



## **AFoCO Landmark Program**

**“Restoring Degraded Forest in Southeast Asia as a Model for a Greener Asia: Capacity-building on Forest Restoration and Sustainable Forestry”**

**INTERIM EVALUATION REPORT**

**ON**

**“VILLAGE-BASED FOREST REHABILITATION IN**

**LAO PDR”**

**Component 3 of the Landmark Program**

**17 October 2018**

**AFoCO Secretariat**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The AFoCO Landmark Program (**LP**) was designed to address the issues of forest deterioration and degradation through building the capacity of major stakeholders and promoting sustainable forest management in Southeast Asia.

This interim evaluation report focuses on the Phase 1 implementation of the LP. The evaluation has two objectives: evaluate the progress and achievements of the four components of the LP covering all the projects and activities in Phase 1 (2014-2018); and, provide future directions and recommendations for the Phase 2 (2019-2023) implementation of the LP. Detailed information of each component, the outline of the LP, the evaluation team, and the schedule are described in **Chapter I**.

**Chapter II** describes the evaluation methodologies. The assessment adopts the five (5) OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. Data for the analysis includes field interviews, survey data, annual plans and reports of the LP, and archival documents, among others.

**Chapter III** reveals the respective findings, issues, and results of the assessment. The project was rated good performance.

Based on the finding issues, the evaluation team suggests and proposes recommendations for each component in **Chapter IV**. Based on the findings from the evaluation, for Component 3, two (2) recommendations are given to the project considering the country's situation in forestry sector. For Lao PDR, the first recommendation involves making some official adjustments at the central government level to improve local land tenure systems. In addition, it is recommended to lever down the project activities towards encouraging villagers and local stakeholders to ensure to set up a sustainable plan by themselves in a sense of ownership and leadership. The evaluation findings and recommendations are also summarized in the tables in **Annex 2**.

Lastly, in the conclusion section of **Chapter V**, future directions within and beyond the scope of the LP are provided with the overall results of the evaluation, in which LP is showing a positive and excellent performance trend. The collaborative, innovative, and sustainable forest management perspective of the LP provides a strategic framework capable of leading forest management policy in the target region.

### **Abbreviation & Acronyms**

ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
AFoCo agreement	Agreement between ASEAN and ROK for Forest Cooperation
AFoCO	Asian Forest Cooperation Organization
CLMV	Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Viet Nam
DAFO	District Agriculture and Forestry Office of Lao PDR
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Product
IAI	Initiative for ASEAN Integration
KFS	Korea Forest Service
KOFPI	Korea Forest Promotion Institute
LP	Landmark Program
OECD/DAP	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Assistance Committee
PM	Project Manager
PSC	Project Steering Committee
ROK	Republic of Korea
PSC	Project Steering Committee

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## I. INTRODUCTION AND OUTLINE OF THE PROJECT

### 1. Introduction

The Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (**AFoCO**), which is initiated by Korea, was officially established on April 27, 2018 as an inter-governmental organization. The establishment of AFoCO was proposed by the government of the Republic of Korea (**ROK**) at the Korea-Association of South East Asian Nations (**ASEAN**) commemorative summit in 2009, and with the cooperation and support of 10 ASEAN members, it began activities in 2012, starting with the ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation. Until now, the AFoCO has successfully initiated 22 forest cooperation projects in ASEAN countries.

Under the Landmark Program (**LP**), a capacity building approach has been taken targeting ASEAN member states. Especially, under the framework of Initiative for ASEAN Integration (**IAI**) for narrowing development gap, the LP responded a rising demand for capacity building focused mainly on Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Viet Nam (**CLMV**) to address these issues in ASEAN region (**Table 1**). In this context, restoration of damaged forests in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia are in progress and in Myanmar, construction of a Regional Education and Training Center (**RETC**) was completed in January 2018, the first in Asia.

There are four main components under the LP – 1) Component 1: Establishment of the AFoCO Regional Education and Training Center; 2) Component 2: Development of Education and Training Programs for Capacity Building; 3) Component 3: Restoration of Degraded Forest Regions; and, 4) Component 4: Development of Advocating Activities.

Component 3 includes three (3) forest restoration projects aimed at promoting sustainable forest management in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam. These restoration projects have supported with the activities of new plantation, enrichment planting, protection of existing forests and genetic conservation.

**Table 1. SWOT analysis for forest management in CLMV countries**

	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
<b>Internal</b>	<b><i>Strengths</i></b>	<b><i>Weaknesses</i></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Abundant natural resource existing (forestry, land and water resources, mining sources, clean energy sources, biodiversity) and rich and pure in natural resources</li> <li>▪ Geographic location makes it accessible for tourism in Southeast Asia or Asian Region</li> <li>▪ Have environment law and regulation</li> <li>▪ Clear air/low pollution</li> <li>▪ Low density of population</li> <li>▪ Good ecosystem</li> <li>▪ Many tourism places and heritages</li> <li>▪ Rich natural parks and protected wildlife sanctuary</li> <li>▪ High internet connectivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Internal capacity</li> <li>▪ Country status: a demand on socio-economic development at national level</li> <li>▪ Less implementation reinforcement of environment laws, regulations and monitoring</li> <li>▪ Agriculture and food security</li> <li>▪ Fast growing in mining and hydropower</li> <li>▪ Heavy exploration in underground natural resources</li> <li>▪ With low experiences in the restoration phases</li> <li>▪ Low awareness on environment impact and sustainable use</li> <li>▪ Social awareness</li> <li>▪ Ethnic wars/conflict (Myanmar)</li> </ul>
<b>External</b>	<b><i>Opportunities</i></b>	<b><i>Threats</i></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sustainable development approach</li> <li>▪ Eco-tourism industrial development</li> <li>▪ Green growth strategy</li> <li>▪ Global assistance</li> <li>▪ Support sustainable living life</li> <li>▪ Life style can rely on natural resource</li> <li>▪ Good health and safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Climate change and disaster impact</li> <li>▪ Many investors came to explore the natural resources and impact from development activities (mining, forestry harvesting, Dam)</li> <li>▪ Rapid urban development (lack of proper planning) and unsustainable development</li> <li>▪ Many businesses with low health care</li> <li>▪ Human vulnerability</li> <li>▪ Infrastructure vulnerability and fast growing in the cities</li> <li>▪ Un-bombing explosion 80 million tons in 270 million tons of bombs (from World War II) (Laos)</li> <li>▪ Weak of controlling regulation and law</li> </ul>

