

## FINAL EVALUATION REPORT



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## Project Fact Sheet

<b>Project Name:</b>	Phongsaly Rural Development (PRDP)
<b>Location:</b>	28 targeted villages (10 new TVs in Samphan District, 10 new TVs in Mai District, and 8 existing TVs in Khua District,)
<b>Funding Agency:</b>	AusAID/ANCP
<b>Excuting Agency:</b>	Care International Laos
<b>Counterpart Agency:</b>	Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office, Provincial Public Health Office, Provincial Planning, Investment and Coooperation Office, and Provincial Lao Women’s Union
<b>Duration:</b>	18 months starting from 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2012 – 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2013 2014
<b>General Objective:</b>	<i>To increase food and nutritional security of the poorest at household and community levels through facilitating the development of food and nutritional strategies and meaningful engagement in wider decision-making processes at local levels affecting their future food security.</i>
<b>Total Budget (18 months):</b>	314.261 AUD /Equivalent of 295.405 USD (Exchange Rate:0.94 AUD/USD)
<b>Office Base:</b>	Khua District, Phongsaly Province

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## Acknowledgements

The FE Team facilitated by Koutiane Sitthivong. Mr wish to express heartfelt thanks to Care Laos, in particular the management of Care Laos in Vientiane City, the team of the provincial program office, PRDP's team.

It is well aware that poverty in rural area remains the greatest challenge for all key stakeholders, though the progress of the poverty reduction mainly food insecurity has visibly decreased across the country. However, the sustainability of development impact in Lao PDR which has long been pushed and supported by GoL, friendly and donor countries, and international organizations including UN network and INGOs hinges very much with wider use of local human resources whom the Government of Lao PDR, friendly and donor countries, international organization including INGOs have hugely invested for. Those human resources are end beneficiaries and development impact multiplier.

The team would like to express deep appreciation for the hospitality and kind cooperation of farmers and authorities of 4 visited villages. Without their kind cooperation, the mission could not have accomplished the assigned tasks. The team felt very secure and warm living and working with the rural people.

Special thanks to all of these officers and staff who provided active support and liaison before, and during field data collection in all projects sites, as well through whole FE process.

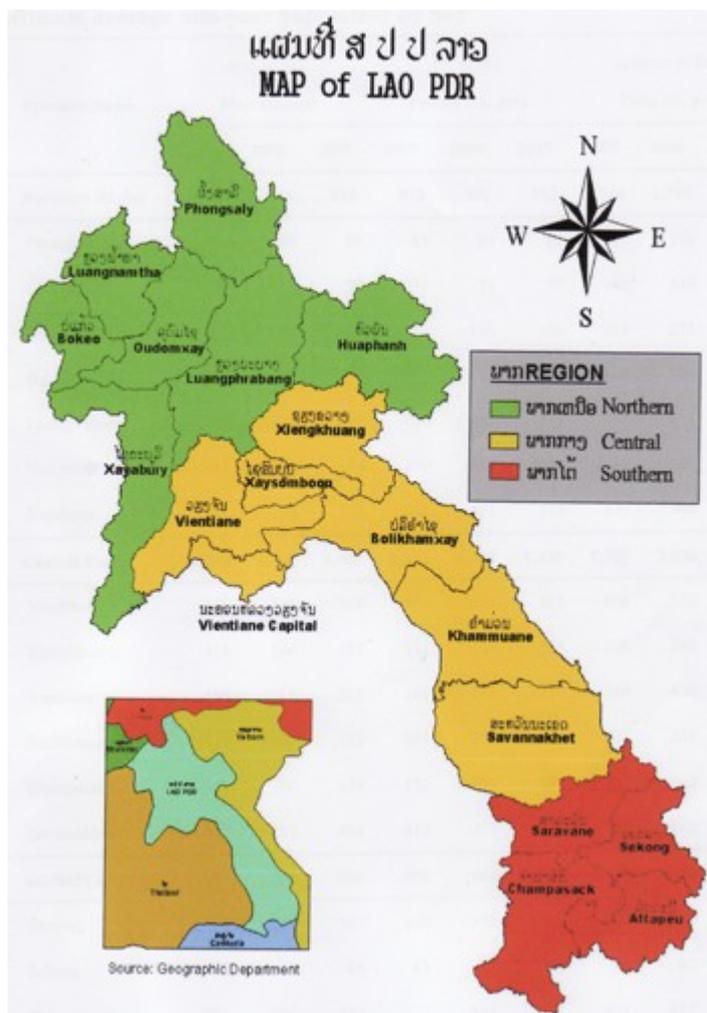


## Acronyms and Definitions

Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
PAFO	Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office
DAFO	District Agriculture and Forestry Office
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PRDP	Phongsaly Rural Development Project
NSEDP	National Socio-Economic Development Plan
VAA	Village Administrative Authority
GoL	Government of Lao PDR
HRD	Human Resource Development
SEDP	Socio-Economic Development Plan
TE	Terminal Evaluation
PPO	Provincial Program Office
VDC	Village Development Committee
8 Strategic Programs of MAF	(1) food security, (2) commercialization, (3) shifting stabilization and rural development, (4) forestry development and management, (5) agriculture and forestry research, (6) irrigation, (7) HRD, and (8) agriculture and forestry services' infrastructure
VAA	Village Administration Authority
F	Female

## Chapter 1 - Introduction

Care International Lao in Lao PDR (CARE INTERNATIONAL LAO) since 1992 has assisted implementing several successful projects in Lao PDR. Phongsaly Province is one of target provinces that rural poor are largely witnessed. Phongsaly Province, located in the northern most of Laos, is among the poorest provinces with 94.4% of total villages are poor and 53.3% of total households are poor (Source: NGPES), and 4 of seven districts in Phongsaly Provinces, mainly Mai, Khua, Yot Ou and Samphan Districts have been classified as poor districts among 72 poor districts in the country. The poor villages in three neighboring districts of Khua, Mai and Samphan take 85.8%, 94.7% and 100% respectively against total villages.



