People's Democratic Republic' – Management Response

the project. This will also ensure continuation of technical support to DALaM for policy and decision making for longer term adaptive action against the likely impacts of climate change on the agriculture sector.					
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Annex 1. Point for PSC assessment required after MTR

The following points are to be discussed at PSC level before implementation. It is however to be noticed that the NPD is the secretary of the PSC and can agree or reject on single discussion points, ahead of the PSC. The follow up on this will be done over the next few months, as the next PSC is planned for early December.

1. Undertaking a second training assessment.
2. Establishing a plan for the DMH to cover the cost of mission and travel for the reparation of weather stations.
3. A workplan for the activities and collaboration related to C1 and the WB project 'Early Warning and Disaster Risk Reduction'.