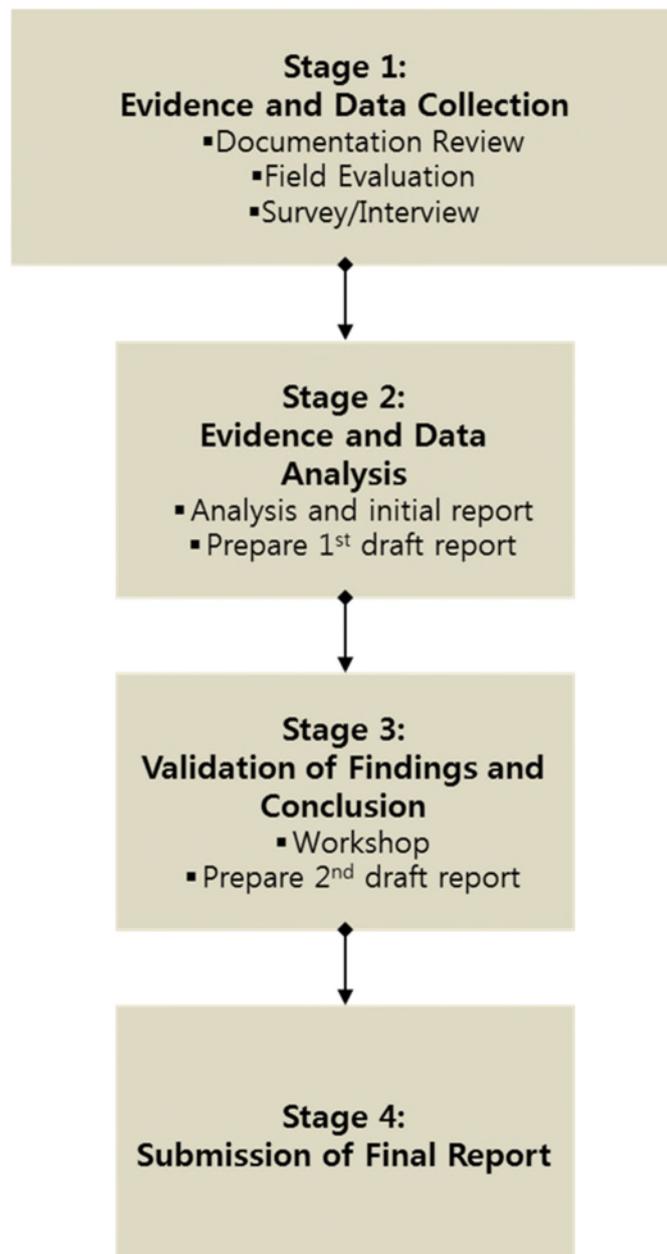
## 2. Purpose of the Evaluation

The Interim Evaluation for the LP has two (2) objectives: 1) evaluate the progress and achievements of each component during the phase 1 (2014-2018), and 2) provide future directions and recommendations of each component for the phase 2 (2019-2023), based on all factors relevant for the current implementation of the program.

As mentioned above, there are four main components under the LP which should be assessed in a proper manner. The main objective is to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the performance, effectiveness, and sustainability of LP and provide recommendations for future directions. The evaluation will cover an institutional/organizational, program, and individual level assessment.

Within Component 3, review the effectiveness, financial, and operational sustainability of the implementation of forest restoration and management in the currently covered countries (i.e., Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam). Specifically, the evaluation will not only look at the total area covered for reforestation but will also look at the mechanisms and actual activities (including policies or laws in place) in protecting the projects and involving the communities in all programs and projects under Component 3.

As part of the *evidence and data gathering*, field evaluation and interview were held from July 2-12, 2018 on beneficiaries, project implementers, officials, and experts in the CLMV countries (i.e., Cambodia, Laos PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam) where the projects under the AFoCO LP are located. Upon completion of the evaluation, the assessment report with key findings and recommendations is submitted. **Figure 1** is the flow of evaluation activities.



**Figure 1. Overall Flow of Evaluation Activities**

### 3. Evaluation Team

1) Dr. Park Sung Min (Main Evaluator)

- Affiliation: Professor, Public Administration Department, Sungkyunkwan Univ., ROK
- Responsibilities to the evaluation:
  - Leading the overall progress of the evaluation in communication with the Secretariat and other evaluators as the representative of the evaluation team;
  - Initial and final presentations/meetings with the Secretariat;
  - Developing detailed methodologies, quantitative and qualitative, based on the evaluation criteria;
  - Reviewing relevant project documents, focusing on five criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability;
  - Assessing project progress at the project site, focusing on five criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability;
  - Collecting supplementary information (e.g. photos, maps, policy documents of the country, etc.);
  - Verifying the negative and positive issues based on the evaluation criteria;
  - Identifying sustainability issues, if any, and future potentials; and,
  - Compiling and submitting the “Evaluation Report” to the Secretariat

2) Mr. Htain Lin (Main Evaluator)

- Affiliation: Expert on institution and project development in Forestry
- Responsibilities to the evaluation:
  - Participating to the overall evaluation of the LP, with specific guidance on forest restoration, and technical improvement on RETC training courses;
  - Developing detailed methodologies, quantitative and qualitative, based on the evaluation criteria ;
  - Reviewing relevant project documents, focusing on five criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability;
  - Assessing project progress at the project site, focusing on five criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability;
  - Collecting supplementary information (e.g. photos, maps, policy documents of the country, etc.);
  - Verifying the negative and positive issues based on the evaluation criteria;
  - Identifying sustainability issues, if any, and future potentials; and,
  - Completing the evaluation report

3) Dr. Ador. R. Torneo (Main Evaluator)

- Affiliation: Associate Professor, Political Science Department, De La Salle Univ., The Philippines
- Responsibilities to the evaluation:
  - Participating to the overall evaluation of the LP, with specific guidance on institutional development of RETC, and sustainable impact on the project beneficiaries at the community, national, and international level;
  - Developing detailed methodologies, quantitative and qualitative, based on the

- evaluation criteria ;
  - Reviewing relevant project documents, focusing on five criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability;
  - Assessing project progress at the project site, focusing on five criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability;
  - Collecting supplementary information (e.g. photos, maps, policy documents of the country, etc.);
  - Verifying the negative and positive issues based on the evaluation criteria;
  - Identifying sustainability issues, if any, and future potentials; and,
  - Completing the evaluation report
- 4) Dr. Reginald G. Ugaddan (Research Assistant)
- Affiliation: Research Center for Public Human Resource Development, Sungkyunkwan University, ROK
  - Responsibilities to the evaluation:
    - Support the evaluation team in terms of the data collection and analysis
- 5) Ms. Ryang Soozin (AFoCO Secretariat)
- Affiliation: Project Manager for Forest Restoration Projects under Landmark Program, AFoCO Secretariat
  - Responsibilities to the evaluation:
    - Overall technical guidance and coordination of the evaluation process

#### **4. Coordination and Facilitation Institutes and Organizations**

- 1) Institute for Forest and Wildlife Research and Development under Forestry Administration of Cambodia
- 2) Department of Forestry, Lao PDR
- 3) Forest Department, Myanmar
- 4) Viet Nam Administration of Forestry, Viet Nam
- 5) AFoCO Secretariat

#### **5. Schedule**

21 – 30 June	To design and set up the evaluation plan To review project documents To arrange the schedule for site verification
2 – 12 July	To conduct site verification
13 July- 17 October	To submit the evaluation report to the Secretariat

## II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

### 1. Scope

The evaluation will focus on the implementation of Landmark Program (LP) from 2014-2018.