The project expands actions initiated under the current EC-funded Food Security project, and expands into two districts, Samphan and Mai. CARE will work with partners to add technically proven interventions and ensure the sustainability and diffusion of food and nutrition interventions locally and on a wider scale. This project was designed through joint CARE and District authority review of the current action and the AusAID and CARE Australia guidelines. Key associates such as the District Offices of Agriculture and Forestry (DAFO), Public Health (DPHO), the Lao Women's Union (LWU) and other district departments and mass organisations, will be the focus of capacity development actions ranging from policy frameworks to technical approaches.

**General Objective:** *To increase food and nutritional security of the poorest at household and community levels through facilitating the development of food and nutritional strategies and meaningful engagement in wider decision-making processes at local levels affecting their future food security.*

## Chapter 2 - Executive Summary

Phongsaly Rural Development Project is an 18-month project, and AusAID/ANCP has funded of 314.261 AUD /Equivalent of 295.405 USD (Exchange Rate:0.94 AUD/USD) and the project coverage has also been expanded while bolstering the development in the existing target villages. The project has covered totally 28 villages.

The project has been at the terminal phase, and there is a requirement for undertaking TE. The purposes are to;

- Assess the overall performance and achievements of the project to date in line with the expected outcomes
- Capture any achievements that will contribute to overall outcomes and impact of the program
- Assess the approach, quality and accountability (including sustainability) of government, partnerships and capacity building approach and community engagement
- Review current scope of project components and their interrelationship, considering sustainability, impact and effectiveness and lessons for future programming
- Review project management systems, including budget processes and financial management systems, project resourcing, risk management procedures and safety & security responses, requirements and resources
- The appropriateness and effectiveness of the gender strategies undertaken. Assess how women's empowerment can be better supported and results assessed and reported.

The time limit for field working visits with the use of expanded tools for instances; semi-questionnaires for different correspondents at different levels (district, village and household levels). However, the main questions raised in the ToR have been captured and presented.

The assessment has used five criterias: relevance, impact, sustainability, effectiveness and efficiency. The observation of the findings and assessment is recommended (Chapter 4 and Chapter 5).

**The recommendations:** the TE workshop was held in Khua District where key stakeholders including the ones from Care International Lao/PRDP and GoL's counterpart (MOFA, MAF, DPI, PAFO, DAFO and 3 District Governors' offices). The recommendations reflected herewith are from the TE workshop;

1. Cash Crop interventions: Cardamom, and galangal become economic crops, and the extension shall be expanded to other project villages;
2. The public infrastructure including mill, WSS shall focus on the O&M arrangement;
3. Livestock production: pig, and goat are also economic promising and this support could be extended to other target villages;
4. Rules and maintenance issues for WSS shall be prepared and enforced;
5. Nutrition demonstration training needs to be better arranged, mainly venue, quantities of ingredients, and visual aids;
6. Some supported interventions that are not doing well including rabbit, home garden, phak-e-houm and etc shall be cautiously extended;
7. Proper and regular maintenance of field operation vehicles including motorbikes are highly encouraged;
8. Project expansion phase is highly recommended and the key GoL's counterpart agencies are ready to cooperate and support on the process;

**Lessons learnt:** The lessons that the evaluator intent to discuss here below are the effective lessons that the project is continuously encouraged to maintain; they are as following;

1. The project staff and/management have worked closedly with VAA of project villages and local district authority, and then there are no reported conflicts between them; however, regular workshop between Steering Committee at district and provincial levels and the project needs to be substaintially maintained.

2. Farmers are satisfied with project support, which are relevant to their needs and able to help addressing their needs, primarily food security, nutrition, and income. Therefore, cooperation among them with the project officers is highly observed. Should there is expansion phase, and there are new staff recruitment, the adequate orientation on this reputable value shall be strictly adhered.
3. Field operation office plays another significant example that could ensure benefits to farmers are closedly distributed and maintained. The gap of connection through closed communication is vital for workplan implementation.

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### Chapter 3 – Introduction of Terminal Evaluation

Phongsaly Rural Development Project is an 18-month project, and AusAID/ANCP has funded of 314.261 AUD /Equivalent of 295.405 USD (Exchange Rate:0.94 AUD/USD) and the project coverage has also been expanded while bolstering the development in the existing target villages. The project has covered totally 28 villages, please Table 1 – Target Villages of PRDP.

**TABLE 1 – TARGET VILLAGES OF PRDP**

It.	Villages	Table 1 -Demographic Data			
		HH	Family	Populati on	
				Total	Female
	<b>Khua</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>1,201</b>	<b>589</b>
1	Phonesaas	18	25	112	68
2	Karding	27	29	126	62
3	Phonethong	14	17	80	33
4	Omtra	40	44	217	107
5	Kongvath	39	30	176	75
6	Chanmai	34	37	190	114
7	Houaythong	32	36	174	70
8	Parkkouane-Keoulouang	24	29	126	60
	<b>Mai</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>3,367</b>	<b>1,710</b>
1	Phier	41	56	228	100
2	Yarkhar	39	46	197	100
3	San in	34	36	181	92
4	Kounglouk	49	49	235	114
5	Kockngiew	36	39	197	102
6	Kiewkacham	50	61	306	155
7	Mokka-ak	24	28	145	89
8	Ompalou	91	111	572	302
9	San Luang	110	145	679	340
10	Yaryoung	50	66	355	181
11	Koungha	23	27	129	68
12	Paklaeng-Lahang	33	36	143	67
	<b>Samphan</b>	<b>605</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>3,906</b>	<b>1,764</b>
1	HadNga neua	27	27	149	69
2	Houaythong	28	33	143	65
3	Namloy	58	66	335	150
4	Laoleiw	146	202	965	488
5	Laosaen	100	147	671	345
6	Somboon	93	114	657	157
7	Kongkhum	33	38	217	106
8	Mokyon	54	67	344	163
9	Sakeo	42	42	278	149
10	Thaovong	24	24	147	72
Tota l		1,413	1,707	8,474	4,063

Note: Villages in Red are included in the site visits.