### 2. OECD/DAC criteria and indicators for evaluation

The Interim Evaluation of the AFoCO LP adopts the OECD/DAC criteria and indicators for evaluation – *Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Sustainability* – and each specific evaluation factors are developed based on these. Detailed assessment indicators according to each evaluation criteria are provided under each component (**Table 2**).

**Table 2. OECD/DAC criteria and indicators for evaluation**

Evaluation Criteria	Indicators
<p><b>Criteria 1: Relevance</b> Degree of the objectives of development projects satisfying the needs and priorities of beneficiaries and policies of donors and recipients</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To check the relevance of the activity to the priorities and policies of target group, recipient and donor</li> </ul>
<p><b>Criteria 2: Effectiveness</b> Degree of the objectives of projects achieved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To measure the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives</li> </ul>
<p><b>Criteria 3: Efficiency</b> Degree to which the costs of development projects can be rationalized against alternatives. In other words, the degree of several inputs economically used and turned into outputs and results</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To measure the outputs – qualitative and quantitative – in relation to the inputs.</li> <li>■ It is an economic term which is used to assess the extent to which aid uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results.</li> <li>■ This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Criteria 4: Impact</b> Overall results of the positive, negative, intended or unintended effects of development projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To see the positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.</li> <li>■ To see impacts and effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators.</li> <li>■ To find out external factors deriving unintended results and providing the positive and negative impact</li> </ul>
<p><b>Criteria 5: Sustainability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To measure whether the benefits of an</li> </ul>

Possibility of a positive long-lasting effect after implementing an evaluation object policy or completing an evaluation object project	<p>activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To foresee environmental as well as financial sustainability</li> </ul>
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## 2.1. Research portfolio and evaluation matrix

Component-3 has three (3) country-based projects formulated based on the need and priority of each country. The projects are uniquely different in terms of technical areas and implementation approaches. The projects have been implemented by the forestry agencies of 3 different countries, who are applying their own domestic regulation and procedure in the implementation. Therefore, it was planned to make country-based evaluations to give a better picture and more logical explanation, rather than program-based evaluation for the component. It is also appropriate to have a regional analysis on Mekong region undertaken in advance for each country to identify potential implications and influences on the project.

This evaluation mission will have a direct access to on-site information as well as interview with key stakeholders of these projects in the three (3) countries. Based on the current project review and analysis undertaken, specific assessment indicators are identified under the five (5) evaluation criteria for each project. Information against these indicators will be collected through various means, such as field survey, interview with stakeholders and online questionnaire survey (**Table 3**).

As AFoCO has adopted OECD evaluation methodology, the performance of these projects was assessed based on the five (5) criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. A matrix of research tools used for 5 evaluation criteria is shown in **Table 4**.

**Table 3. Research Portfolio**

Evaluation criteria	Document analysis	Data and statistics analysis	Interview with the local people and beneficiaries	Interview with the project stakeholders and implementers	Questionnaire survey of targeting group	On-site field trip and survey
Relevance	O		O	O	O	O
Effectiveness	O		O	O	O	O
Efficiency	O	O	O	O	O	O
Impact			O	O	O	O
Sustainability			O	O	O	O

**Table 4. Evaluation Matrix**

Evaluation Criteria	Indicators and description	Stakeholders to engage
<b>1. Village-based Forest Rehabilitation in Lao PDR</b>		
Relevance	1. Explore the current national rules and regulations on village forestry and progress on policy development (comment & score)	Laos officials
	2. Explore the extent of user right and marketability of forest land under community forestry (comment & score)	Village leaders, local community, Laos officials
	3. Identify regulation / policy constraints and issues in the implementation of project (comment & score)	Laos officials
	4. Explore ways to improve relevance (comment)	Laos officials, AFoCO officials
Effectiveness	1. Identify human resources and rank technical capability of the department on handling of the project (comment & score)	Laos officials, Village leaders
	2. Identify the change of level of local participation (comment & score)	Village leaders, local community
	3. Identify local constraints such as dispute on land tenure, ownership (comment & score)	Laos officials, Village leaders
	4. Identify any proposal and approach from other villages to engage in the project (comment & score)	Village leaders, local community
	5. Explore ways to improve effectiveness (comment)	Laos officials, AFoCO officials
Efficiency	1. Cost comparison with a similar activity implemented by domestic budget (comment & score)	Laos officials
	2. Cost comparison between the 2 model sites on the same activity (comment)	Laos officials, AFoCO officials
	3. Identify any unused items or abandoned program in the project (comment & score)	Laos officials
	4. Identify activities with most efficient cost per return (comment & score)	Laos officials

Evaluation Criteria	Indicators and description	Stakeholders to engage
	5. Explore ways to improve cost efficiency of project implementation (comment)	Laos officials, AFoCO officials
Impact	1. Identify any positive effect(s) other than relevance and effectiveness (comment & score)	Laos officials
	2. Identify any negative effect(s) due to the project interventions (comment & score)	Laos officials, local community
	3. Explore ways to improve synergy and increase positive impact (comment)	Laos officials, AFoCO officials
Sustainability	1. Identify national policy of Lao PDR that are supportive to continue the project activities (comment & score)	Laos officials
	2. Identify future management plan beyond the project (comment & score)	Laos officials
	3. Identify other successful projects handed over and managed by the local community (comment & score)	Laos officials, local communities
	4. Assess local perception and interest to manage a similar project (comment & score)	Village leaders, local community
	5. Explore ways and future interventions needed to enhance sustainability (comment)	Laos officials, AFoCO officials

## 2.2. Evaluation Questions

As a first step, the project documents, reports, and background information were reviewed before conducting on-site verification and personal interview with stakeholders and beneficiaries during the field visit. Secondly, online questionnaire survey forms were developed based on the questions for assessment indicators in **Table 4** and the forms were sent to the key stakeholders to collect their feedbacks. The information collected during the field visit were used to support for a qualitative evaluation analysis and key findings were consolidated with recommendations. Thirdly, the information received online were analyzed and calculated to get a set of performance scores for each criterion as well as an overall score for the whole project. The performance scoring system applied in this evaluation is shown in **Table 5**.

**Table 5: Performance Scoring System**

Score range	Performance description
0.1 – 1	Poor performance (below 20%) against the indicator
1.1 – 2	Limited performance (21 – 40%). Significant improvements needed.
2.1 – 3	Satisfactory performance (41 – 60%) but room for improvements.
3.1 – 4	Good Performance (61 – 80%) against the indicator
4.1 – 5	Excellent performance (81% and above) against the indicator

Since it is a mid-term evaluation and some criteria cannot be assessed at their full extent, a weighted scoring mechanism was adopted to calculate an overall performance score. A lower weighting of 30% was given to the criteria of “Impact” and “Sustainability” while the other three (3) criteria – “Relevance, Effectiveness and Efficiency”, which can be assessed fully, received a higher weighting of 70%. In fact, this scoring mechanism was discussed at length during a meeting with Vietnamese officials and as a result, this weighted scoring system was applied for a fair evaluation of all three (3) projects.

Basically, the performance scores should be used as complementary to support and consolidate in-depth qualitative analysis and its results. Therefore, performance score cannot be referred to as a sole performance indicator of the project.

In order to get in-depth view, critical response and feedback from the stakeholders of the project, specific assessment indicators and associated questions were developed for each of five (5) evaluation criteria, depending on the scope and direction of the project (**Table 6**). The detailed questions for each project are in **Annex 1**.

**Table 6. Evaluation criteria and questions for assessment indicators**

Evaluation Criteria	Questions for specific assessment indicators	Stakeholders to engage
<b>1. Village-based Forest Rehabilitation in Lao PDR</b>		
Relevance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the current village forestry rules and regulations of your country, how much relevant can you describe this project is to your country policy? (score &amp; comment)</li> <li>Please give a ranking on the legal protection of land user right and its marketability (sale, transfer, access to bank loan, etc.) (score &amp; comment)</li> <li>Identify policy / regulation constraints and issues in the implementation of project</li> </ol>	<p>Laos officials</p> <p>Village leaders, local community, Laos officials</p> <p>Laos officials</p>

Evaluation Criteria	Questions for specific assessment indicators	Stakeholders to engage
	<p>(such as constraints from regulation, policy or human resources). (comment &amp; score)</p> <p>4. Please advise on ways to improve relevance of the project. (comment)</p>	<p>Laos officials, AFoCO officials</p>
Effectiveness	<p>1. Identify the staff members dedicated for the project and rank their collective technical capability (comment &amp; score)</p> <p>2. Identify major decisions made together with the local community since the commencement of the project? (comment &amp; score)</p> <p>3. Identify local constraints such as dispute on land tenure, ownership, etc. (comment &amp; score)</p> <p>4. Identify any proposal and approach from other villages to engage in the project (comment &amp; score)</p> <p>5. Please advise on ways to improve effectiveness in the future. (comment)</p>	<p>Laos officials, Village leaders</p> <p>Village leaders, local community</p> <p>Laos officials, Village leaders</p> <p>Village leaders, local community</p> <p>Laos officials, AFoCO officials</p>
Efficiency	<p>1. Please provide a cost comparison with similar other activities implemented by domestic budget. (comment &amp; score)</p> <p>2. Please make cost comparison between Sangthong and Paksong sites on one identical activity below. (comment)</p> <p>3. Identify and list any unused items or abandoned program in the project below. (comment &amp; score)</p> <p>4. Identify the most cost-efficient activities (efficient cost per return) in your opinion (comment &amp; score)</p> <p>5. Please advise on ways to improve cost-efficiency in the future. (comment)</p>	<p>Laos officials</p> <p>Laos officials, AFoCO officials</p> <p>Laos officials</p> <p>Laos officials</p> <p>Laos officials, AFoCO officials</p>
Impact	<p>1. Identify any positive effect(s) other than relevance and effectiveness (comment &amp; score)</p> <p>2. Identify any negative effect(s) due to the project interventions (comment &amp; score)</p> <p>3. Please advise on ways to improve synergy and increase positive impact. (comment)</p>	<p>Laos officials</p> <p>Laos officials, local community</p> <p>Laos officials, AFoCO officials</p>

Evaluation Criteria	Questions for specific assessment indicators	Stakeholders to engage
Sustainability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="480 271 1102 383">1. Identify national policy of Lao PDR that are supportive to continue the project activities (comment &amp; score)</li> <li data-bbox="480 389 1102 461">2. Identify future management plan beyond the project (comment &amp; score)</li> <li data-bbox="480 468 1102 580">3. What are the difficulties and issues to manage a similar project by themselves? (comment &amp; score)</li> <li data-bbox="480 586 1102 658">4. Please advise on ways to enhance sustainability in the future. (comment)</li> </ol>	<p data-bbox="1107 271 1445 331">Laos officials</p> <p data-bbox="1107 389 1445 427">Laos officials</p> <p data-bbox="1107 468 1445 539">Laos officials, local communities</p> <p data-bbox="1107 586 1445 658">Laos officials, AFoCO officials</p>

### III. RESULTS OF EVALUATION

#### 1. Overview

The framework objectives of the component-3 are to: 1) rehabilitate deforested and degraded forest areas in ASEAN region, especially in the lower Mekong countries; 2) promote public awareness on conservation and sustainable management of forest ecosystem; and, 3) promote participation of local communities in forest conservation activities.

The project in Lao PDR is designed to engage the villages and local communities for the restoration of degraded areas, contributing to poverty reduction through increased income and strengthening the capacity of stakeholders at different levels of implementation. This project is in line with the national priority of Lao PDR to promote village forestry as part of its drive for forest restoration program. Currently, the project is implementing at two (2) model sites – one at Sangthong near Vientiane capital and the other one at Paksong about 700 km south from Vientiane.

#### 1.1. Economic and environmental analysis on Mekong region

This component was designed to support the least developed members of ASEAN countries for restoration of their degraded forests and establishment of model forests. Among ten (10) ASEAN countries, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam are the least developed members and they are collectively termed as “CLMV countries”. There is a special program called “Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI)” with an aim to provide technical support to the CLMV countries to narrow their development gap with the rest of ASEAN members. The ROK proposed to designate the support under this component for CLMV countries in line with this IAI program. National economic and environmental indicators of CLMV countries are shown in **Table 7**. After Myanmar was granted to host the RETC (component 1) at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Governing Council of ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation in October 2013, the support under component – 3 was dedicated to Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam for a duration of 10 years from 2014 to 2023.