The main objectives of the TE in reference with the ToR included;

- Assess the overall performance and achievements of the project to date in line with the expected outcomes

- Capture any achievements that will contribute to overall outcomes and impact of the program
- Assess the approach, quality and accountability (including sustainability) of government, partnerships and capacity building approach and community engagement
- Review current scope of project components and their interrelationship, considering sustainability, impact and effectiveness and lessons for future programming
- Review project management systems, including budget processes and financial management systems, project resourcing, risk management procedures and safety & security responses, requirements and resources
- The appropriateness and effectiveness of the gender strategies undertaken. Assess how women's empowerment can be better supported and results assessed and reported.

### 3.1 Methodology

The Terminal evaluation has gone through three acceptable phases that stipulated in the ToR of the TE; they are as following;

Desk Reviews

Site visits to recommended villages (4 villages- Phonsaat, Kongvat, )

Briefing Workshops and grasping the feedbacks from the stakeholders toward finalization of the TE Report

The intensive duration for TE did not favor the longer process with multiple tools for instances semi-questionnaires at different levels (district, village and household levels), and however, the practical tools employed in the TE process including;

A. Questionnaires designed for specific purposes that could help answering the questions indicated in the ToR for TE have substantially been captured through plenary discussion, and here are they;

What activities have been supported by PRDP in your village? Please list out.

Which of the mentioned activities are most satisfied? Why?

Which are most dissatisfied? Why?

Are there any livelihood improvements in your villages, in particular your household? If yes, what are they?

Whether other farmers in your village and/or other villages ask for free and/or purchase the seed/stock from you for replication purposes (agronomy and livestock)? How many?

Have you observed any positive changes toward women's empowerment in your village? (Women empowerment)

Are there any difficulties in market access? For example, in case you want to sell your products? (Used for different products – cardamom, galangal, pig, goat, and rice).

How about the price for each product? Good, bad or satisfied.

Whether you have been involved in the nutrition advocacy events? What do you remember and whether you continue using the recipe lessons? How?

How about women and children workload reduction activities for instant miller, WSS, energy saving fireplaces/stoves? Do they really help reducing workload for women/children?

In addition, the TE also uses the following tools;

Documents reviewed

ToR, please see [Annex 1 – Term of Reference](#)

MOU

18 Months Final Report

ANCP Annual Plan

Logical Framework of PRDP

Village Profiles

First Quarter Plan 2014

Case Study

- Digital camera, laptop, vehicles/motorbikes, existing documents
- Discussion with concerned officers including project/program and counterpart staff

After field working visit, the project has organized the plenary discussion workshop relating the preliminary results of the findings, and the purpose was to present the preliminary results and at the same time, the participants (mainly key stakeholders) were also be able to provide solid comments with supplement recommendations, please see [Annex 2 – List of Participants of the TE Workshop](#). The comments and recommendations have also been consolidated in the Final Terminal Report.

### **3.2 *Limitations***

As it has been observed and aforementioned above that the time limit for field working visits with the use of expanded tools for instances; semi-questionnaires for different correspondents at different levels (district, village and household levels). However, the main questions raised in the ToR have been captured and presented.

## 4.1 General Findings

With total area of 15,700 Sq.Km and total population of 167,181, 83,198 of which are female (Census 2005), Phongsaly Province has 7 districts, and 4 of those (namely Yot Ou, Mai, Khua, and Samphan) are identified as poor districts. Three of those poor districts including Mai, Samphan and Khua have been included in the project target districts.

The PRDP has actively operated in 28 target villages (please see Table 1 – Demographic Data), and twenty of which are new target villages which have recently been expanded under ANCP’s funding. The field observation visits have been made for 4 target villages in three project districts.

It has been observed during field visit that all visited target villages are connected with access roads, and grid, and these allow rural farmers’ HH access to market, and processing of agroproduct and NTFPs could be introduced.

The means of transportation include pic-up trucks and motorbikes. Several rural farmers HH in the visited villages possess motorbikes.

Majority of rural HHs in the project area remain engaged in the agri-economy, and shifting rice cultivation is still practiced, however, the cycle has been shortened from seven years down to four years, and this could be observed through the land pressure, please see Gallery 1 – Land Use in the Project Area

Gallery 1 – Landuse in the Project Area



Population in the project villages are almost ethnic groups including Kmu, Akha and Phounoy, and the proportion differentiates from one to another project districts. 100% of target villages in Khua are populated with Khmu Minority Group, 50% in Samphan District, and 69% in Mai District respectively. Akha and Phounoy minority groups have been witnessed largely in Samphan District.

It is observed during the field investigation that the community grounds are clean, please see Gallery 2 – Clean Community Ground.

### Gallery 2 – Clean Community Ground



Generally, farmers in those villages have an agro-based economy with supplements from forestry and NTFP. Livestock raising is also a secondary livelihood activity, and the animal that farmers’ HHs like to raise including poultry, pig, goat, cattle, and buffalo. Rice is the main staple food for all farmers’ HHs in the project sites. However, the incidences of rice shortage remain reported. Galangal and cardamom are witnessed in all visited villages.

Home gardening is also observed, and farmers grow different vegetables including onion, garlic, Chinese cabbage, gourd, pumpkin, and yam. Other several varieties are also reportedly grown. Fruit tree crops are also grown in the villages.

The PRDP efforts to improve food security in Phongsaly Province, in particular of those three districts and 28 targeted villages is shown in the table 2 – List of Project Interventions.