**Table 7. Key economic and environmental indicators of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam (2016 data except EPI)**

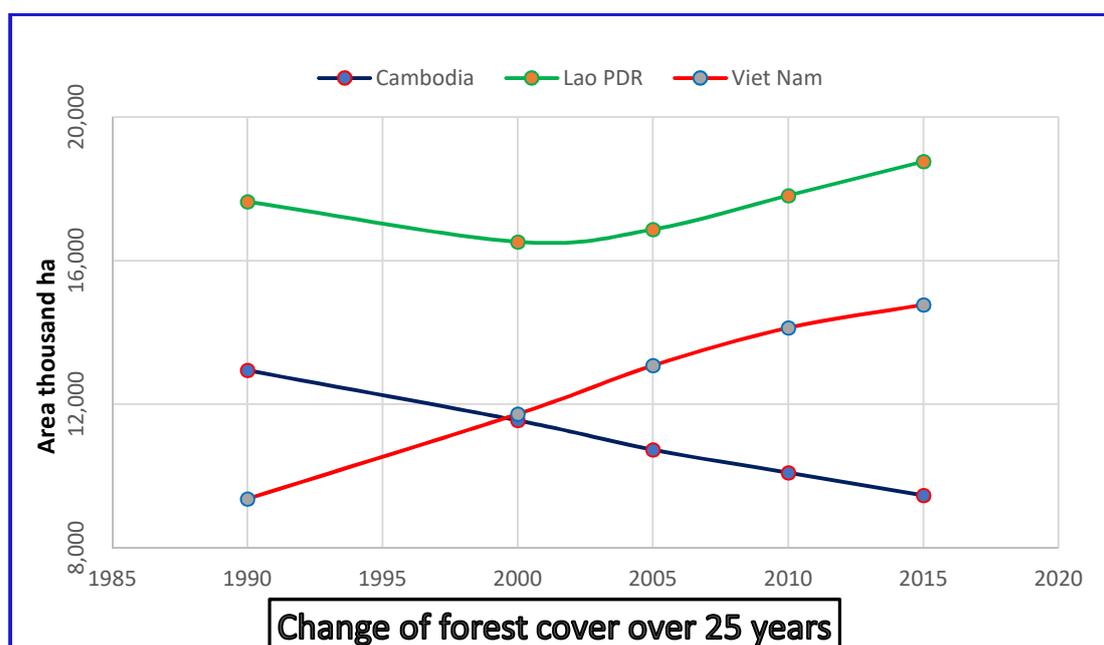
	Cambodia	Lao PDR	Myanmar	Viet Nam
Population (million)	15.76	6.76	52.89	94.57
Area (thousand sq. km)	181	236.8	676.6	331
GDP (current USD in billion)	20.02	15.81	63.23	205.28
GDP growth %	7	7	5.9	6.2
GNI (current USD in billion)	17.91	14.52	63.09	194.83
per capita GNI (current USD)	1140	2150	1190	2060

Inflation (%)	3.5	3	3.6	1.1
Forest area (thousand sq. km)	94.6	187.6	290.4	147.7
Forest cover (% of country area)	52%	79%	43%	45%
CO <sub>2</sub> emissions (metric ton per capita)	0.44	0.3	0.42	1.8
Environmental Performance Index (EPI) rank – 2018 (out of 180 countries)	150	153	138	132

Source: <https://data.worldbank.org/country> and <https://epi.envirocenter.yale.edu/epi-topline>

## 1.2. Country background in Lao PDR

A brief analysis was undertaken for each country to provide background and policy direction in the forestry sector. **Figure-2** shows change of forest cover in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam over the past 25 years from 1990 to 2015. While Cambodia has lost about 25% of its forest, Viet Nam has gained 25% more forest cover with an extensive reforestation program, making the country an exceptional case in Southeast Asia. In case of Lao PDR, the loss of forests in the 1990s and early 2000s appeared to have been recovered by 2015.



Data source: *Global Forest Resources Assessments (FAO, 2018)*

**Figure 2. Change of forest cover in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam**

Despite a small population of about 6.8 million and a claim of relatively high forest cover nearly 80% of the country, Lao's forests remain under a constant pressure due to commercial and illegal logging, shifting cultivation practice, uncontrolled fires, and local demand for fuelwood and building materials. The country lost around 12.5% of its forest over 10-year period from 1992 to 2002, but a gradual gain in forest cover has been reported in recent years.

[Annex-5]

Of the registered country forest area of about 18.7 million hectares, the protection forests occupy about 50% followed by the conservation forests and production forests.

After introduction of a Forestry Law in 2007, significant changes have taken place in decentralization in forest management, reorganization of forest agencies, promoting community participation in forest management, and recently engaging in climate change related forestry activities. Lao PDR's Forest Strategy - 2020 aims to raise forest cover to 70 percent of the total land area, by natural regeneration up to 6 million ha and by plantation up to 500,000 ha in degraded forest area. With the formation of a new Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment in 2012, management of protection forest and conservation forest were placed under the control of the new ministry while the Ministry of Agriculture and Forest maintained the management of production forest which is also related to promotion of village-based forestry.

Currently, the priorities of Lao PDR are to: 1) increase national forest cover; 2) ensure a sustainable supply of forest products; 3) promote village-based forest management and improvement of local livelihood; 4) preserve threatened species and their unique habitats; 5) address the impact of climate change, and; 6) improve the capacity of human resources.

### **1.3. Brief project analysis**

Although the 10-year Landmark Program was launched in March 2014, it took almost two (2) years for the component 3 projects to actually launch their ground activities in 2016. Basically, the officials from the Secretariat and recipient countries were occupied with the project formulation in 2014 and 2015.

The project in Lao PDR was formulated in line with the national priority to promote village forestry as part of the country's policy drive for forest restoration. The project has laid out three (3) specific objectives to: 1) restore degraded forest areas, 2) strengthen capability of all stakeholders including villagers in implementing national forest rehabilitation policy, and 3) contribute to poverty reduction by providing direct income to the local community. As part of mobilizing local communities under the project, two types of village groups were formed, one for plantation activities and one for maintenance and protection activities.

Currently, the project is implementing at two (2) sites – one at Sangthong near Vientiane capital and the other one at Paksong about 700 km south from Vientiane. The activities for the objective-1 are quantitative: 1) raising of about 450,000 seedlings; 2) establishment of ex-situ conservation plantation on a total area of 60 ha; 3) enrichment planting in degraded forest areas (790 ha in total); and 4) conservation activities at the selected village forest areas (2,770 ha in total). For the objective-2 of strengthening capability of stakeholders in implementing national forest rehabilitation policy, social mobilization activities such as awareness raising, community training and empowerment activities were applied. For the objective-3 of contributing to poverty reduction, the poor villagers were given a priority to benefit from the income received from forest nursery and planting activities.

## 2. Evaluation Findings

### 2.1. Relevance

**Relevance with village forestry policy in Lao PDR:** Lao PDR has been promoting village-based forestry recently as part of its national strategy 2020 to increase national forest cover and promoting sustainable development in the country. Under the recent policy reform, the government is implementing a decentralization program which empower the local government bodies as well as the local communities in decision-making process. One other element is to create new livelihood opportunities for the improvement for local income and poverty reduction in the country. The project carries all these important elements – village-based forestry, reforestation, income generation and local empowerment. Therefore, the project is highly relevant with the current forestry policy of Lao PDR.