No	Village	Table 2 - List of Project Interventions with number of HH Beneficiaries in Each Village																	
		Pig Bank	Goat Bank	Rabbit	WSS	Cardamom	Galangal	Phak e houm	Banana	Honey culture	Ducks	Mushroom	Fish Culture	Home Garden	Rice Mill	Nutrition Training			Rice Demonstration
		HH	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH	Tot	M	F	HH
i.	Khua Dist.	109	72	4	37	199	64	204	30	12	15	2	30	166	0	469	51	418	0
1	Phonesaas	4	10	2	0	22	16	18	10	5	0	2	13	16	0	43	3	40	0
2	Karding	0	7	0	0	31	1	22	0	0	5	0	0	17	0	46	5	41	0
3	Phonethong	3	11	0	0	8	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	42	2	40	0
4	Omtra	6	24	0	0	23	6	32	0	0	0	0	0	32	0	57	3	54	0
5	Kongvath	8	10	0	0	24	0	24	0	0	0	0	0	21	0	57	2	55	0

6	Chanmai	18	0	2	37	0	0	35	10	0	0	0	10	10	0	52	9	43	0
7	Houaythong	28	10	0	0	29	17	29	0	5	5	0	7	19	0	77	22	55	0
8	Parkkouane-Keoulouang	42	0	0	0	62	0	44	10	2	5	0	0	38	0	95	5	90	0
ii.	Mai Dist.	40	69	6	436	238	9	68	30	10	15	2	97	108	0	1972	499	1473	55
1	Phier	0	0	2	40	35	0	38	0	0	5	2	8	0	0	158	19	139	3
2	Yarkhar	16	0	0	46	25	0	5	0	0	0	0	17	0	0	171	29	142	32
3	San in	12	0	0	43	24	0	5	10	5	0	0	0	30	0	198	70	128	10
4	Kounglouk	0	0	2	49	0	9	5	10	0	0	0	16	12	0	264	46	218	0
5	Kockngiew	12	0	2	38	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
6	Kiewkacha m	0	0	0	61	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	31	0	303	60	243	0
7	Mokka-ak	0	0	0	0	20	0	5	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Ompalou	0	0	0	85	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	14	0	0	179	46	133	0
9	San Luang	0	35	0	0	20	0	5	0	0	0	0	14	35	0	246	84	162	0
10	Yaryoung	0	10	0	49	49	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	236	91	145	0
11	Koungha	0	24	0	25	0	0	5	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	125	27	98	0
12	Paklaeng-Lahang	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	92	27	65	0
iii.	Samphan Dist.	47	72	4	1670	142	19	30	30	10	15	0	46	100	50	286	0	286	77
1	HadNga neua	0	22	2	0	25	0	0	10	0	5	0	0	14	0	28	0	28	27
2	Houaythong	0	0	2	0	27	19	10	10	0	5	0	2	10	0	21	0	21	0
3	Namloy	16	0	0	351	14	0	10	0	0	5	0	0	8	0	29	0	29	10
4	Laoleiw	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	9	0	24	0	24	10
5	Laosaen	0	0	0	593	15	0	0	10	0	0	0	5	22	0	23	0	23	5
6	Somboon	0	20	0	0	20	0	10	0	0	0	0	13	8	0	58	0	58	0
7	Kongkhum	0	15	0	0	21	0	0	0	5	0	0	12	0	0	31	0	31	0
8	Mokyon	0	15	0	338	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	20	0	20	25
9	Sakeo	19	0	0	274	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	41	28	0	28	0
10	Thaovong	12	0	0	114	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	9	24	0	24	0

## Chapter 5 – Specific Assessment

The assessment of the TE uses five core criteria including relevance, impact, sustainability, effectiveness and efficiency. The indicators by each level of project hierarchy will also be reviewed.

### 5.1 Relevance

PRDP is relevant with local needs, and supporting several goals of the country's and sectoral development. It is in particular relevant with focuses of development strategies of Care International in Lao PDR.

#### 5.1.1 Relevance with local needs

Basically, food insecurity in the Pongsaly Province, in particular of the 3 target districts of Khua, Samphan and Mai, and directly with those of 28 project villages is related to rice, and the capacity of target farmers to diversify food sources remain limited at household production level and NTFP as an additional source. The household size is on average 5 or more persons, it is assumed that each person would ideally consume around at least 350kg of rice per annum, bringing the household requirement to around 2,100 kg/HH/annum. The production systems in the project area are primarily Hai (shifting cultivation), and Na is hardly practiced in the project villages, and this is because the landscape is mostly mountainous and steep slope. The terrian Na is practiced in some limited area.

Farmers have been encouraged to supplement the rice production with cash crops and livestock production in order to diversify income sources. It is expected at the beginning of the project in consultation with community through PRA, those participatory introduced interventions could boost income for medium and longer term, and the farmers HH will then be able to purchase rice for fulfilling the rice shortage gap/period.

The project interventions for local needs include promotion of crop production including rice, cardamom, galangal, and banana, phak-e-houm and home garden. Livestock production has also been introduced including goat raising, rabbit and fish culture. The farmers who have been involved in the cardamom, galangal, and got of Phonsaas, and Kongvat. The other two visited villages also see the prospection from these two cash crops; however, the crops are not matured yet.

Home garden<sup>1</sup> and banana are aimed to supplement for home grown vegetables, which will help improving the nutrition situation through food availability.

#### 5.1.2 Relevance with development focuses of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP and Sector Plan No.VII of MAF

The goal of the project is relevant with development focuses of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP, in particular the focuses on rural development and poverty alleviation and regional and local development. The 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP advised village and district development and concentrate on the production and services. In addition, three of 8 strategic programs of MAF such as (a) food security, (b) commercialization and (c) shifting stabilization correspond with PRDP/ANCP's Goal.

#### 5.1.3 Relevance with SEDP of Phongsaly Province and 3 Project Districts (Khua, Mai and Samphan)

LECs IV revealed that the poverty indication in the province is 46% and most of the incidences are highly indicated in the 4 districts of Mai, Samphan, Khua and Yot Ou. And three of them are included in the project districts (Samphan, Mai and Khua). Phongsaly Province is striking to eradicate acute poverty, which is largely reported in the province.