**Legality of land tenure at project area:** Legally, forest land is a state-owned land and it cannot be treated as a private property. Under the policy of village forestry development, the forest land can be provided to the village for reforestation and income generation purposes. During the interview with local people at Paksong project site; however, it was observed that the forest land demarcated for the project has a long history of land encroachment or a type of local control by the individual villagers for many years although it is not officially recognized. Some of these forest land areas have been used as farmland or for other purposes by those farmers and there is a hidden fact that some of these farmers have teamed up together by allocating their occupied land to be rehabilitated under the project. The certificate issued under the village forestry development for the land use has become a legal paper to claim their long-encroached land in an alternative way. With the flexibility of current village forestry policy by encouraging agro-forestry such as rubber and coffee to be mixed with forest trees, it was foreseeable that the value of these forest land will continue to rise for the benefit of local farmers.

**Regulatory and administrative constraints:** Generally, there is no regulatory and administrative constraints reported for the project. In fact, the project was formulated to be consistent with the policy reform of village forestry in Lao PDR and the activities were designed to support the elements of village forestry – reforestation, income generation, awareness raising, and promotion of local participation and empowerment. It was observed; however, that the project has no apparent connection with local administrative bodies at province and district levels, and it has raised a question of sustainability for the project.

### 2.2. Effectiveness

**Operational capability of local staff:** The implementation structure of the project appeared to be simple and centralized. Under direct control of the project director and team at Vientiane Headquarter, most activities were implemented by the District Agriculture and Forestry Office (DAFO). An officer from DAFO was assigned to implement the activities in the field through the local contracts with target communities for activities such as new plantation,

enrichment planting and protection activities. Some local staff are capable of certain technical work such as nursery management as it was reported that many quality seedlings were raised at the Sangthong district nursery. Majority of staff assigned for the project are multi-tasked and cannot contribute fully to the project activities. During the field visit to Paksong site, only one (1) out of four (4) staff coming from Vientiane is a project staff. Therefore, it can be concluded that the project is operating with limited staff and many activities are implemented on ad-hoc basis.

**Participatory decision-making process:** There were some key decisions made in consultation with the local communities, such as selection of project sites and tree species. Although there was a plan of raising seedlings by the villagers as to provide some income for the poor villagers, the plan was changed to raise the seedlings at the district nursery at Sangthong site, and the farmers appeared to be content with this changed arrangement in favour of good quality seedlings. The losers appeared to be the most disadvantaged poor villagers.

Another issue on participatory decision-making was observed during the field visit to Paksong project site. Although an infrastructure of village office and nursery was built at the current site to be jointly used by two (2) villages, this arrangement doesn't seem to be working well as the second village was making a new request of support for a new village office, a separate nursery, an access road to their forest area and other utilities. Again, it raised a question of whether a participatory decision-making process was applied properly to select the location of this infrastructure.

In short, it can be assumed that there are still more rooms to apply participatory decision-making process with these local communities. Since Lao PDR has prioritized for local empowerment approach, it is more appropriate for the project to apply this process as much as possible.

**Dealing with local constraints and disputes:** As reported in the online survey, there appear to have some misunderstandings regarding the land among the villagers. As mentioned earlier in the section "Legality of land tenure at project area", the land area designated for the project was already occupied unofficially by some farmers for many years. With the project support, the Department of Forestry is trying to promote village forestry through plantation activities in the area. However, some villagers have misunderstood the project as an attempt of the government to take away their land and it took time and a lot of effort for the DAFO officials to clarify and eliminate their major worries. Other than this land issue, there is no other constraint observed in the area.

**External demand for a similar project:** Among the four (4) villages of Paksong district, only two (2) villages are involved in the project. Recently, the other two villages, Thongset and Nongsoung, have approached DAFO officials to consider joining the project, with a priority on income generation activities.

At the project site in Sangthong district, since all seven (7) villages are involved in the project activities, of which (4) villages requested and participated in the project activities in the second implementing year of 2017.

## 2.3. Efficiency

**Cost comparison with other similar activities:** There is a similar forest plantation site implemented by Korea Forest Promotion Institute (KOFPI) at the Xe-Pian Xe-Namnoy hydropower project site which is close to Paksong. It was informed that 1-ha plantation cost at the hydropower project site is USD 600 per ha while the cost at Paksong site is recorded at USD 543 per ha. It can be generally assumed that it is 10.5 % more cost efficient than a similar activity implemented at the neighbouring project.

**Cost comparison between Sangthong and Paksong sites:** Generally, the costs of seedling raising and planting at Sangthong are relatively cheaper than those at Paksong site. Per hectare planting cost at Sangthong is USD 500 while it is USD 543 at Paksong. Similarly, each seedling cost about USD 0.52 at Sangthong, while the same item cost USD 0.60 at Paksong. These differences may be due to transportation and transaction cost; however, such a small difference in each seedling could be very significant cost for a large-scale plantation project.

**Unused items and inapplicable programs:** There is no unused item or inapplicable program reported under the project.

**Value for money:** Based on the local respondents of survey, the activities and items that are found to have high value for money invested are listed below:

- Plantation of *Spondias axillaris* species, as it is fast growing, edible, and has a good quality wood for housing; and,
- Seedling production and trees planting activities are considered cost efficient because they provide double benefits – local income generation and increase of forest cover.

## 2.4. Impact

**Positive impact rather than relevance and effectiveness:** There are two (2) positive impacts identified by the respondents of survey and they are listed below:

- Improvement of local livelihood through the supply of non-timber forest products; and,
- Improvement of environment with more forest cover and richer biodiversity.

**Negative impact due to project intervention:** Based on the respondents of the survey, there is no negative impact caused by the project.

## 2.5. Sustainability

**Evidence of policy support in the future:** Article 108 of Forestry Law (2007) particularly stipulated for promotion of village forestry. Similarly, Forest Strategy 2020 has clearly given the guidelines for promotion of village-based forest management, decentralization, and local empowerment process. These legal documents will ensure long term policy support for the activities initiated by the project.

***Future management plan beyond the project term:*** There is no future management plan yet as the project is still ongoing until 2024. The future management options beyond the project term are identified below by the respondents of the survey:

- Continued technical support and exploring policy and regulatory support for the activities initiated by the project; and,
- Drawing of a future management plan before end of the project to ensure self-reliance of the project with technical support from the respective government agencies.

***Challenges for independent management by local communities:*** Technical and financial limitations are identified as the main challenges to be encountered by the local communities in the future. In addition, it was observed that a small adjustment in land use regulation could be beneficial for all stakeholders, by officially recognizing a long-term land use right for individual farmers so long as it is within the framework of the current community forestry certificate issued to them. However, it remains an obstacle to be overcome by the government.

### 3. Summary and Overall Assessment

Considering that it is a mid-term evaluation and some criteria cannot be assessed at their full extent, a lower assessment weighting of 30% was given to the criteria of “Impact” and “Sustainability” while the other three (3) criteria of “Relevance, Effectiveness and Efficiency” received a higher assessment weighting of 70%.

As an effort to rehabilitate degraded forests and restore forest cover under National Strategy 2020, the Lao government has been collaborating with local authorities and international organizations to address the livelihood in rural areas through national forest rehabilitation program.

A unique feature of the project among the village-based forest rehabilitation projects in the country is that it focuses on the leadership and ownership of the local communities, with a concept drawn from the ROK’s past experience of national forest rehabilitation (i.e. Saemaul Undong). Combining with the country’s traditional scheme of rural development ‘Samsang’, the DoF is now developing a new model of ‘village-driven forest rehabilitation’. So far, all the participating villages have actively engaged in the project activities under the project’s win-win strategy to manage forest lands by planting trees for rehabilitation and cultivating non-timber forest products for income generations.

In spite of pursuing participatory decision-making process in every implementing process of the project, still there are more rooms for improvement such as promoting local empowerment and legality of land tenure to boost villagers’ sense of ownership of forests for the sustainable forest management. In addition, the implementation of this project should not be treated as a standalone project but rather streamlined as part of a broader local development scheme where all development sectors are considered in a comprehensive framework. This may require a close consultation with other relevant agencies, local authorities and beneficiary communities.

Based on the performance scoring system (**Table 5**), the overall performance score of the project in Lao PDR is “**3.55**” out of the total score of 5.00. The project is in **good performance** and it is consistent with the qualitative evaluation analysis made above for all five (5) criteria. Basically, the performance scores should be used as complementary to support and consolidate in-depth qualitative analysis and its results.

## **IV. RECOMMENDATION**

This interim evaluation was conducted through documents review, on-site field survey, personal interview, and online questionnaire survey. Based on the observations in the field and feedback from various stakeholders, the project was evaluated critically for the improvement of planning and implementation in the remaining project period. The following recommendations were made to be considered by project. Every attempt was made to ensure that recommendations provided in this section are content specific and applicable under the local circumstances of the country.

### **1. Enhancing Local Land Tenure System**

As observed at Paksong project site, it is an open secret that the so-called community forestry land area is under the control of some individual farmers who have encroached and claimed unofficially for years, if not generations. Although these lands are declared officially as non-transferable or not-for-sale, they already have certain market value and there is always a hidden transfer or sale of such land in a local way. In other words, it is a typical and well-rooted land issue seen not only in Lao PDR but almost everywhere in Southeast Asia. The best solution for such encroached land appears to be by granting a more transparent individual land title or private ownership to the farmers but many governments seem not having the political will to make such a bold decision.

When the project came into this scenario by organizing the area for reforestation and conservation purposes, such initiatives were met with suspicious eyes and a local misperception that the government is using the project as an excuse to take over their land and as a result, the cooperation of the farmers has become minimal or less enthusiastic in the project activities. In order to maximize the productivity of the land both economically and environmentally, it is recommended to make some adjustments by officially recognizing individual management of land in a more transparent way, while the village forestry or the community forestry is used as an umbrella framework. Such flexibility and adjustment in recognition of land use may need the backing of a decision-maker, but it will surely enhance property right together with the productivity of the land.

### **2. Sustainability Plan for Project Activities**

As mentioned earlier regarding the “operational capacity of local staff” under the criterion “Effectiveness”, the staff assigned to this project are multi-tasked and many activities are implemented on an ad-hoc basis. An official stationed at the District Agriculture and Forestry Office (**DAFO**) is the only responsible person at the sites and there is no proper linkage with local administration mechanism. Since the community participation is not so active and strong, a project implemented by a technical agency in the village can only survive until the termination of the project. Under the current scenario, the sustainability of the project is questionable.

[Annex-5]

Since most activities will be left in the hands of village groups at the end of the project, it is needed to link properly with a local administrative mechanism to ensure the activities have become part of the mainstream planning in the area. It is recommended that all the activities implemented in the area including facilities provided and the plan for forest-related activities should be registered with the relevant local authorities for future monitoring and regular reporting by the village groups. At the same time, any activities initiated by the project should be done in consultation with the local stakeholders such as village groups and local administrative bodies for the sake of transparency and accountability.

## V. CONCLUSION

The overall results of the evaluation of the Phase 1 implementation of the AFoCO Landmark Program (LP) suggest a positive and excellent performance trend. The LP is only on its 5-year of operation but it has already established the basic foundation and instilled the importance and public value of “*Restoring Degraded Forest in Southeast Asia as a Model for a Greener Asia*”. The collaborative, innovative, and sustainable forest management perspective of the LP provides a strategic framework capable of leading forest management policy in the region.

The results of the interim evaluation provide findings and recommendations to consider in the next stage of the LP implementation. The aforementioned specific recommendations may help to enhance the management and implementation of the LP in Phase 2 (2019-2023). In addition, the AFoCO Assembly may consider following general observations from a wider perspective on the management of various outputs and resources from the LP.

Within the scope of the Landmark Program, at the entering point to the next phase, it would be an appropriate time to re-check the direction of each component and determine if it indeed aligned with the main objective of the LP: to tackle down the unequal distribution of resources, technology, and funding amongst the ASEAN Member States. Intensifying research and leading the policy discussion on sustainable forest management in the region can be suggested through various advocacy activities such as research publications, conferences, colloquia, and among others. The LP should dedicate more effort in pursuing such endeavors in order to gain recognition as a leader on forest management policy initiatives, innovations, and research.

The three (3) forest restoration projects are expected to establish three (3) diverse model forests as part of the final stage of each project. For this to be achieved, the countries in cooperation with the Secretariat need to steadily monitor the project progress and surroundings socio-environmental situations surrounding the project areas and practically discuss with the project stakeholders and beneficiaries.

[Annex-5]

## Annex 1. Questionnaire Survey for Component 3

### Questionnaire survey for Lao PDR project

Thank you for participating in this survey. This survey is to evaluate AFoCO Landmark Project in Lao PDR “**Village-based Forest Rehabilitation in Lao PDR**”. Kindly note that the information you have provided in this survey will be kept “confidential”.

#### Section 1: Information about your role in the project

Official position:

Choose an item.

Education level:

Choose an item.

Current work place:

Choose an item.

Main responsibility:

Choose an item.

Membership in PSC:

Choose an item.

Duration of your involvement:

From: Click or tap to enter a date.

To: Click or tap to enter a date.

Any specific comments about your role:

Click or tap here to enter text.

#### Section 2: Assessment of the project

For the purpose of program evaluation, the following performance scoring system will be applied.

Score range	Ranking description
0.1 - 1	Poor performance (below 20%) against the indicator
1.1 - 2	Limited performance (21 – 40%). Significant improvements needed.
2.1 - 3	Satisfactory performance (41 – 60%) but room for improvements.
3.1 - 4	Good Performance (61 – 80%) against the indicator
4.1 - 5	Excellent performance (81% and above) against the indicator

For questions below, please give a performance score where relevant and provide comments if necessary.