<sup>1</sup> Home garden crops provided by the PRDP/ANCP included: salad, coriander, chinese cabbage, cabbage, longbean, pea, bear foot cabbage

#### 5.1.4 Relevance with Care Laos' Rural Development and Women Empowerment focuses

Care Laos focuses on promoting gender equality, food security, and rural development including infrastructure and production promotion. The strategic project and/or program locations are always in the poorest areas for example PRDP/ANCP is in three mountainous and remote districts, and so are the target villages.

Equality among gender has been advocated by the PRDP, and the focuses are at (a) workload reduction for women including girls (b) mainstreaming and (c) income generation.

Workload reduction for women and girls: several interventions are aimed for women and girls including (1) WSS (2) rice mills. Women (Akha ethnic group) confirmed that the mill really help reducing their workload. The WSS might not be provided by this expansion phase with ANCP funding, but it remains operational and play important role in reducing women and children workload.

Mainstreaming: The population in those target villages belong to ethnic Khmu, Akha and Phounoy, and illiteracy of women of these ethnic groups is very high. The flexibility in the managements of different interventions are reported by PRDP, however, the prospect future on such arrangement realizes very much on younger female generations which require continuous support from concerned authorities including PRDP. Women of target villages have also been involved in nutrition advocacy sessions.

Income Generation: In addition with those workload-reducing interventions for women/girls, there are also income generation interventions for women including (1) cardamom (2) galangal (3) aquaculture, (4) pig bank and (5) goat bank. It was reported that women are not only involved in the mentioned interventions, but they also take responsibility in selling those commodity in the market (farmgate), mainly galangal, cardamom and fish. Most of the produced commodities are normally sold at the village. Women save money and maintain expenditure in almost HHs of the target villages. However, husband and spouse decide on key expenditure together.

## 5.2 Impact

With over decade of presence of Care International Laos in Phongsaly Province under the broader PRDP has created favorable environment including counterpart and institutional setting in Phongsaly Province for implementing the AusAID/ANCP. The ANCP is an eighteen-month project, and it is assumed that by this shorterterm duration, it may not produce much impact, but in opposite the impact has been significantly observed in three prospects;

Income: the effective intervention planning has played high score of progressive development. The management of PRDP/ANCP has paid adequate attentions for the needs of the rural farmers, which have been reflected in the PRA results. Short-term cash crops including cardamom and galangal have been selected for intensification in the ANCP target villages, and these cash crops could yield in shorterterm while the yield could be significantly gained in longer term. Farmers in Phonsaas, and Kongvat have confirmed that they could harvest some of the crops. 14 HHs in Phonsaas reported that have more income from selling of two cash crops. A female beneficiary from Kongvat Village said that the livelihood of her HH is getting better because of more income of these two crops, and she could also feed her 6 children better, and they all could go to school.

Women Empowerment: The PRDP does not only pay attention on women empowerment in the project villages, but the staff of PRDP/ANCP has also been empowered. At the project village level, women have been involved in the planning, implementing and decision making process of development activities in the village, and in particular at the HH level. Ethnic women have been encouraged to participate in the

discussion and training workshops held in the villages for instance nutrition, TE and PRA process. The below Gallery 3 – Akha Ethnic Women Attended the TE Workshop, this is one of the positive sign that these ethnic groups of women were involved in the development process, and they took active participation in the discussion relating the progress of development in the village, and they took courage to report about the progress of development of their own HHs including positive changes.

Gallery 3 – Akha Ethnic Women Attended the TE Workshop



**Nutrition:** The nutrition situation in the project villages has been significantly improved as a result from the increase of income and food production at HH level. Fish, goat, pig, vegetables, cardamom, and galangal are main project extended interventions that farmers impressed the most in term of income generation, demand, and price.

Women in the visited target villages confirmed that they did attend the nutrition advocacy workshop in their villages, and main groups of food and its value were identified during the plenary discussion.

### 5.3 Sustainability

The TE has observed the indications for sustainability of each intervention on three main angles: (a) replicability (b) demand/market (c) price. The assessment is summarized in Table 3- Sustainability Assessment Matrix.

Table 3- Sustainability Assessment Matrix

it.	Activities	Rated by Farmers			Observations Remark by TE
		Satisfied	Moderate	Poor	
1	Cardamom	X			Farmers consistently request for more young saplings. During plenary discussion, farmers confirmed that they would extend their cardamom plots, and the price and market are currently met with their satisfaction (Price (raw) is 5,000-9,000LAK/Kg, and 70,000-75,000LAK/kg (dried). The saplings have been purchased and/or asked for from other neighboring farmers.
2	Galangal	X			This cash crop is one of attractive crops for rural farmers' HH, and most of farmers like growing it, income is also increased from the sale of this commodity. The price ranges from 15,000-25,000LAK/kg. The saplings have been purchased and/or asked for from other neighboring farmers
3	Pig Bank	X			The revolving model of pig bank remains functioning, and the number of pigs including new piglets has increased in all visited villages. Market is not the problem. The price for pig ranges from 20,000 – 25,000 LAK/Kg.
4	Goat Bank	X			This is similar to Pig Bank. The prospect of reinvestment from the