## 2.1 “Relevance”

- a) Based on the current village forestry rules and regulations of your country, how much relevant can you describe this project is to your country policy? **(Question for Laos officials)**  
Please give a relevance score in % below:

Choose an item.

Please provide comments as necessary

Click or tap here to enter text.

- b) Please give a ranking on the legal protection of land user right and its marketability (sale, transfer, access to bank loan, etc.) **(Question for Community leaders, members and Laos officials)**

Please give a ranking from 1 to 5 (1 the bottom and 5 the top):

Choose an item.

Please provide comments as necessary

Click or tap here to enter text.

- c) Identify policy / regulation constraints and issues in the implementation of project (such as constraints from regulation, policy or human resources). **(Question for Laos officials)**  
Please list constraints and issues below:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Based on the number of constraints and issues, provide a relevant score below:

Choose an item.

- d) Please advise on ways to improve relevance of the project. **(Question for Laos officials and AFoCO officials)**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## 2.2 “Effectiveness”

- a) Identify the staff members dedicated for the project and rank their collective technical capability **(Question for Laos officials)**  
Please list staff members, positions and identify technical issues below:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Depending on the number of staff above, please give a score below:

Choose an item.

- b) Identify major decisions made together with the local community since the commencement of the project? **(Question for Community leaders, local community)**

Please list major decisions below:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Depending on the number of decisions made, please give a score below:

Choose an item.

- c) Identify local constraints such as dispute on land tenure, ownership, etc. **(Question for Community leaders, Laos officials)**

Please list local constraints below:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Depending on the number of local constraints above, please give a score below:

Choose an item.

- d) Identify any proposal and approach from other villages to engage in the project **(Question for Community leaders, local community)**

Please list the external proposal or approaches below:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Depending on the number of external proposals, please give a score below:

Choose an item.

- e) Please advise on ways to improve effectiveness in the future. **(Question for Laos officials and AFoCO officials)**

Click or tap here to enter text.

### 2.3 "Efficiency"

- a) Cost comparison with similar other activities implemented by domestic budget. **(Question for Laos officials)**

Please provide an example and clarify below:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Based on the difference in cost (%) above, please give a score below:

Choose an item.

- b) Please make cost comparison between Sangthong and Paksong sites on one identical activity. **(Question for Laos officials and AFoCO officials)**

Click or tap here to enter text.

- c) Identify any unused items or abandoned program in the project **(Question for Laos officials)**  
Please list any unused items or abandoned program below:

[Annex-5]

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please select one below depending on number of items found above:

Choose an item.

- d) Identify the most cost-efficient activities (efficient cost per return) in your opinion **(Question for Laos officials)**

Please provide answer and clarification below:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please select one below depending on number of items found above:

Choose an item.

- e) Please advise on ways to improve cost-efficiency in the future. **(Question for Laos officials and AFoCO officials)**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## 2.4 “Impact”

- a) Identify any positive effect(s) other than relevance and effectiveness **(Question for Laos officials and community leaders)**

Please list positive effects below:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Depending on the number of positive effects above, please give a score below:

Choose an item.

- b) Identify any negative effect(s) due to the project interventions **(Question for Laos officials and community leaders)**

Please list negative effects below:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Depending on the number of issues above, please give a score below:

Choose an item.

- c) Please advise on ways to improve synergy and increase positive impact. **(Question for Laos officials and AFoCO officials)**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## 2.5 “Sustainability”

- a) Identify national policy of Lao PDR that are supportive to continue the project activities **(Question for Laos officials)**

Please list positive national policies below:

Click or tap here to enter text.

[Annex-5]

Depending on the number of policy above, please give a score below:

Choose an item.

- b) Identify future management plan beyond the project **(Question for Laos officials)**

Please clarify the future management plan below:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Depending on the outreach, inclusiveness and level of community engagement, please give a score below:

Choose an item.

- c) What are the difficulties and issues to manage a similar project by themselves? **(Question for Village leaders and local community)**

Please identify the issues and difficulties for the local people:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Depending on the number of issues above, please give a score below:

Choose an item.

- d) Please advise on ways to enhance sustainability in the future. **(Question for Laos officials and AFoCO officials)**

Click or tap here to enter text.

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**Annex 2. Summary on the Project in Lao PDR of Landmark Program (2014-2018)**

Element/indicator	Key Findings and Issues	Recommendation	Responsibility	Time
<b>[1] Lao PDR</b>				
Relevance	The project is highly relevant with the national priority of promoting village-based forestry to increase national forest cover and local livelihood improvement. However, the land designated for the project has long been occupied by the local farmers who are trying to legitimate their land use in the name of village forestry.	Since the current policy has allowed a mixture of forest and plantation crops in the name of village forestry, such flexibility of land use should be promoted and applied in line with the implementation local development plan and market demand of plantation crop products.	Department of Forestry & Local authorities.	2019 onward
Effectiveness	The project is managed by a team based in Vientiane and led by a director who is multi-tasked. For operational activities in the field, an official from district level agriculture and forestry office is directly engaged with the village committee and members. The villagers in 2 (two) villages are found to be less active due to some misunderstanding about the intention of government agency on the land.	Rather than a standalone project, it is needed to find a way to make the project as part of local development planning. Since the future management responsibilities will be left with the village committees, it is needed to set up a proper check-and-balance mechanism with the district level authorities.	Department of Forestry & local authorities.	2019 onward
Efficiency	Cost of forest plantation at this project site is 10% less than a nearby project supported by a Korean company.	Promising local species which give multiple benefits (such as good wood quality, edible food supply and fast growing) should be invested more from the view of cost efficiency.	Department of Forestry & local communities.	2019 onward

[Annex-5]

Element/indicator	Key Findings and Issues	Recommendation	Responsibility	Time
Impact	At this stage, there is no visible impact yet except some funding support to the local people for nursery raising and plantation activities. Another impact is more availability of non-timber forest products after protection activities.	The facts and long-term benefits of this project should be publicized such as leaflet distribution for the local stakeholders and communities.	Department of Forestry.	2019 onward
Sustainability	There is no long-term management plan observed at Paksong community plantation site and the government agency can only provide technical support after the end of the project. This raises a sustainability question.	<p>In order to maximize the productivity and environmental sustainability of the land in the long run, some official interventions are needed by officially recognizing individual management of land, while the village forestry or the community forestry is applied as an umbrella framework.</p> <p>Before the project end, it is needed to link properly with local administrative mechanism to ensure the activities has become part of local mainstream planning. All the implemented activities should be registered with the relevant local authorities for future monitoring and regular reporting by the village groups.</p>	Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry & local authorities.	2019 onward