					sale of goat is reported among interviewed farmers. The price for goat is 30,000-35,000LAK/Kg.
5	Nutrition	X			It is very interesting to see that minority group in the project villages who are Khmu, Akha and phounoy are better aware of nutrition and hygiene. Ethnic women of these groups are able to inform us about main food groups, the benefits of each food groups, and they continue using the lessons from the nutrition advocacies. In addition, the hygienic behavior is getting improved for instance 3 cleans (sleeping, eating, drinking). The community ground is also cleaned. Women said that they drink boiled water, this also help preventing diseases in their households and villages.
6	Women Empowerment		X		Ethnic women in the target villages have been encouraged to participate in almost every project interventions. The involvement is not just at activity implementation level, but they also involve in the decision level including management committee for instance in the committee for Pig Bank, Goat, Crop Production Groups. Significantly, it has been observed during field investigation that ethnic women of Akha, Phounoy and Khmu could confidently express during the plenary discussion sessions. This incidence was not adequately observed in the past few years backward.
7	Home Garden		X		Under home garden intervention, the seeds of salad, coriander, chinese cabbage, cabbage, longbean, pea, bear foot cabbage were distributed to farmers HHs, and however, some of them remain reserved by farmers, they are salad, coriander. The other variety has not much reported. Farmers grow these crops for HH consumption, and sometime it has been sold for 1,000LAK/bunch. However, only few cases reported.
8	Banana		X		This crop has just been distributed, and no harvest yet. However, the banana is growing well. Farmers are confident that there is opportunity for banana market.
9	Rabbit			X	The rabbit is newly introduced, but farmers themselves are not familiar with this type of animal. The mortality is too high. Fortunately, the scale is very small, and it did not affect much out the outcome of the intervention.
10	WSS			X	Farmers HH led by VAA have less attention to the O&M of WSS (At Sen In Village, the system has been interrupted by the road construction, while some sections of pipe have been cut. VAA shall take lead on provision of adequate maintenance service and rescue the system at the operational level.
11	Phak-E-Houm			X	The scale is very small for each village. The survival rate is not satisfied.
12	Rice Mill		X		Proper O& M advice/rule shall be adequately introduced
13	Rice Demo.		X		The rice demo. Outcome is good, but the acceptance by farmers remains reluctant. It has been strangely reported that those two rice varieties (Laboun and None) are tasty and their children eat them too much.

## 5.4 Effectiveness

This section is to assess the degree of progress in achieving the goal (overall objective of the PRDP)

**5.2.1 General Objective: *To increase food and nutritional security of the poorest at household and community levels through facilitating the development of food and nutritional strategies and meaningful engagement in wider decision-making processes at local levels affecting their future food security.***

It has been found that the project has aggressively progressed toward the general objective statement. However, the project design lacks the clarity of the statement and it is too broad, and there is no indicator for the General Objective, and in addition, the baseline does not exist. The design of the project lacks the proper “*cause and effect analysis*”. However, key stakeholders have been specifically identified. The rural context has been captured and this also reflected out during the pre-implementation of interventions. The logical framework approach is not fully used for the project design, and the design has only three hierarchical levels (Project objective-Output-Activity) instead of four levels (Goal-Specific Objective-Output-Activity/resource). Interestingly, there is no assumption in the project design matrix.

### **5.3 Efficiency**

#### **5.3.1 Project design and site selection**

The project design is quite simple, but not really efficient as it lacks of overall goal statement, indicator for project objective, and assumption. However, the project site selection is in line with the policy of local counterpart (province and district), rural target farmers in rural villages of three districts, and funding agency/ANCP.

#### **5.3.3 Activities/Interventions**

The activities/intervention has been sufficiently identified through PRA, and the selection of interventions for systematic support from project is strategically decided in consideration with size of project fund and productive cycle (pig, goat, cardamom and galangal). The women empowerment intervention is also praised, as there is a positive impact on the changes on behavior of ethnic women toward inclusive development.

#### **5.3.4 Budget**

The total project budget of 314.261 AUD /Equivalent of 295.405 USD (Exchange Rate:0.94 AUD/USD) from AusAID/ANCP has been pledged for the expansion phase of the broader PRDP. The budget looks relatively small, but the outcome of the project interventions has been positive toward diversification of income generation sources, and women empowerment.

#### **5.3.5 Staffing**

It is very impressive finding that the project has hired local project staff with different fields of expertises. Ethnic minority has been impressively taken into account of staff recruitment. This is a very significant sign of local capacity building and benefit multiplication for Phongsaly Province as well Lao PDR, please See [Annex 3 – Organization Chart of the PRDP](#). The staff has strong spirit for working in rural and remote areas. However, more attention relating to incentive arrangements from the provincial program operation office is encouraged, to retain the best performing staff and those and willing to be based at the field operational office of Khua District., in particular with new technical members.

Interestingly, the project also supported counterpart staff relating skills improvement through training, workshop and study tour; please see [Annex 4 – List of Training](#). During the TE workshop, the provincial and district levels delegate looked impress on this development.

### **5.3.6 Project Vehicles**

The project has one 4x4 wheel vehicle, and it looks efficient on the use of unit. The project also has off-road motorbikes for fieldwork. The model and types of vehicles and motorbikes are suitable with the project work as the locations of target villages are in remote mountainous and rural areas. The regular maintenance is strongly recommended.

### **5.3.7 Field operational office (FOO) and dormitory for staff**

The FOO and dormitory for staff that the PRDP/Care International Laos provided to the project field staff is significantly contributed to the impressive milestone of the development in the project area, as the management and field operation staff are located in the project-base-area where they could access to target farmers in a short time, and the regular field monitoring could be carried out.

## Chapter 6 – Recommendations

The TE workshop was held in Khua District where key stakeholders including the ones from Care International Lao/PRDP and GoL's counterpart (MOFA, MAF, DPI, PAFO, DAFO and 3 District Governors' offices). The recommendations reflected herewith are from the TE workshop;

9. Cash Crop interventions: Cardamom, and galangal become economic crops, and the extension shall be expanded to other project villages;
10. The public infrastructure including mill, WSS shall focus on the O&M arrangement;
11. Livestock production: pig, and goat are also economic promising and this support could be extended to other target villages;
12. Rules and maintenance issues for WSS shall be prepared and enforced;
13. Nutrition demonstration training needs to be better arranged, mainly venue, quantities of ingredients, and visual aids;
14. Some supported interventions that are not doing well including rabbit, home garden, phak-e-houm and etc shall be cautiously extended;
15. Proper and regular maintenance of field operation vehicles including motorbikes are highly encouraged;
16. Project expansion phase is highly recommended and the key GoL's counterpart agencies are ready to cooperate and support on the process;

## Chapter 7 - Lessons Learned from Workplan implementation

The lessons that the evaluator intent to discuss here below are the effective lessons that the project is continuously encouraged to maintain; they are as following;

4. The project staff and/management have worked closedly with VAA of project villages and local district authority, and then there are no reported conflicts between them; however, regular workshop between Steering Committee at district and provincial levels and the project needs to be substaintially maintained.
5. Farmers are satisfied with project support, which are relevant to their needs and able to help addressing their needs, primarily food security, nutrition, and income. Therefore, cooperation among them with the project officers is highly observed. Should there is expansion phase, and there are new staff recruitment, the adequate orientation on this reputable value shall be strictly adhered.
6. Field operation office plays another significant example that could ensure benefits to farmers are closedly distributed and maintained. The gap of connection through closed communication is vital for workplan implementation.

●●●●●●●●



Ethnic

## PROJECT EVALUATION

### CARE AUSTRALIA AND CARE INTERNATIONAL IN LAOS

**Project Name:** Improving Livelihood and Health Options for Remote Communities Project

**Position Title:** Evaluation Consultant

**Place of Assignment:** Home-base with travel to Phongsaly

**Reporting to:** Remote Ethnic Women Program Coordinator

**Duration:** 20 days – May-June 2014

**Start Date:** 19 May 2014

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#### 1. CARE LAOS PROGRAM STRATEGY

CARE Laos' Program Strategy is explicitly oriented the empowerment of particularly marginalised and vulnerable women in Laos. CARE has begun transitioning to a long term program approach, orienting initiatives around impacts for specific groups of marginalised people. Extensive analysis, reflection and synthesis has been undertaken in framing these long-term programs.

CARE recognises that the key to achieving equitable development outcomes lies in shifting deeply rooted, structural **underlying causes of poverty and social and gender injustice** which contribute to exclusion and vulnerability of particular groups in society. CARE Laos' long term programs focus on significant and lasting change for identified impact groups:

1. **Remote Ethnic Women** [REW]- who are land poor, have the highest food insecurity and lowest nutrition and health status
2. **Marginalised Urban Women** [MUW]- the most socially and economically marginalised women and adolescent girls in urban settings, including recent migrants

The Impact Group for this program is defined as:

**Remote Ethnic Women - who are land poor, have the highest food insecurity and lowest nutrition and health status**

This program focuses on particularly marginalised **ethnic women**. Putting women at the centre of this program, CARE Laos is responding to the significant gender disparities across a range of economic and social dimensions within the more general levels of exclusion and poverty experienced by remote ethnic groups. This is particularly true for ethnic minority women who are **remote**, or isolated by their geographical setting, and / or isolated by language and culture from the mainstream.

The program aims to promote significant and lasting changes for REW who **are land poor**, ie lack secure access to productive land and other productive resources such as forest and water resources, capital and skills; which combined with gender relationships, severely constrains equitable economic participation. The impact group definition also highlights CARE's commitment to ensure positive changes benefit many of the most disadvantaged amongst ethnic women, ie those with very poor food security, nutrition and health status.

## 2. BACKGROUND TO PROJECT

The *Improving Livelihood and Health Options for Remote Ethnic Communities Project* has been implemented in Phongsaly since **January 2012**. The design of this project emerged from detailed analysis that led to the development of CARE Laos' Remote Ethnic Women's program. In addition, it is based on further research and analysis recorded in CARE's strategies on gender, partnership, Maternal and Child Health and draft strategies on DRR/Climate Change and Food Security/Livelihoods.

CARE and the local communities conducted village development planning processes in 2012 which have been used to identify the activities for this project. Activities have included building and upgrading water supply systems, ensuring safe and sufficient water supply to three communities in remote ethnic areas. Considerable capacity building activities have been provided by CARE's community development officers including technical support to women's groups so that they can access small grant opportunities, linked to targeted, community led development activities in 15 villages. This activity has piloted a new model of community support for CARE, moving away from direct implementation of development activities in the communities, to provision of technical advice and information and support to finding sources of funding for activities. Grants will be available from CARE, in order to ensure the groups will have the capacity to apply for, run and report on such activities.

In addition, health and nutrition activities of the women's groups have been supported by regular coaching visits from the CARE community development team. Dedicated support from CARE maternal, infant and reproductive health advisers to CARE staff, district health officials and the community aims to improve knowledge and understanding of key health and nutrition messages, leading to improved maternal, infant and child health. In Phongsaly, the improved management capacity of the District Health Office has been targeted by CARE staff. This has also been a pilot activity, with learning from project implementation informing project for future years.

The expected outcomes of the project are:

Outcome 1 - To facilitate nutrition, health and income improvements amongst targeted remote ethnic communities

Outcome 2 – To strengthen the financial, technical and programmatic capacity of selected CBOs and CSOs to lead development actions at local levels

Outcome 3 – To strengthen program linkages, learning and engagement with national level dialog

## 3. OBJECTIVES

The project has now been running for two-years and CARE would like undertake an external evaluation to assess the progress of the project and to inform ongoing work. A number of models have been trialled and we would like to assess how these are progress and capture any findings.

In particular, the review will:

- 1) Assess the overall performance and achievements of the project to date in line with the expected outcomes
- 2) Capture any achievements that will contribute to overall outcomes and impact of the program
- 3) Assess the approach, quality and accountability (including sustainability) of government, partnerships and capacity building approach and community engagement
- 4) Review current scope of project components and their interrelationship, considering sustainability, impact and effectiveness and lessons for future programming
- 5) Review project management systems, including budget processes and financial management systems, project resourcing, risk management procedures and safety & security responses, requirements and resources

- 6) The appropriateness and effectiveness of the gender strategies undertaken. Assess how women's empowerment can be better supported and results assessed and reported.

The review will also take into account CARE Lao's program approach both in terms of how the project can have contributed to this as it moves forward, and also how the project informs the broader CARE program.

#### 4. SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

##### Methodology

The assessment will be conducted in 3 phases and will be completed by 30 June 2014.

##### Phase 1:

The Consultant will conduct a desk review of relevant project documentation, existing work that has been undertaken in review of the project and/or components (such as revised Design, Annual Reports & Plans and, etc), collate further documentation to feed into the Evaluation and decide on framework of inquiry and the final report structure, and draft key tools (e.g. interview and focus group questions).

##### Phase 2:

The evaluation of the project will take place the first two weeks of June. The evaluation will include:

- Field visits to key activities (women's groups, livelihoods etc)
- Community Focus Group Discussions
- Focus Group/Reflection Discussion with Partners
- Interviews with individual staff members, partners, government representative and other key stakeholders and community members
- Workshops with key project and, allocating time for;
  - o reflection on refining indicators
  - o specific discussion around women's engagement
  - o specific discussion of sustainability

##### Phase 3:

The third phase includes follow up discussion where required and finalisation of the evaluation report.

#### 5. PROPOSED EVALUATION SCHEDULE

Item	Description	# Days	Date
1.	Briefing with CARE Lao and arrangement of logistics (Vientiane)	1	19 May
2.	Desk review of key documents and presentation of Evaluation Framework to CARE Laos	2	21-22 May
3.	Travel to Phongsaly	1	25 May
4.	Conduct Evaluation at project sites	10	26 May to 4 June
5.	Feedback workshop with project team	1	5 June
6.	Travel to home base	1	6 June
7.	draft Evaluation report	3	9-11 June
8.	Finalise Evaluation report	1	16 June
	<b>TOTAL number of days</b>	<b>20</b>	

#### 6. REPORTING/OUTPUTS

By 30 June 2014, the Consultant will produce a Final Review Report (max 30 pages) including:

- Executive Summary

- Project Background
- Summary of Methodology including limitations
- Key findings against objectives
- Cross cutting issues – analysis and discussion (e.g. gender, sustainability)
- Recommendations.

Annex 2 List of TE Workshop Participants

<b>It.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Agencies</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Cell</b>	<b>Email</b>
1.	Mr Ngongthong	Care Intl. Laos	Agronomist	22515710	yongEethong@hortmail.com
2.	Mr Sisanga Tanpadith	Samphan Dist. DAFO	Dpty Head of Office	55194248	Tanpradith@yahoo.com
3.	Mr Souvanny Souliyaphone	Khua Dist. (DAFO)	Dpty Head of Office	28764000	ssouvanny@gmail.com
4.	Mr Viengsamai Sisongkharm	Mai Dist. (DAFO)	Dpty Head of Office	28761817	viengsisongkham@yahoo.com
5.	Mr Khamsao Hongsakhone	Mai Dist. (GO)	Dpty Head of Office	98627334	
6.	Mr Khamsy Khounmany	Khau Dist. (Planning Office)	Dpty Head of Office	52577856	
7.	Mr Bounpheng Yotvongsa	Mai Dist. (Planning Office)	Head of Office	98345686	
8.	Mr Koutiane Sitthivong	Evaluator	Evaluator	23206690	Tiane_stvong
9.	Mr Somphone Yangsouthi	PAFO	Inspector	56866234	SomphoneyangsuLiatham@gmail.com
10.	Ms.Phouangmala Souksan	Samphan Dist. (LWU)	TSO	54447077	
11.	Ms.Phiw Sengvilay	Mai Dist. (LWU)	Dpty Head of Office	22592277	
12.	Mr Vanxay Souksan	External Relation Dept.	Dpty Head of Office	22399888	Vansay @ 126.com
13.	Ms Saithala Sipanya	MAF	Head of Division	59961612	ssaithala@yahoo.com
14.	Mr Khamphone Xayvongdalasak	Samphan Dist. (GO)	Dpty Head of Office	55452741	
15.	Mr Viengsavath	Care Intl. Laos		55497797	
16.	Ms. Venphet Philathong	MOFA	TSO	22939777	
17.	Mr Sompen Vong-in-pon	Mai Dist. (Planning Office)	Head of Office	99855476	
18.	Ms. Somsouk Xayachoum	PLWU	Dpty Head of Division	28761856	somsouk@hotmail.com

## Annex 3 – Organization Chart

## Annex 4 - List of Training

June - December 2012-2014						
Location of Training	Training Content	Participants	female participants	days of training	Date	Target group (villagers, CARE staff, GOL staff)
VTE	Study tour of lao woment group	12	11	5	29-May-12	10 villager, 2 care staff
VTE	leader ship training	5	0	5	9-13/7/2012	only CARE staff
VTE and ODX	English training	8	3	15	6-24/8/2012 13-24/8/2012	only CARE staff
Khua	Gender and community development				27-31/8/2012	
Veitnam	study tour	11	11	4	7-10/11/2012	
SYBL	Mush room spore	2	1	4	29/05/2013-2/06/2013	only CARE staff
Boekeo	village funding management	16	15	4	22-24/5/2013	2 care staffs 3 GOL staffs 11 villager
Khua	TOT 1					
Khua	TOT 2.1 meat	11	10			6 care 5 GOL
Khua	TOT 2.2	13	12			6 care 7 GOL
Khua	TOT 2.3					
Khua	M&E	9	8			4 care 5 GOL
Khua	Setting Farmer Group	14	8			6 Gol and 8 CARE
Khua	Farmer Group managerment	33	17			5 GoL, 7 CARE, 21 Villager
Khua	Mush room spore	13	5			5 CARE, 4 villager, 4 GoL
Khua	Cemecal using	16	9			8 Care, 8 GoL
Khua	Exchange lessonlern on farmer group	29	9			3 GoL, 2 Care, 24 villager
Chaingmai	Farmer Group	9	3			4 care , 5 GoL
Total		201.00	122.00	37.00		