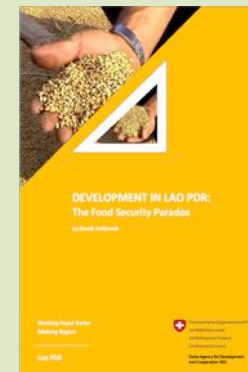
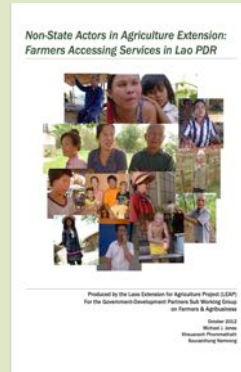




10 Years of Supporting Policy Dialogue for Farmers and Agribusiness

Somxay Sisanonh, Dep DG, DAEC
SSWG-FAB meeting,
13 May 2016



11. Reduce risk of indebtedness among farmers through raising awareness about challenges and risks of borrowing money and contract farming. In addition, ensure that all loans have a clear production and marketing plan.

12. At present, Farmer's Organizations throughout the country are not consolidated which is difficult for farmers to express their voice effectively. We would like to propose for establishment of the National Farmer's Federation.

13. Develop clear legislation to support organization and function of farmer organizations.

14. We would like to participate more in policy and regulation formulations such as price set up, ban of import and export, tax and tariff rates, service fees, export process, land concession, etc.

Delegates of the conference agreed to rank identified issues and the top 5 priority issues are:

1. Policy for low interest loan for reasonable period (point No. 5)
2. Provide market information from local and international markets (point No. 1)
3. Learning new production techniques (point No. 9)
4. Ban and reduce foreign direct investments that cause negative impacts for local productions (point No. 6)
5. Tax exemption for production and trade of agriculture product (point No. 4) and reduce health and environmental impact from use of chemical in agriculture (point No. 8)

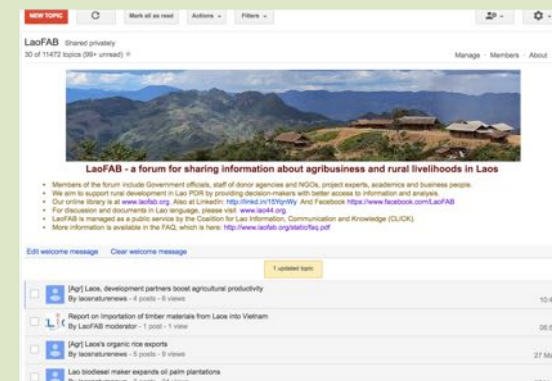
A workshop of Farmer's Organisation engaged in commercial agriculture production in Northern Laos was organised by Sub Sector Working Group on Farmers and Agribusiness (SSWGAB). The objectives of the workshop were to share lessons and experiences, establish a network amongst FO and identify key issues as faced by the FOs on commercial agriculture production. Above statement is the output of the workshop.

Electronic file of the statement is available @ www.lao4.org and www.laofab.org

Farmers' Statement

Farmer's Conference on Commercial Agriculture

19-20 June 2015, Luangnamtha, Lao PDR



Overview



- ◉ Introduction to the Working Group
- ◉ Completed Studies
- ◉ Information Services
- ◉ Capacity Building for Advisory Services
- ◉ The emergence of Lao Farmer Network
- ◉ Outcomes for Different Stakeholders
- ◉ Concluding Remarks



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- This horizontal strip contains 12 small thumbnail images. From left to right, they depict: 1) A close-up of green watermelons. 2) A grid of many small photos showing various people and activities. 3) A person working in a field. 4) A group of people in a field. 5) A person holding a large green leafy vegetable. 6) A group of people in a field. 7) A person working in a field. 8) A person working in a field. 9) A person working in a field. 10) A person working in a field. 11) A person working in a field. 12) A person working in a field.

Completed studies



- ◎ In the past ten years, the Secretariat of the Working Group has commissioned and disseminated the results of 17 policy studies:
 - 2006 – Agribusiness literature review and prioritization of topics for further study
 - 2007 – Contract Farming in Lao PDR: Cases and Questions
 - 2008 - Agriculture and forestry service delivery at the village cluster (kumban) level
 - 2009 – Aid effectiveness in agricultural extension
 - 2009 – Development in Lao PDR: The Food Security Paradox
 - 2009 – Input Chains: Case Studies from Oudomxay and Attapeu Provinces
 - 2010 – Farmer Bargaining Power in the Lao PDR: Possibilities and Pitfalls
 - 2010 – Farmer's Voices



Completed studies



- 2011 – Farmer Organisations: Opportunities, constraints and pathways for development
- 2011 – Smallholder production agreements in the Lao PDR: Qualifying Success
- 2012 – Non State Actors in Agriculture Extension: Farmers Accessing Services in Lao PDR
- 2012 – “Up to their necks”: A short and anecdotal study of indebtedness in selected farming villages
- 2013 - Meta study on Farmers and Agribusiness: Synthesis of lessons from 7 previous SSWG-FAB studies
- 2014 – Capitalisation of Approaches on Supporting Development of Farmers Organisations
- 2014 – Capitalisation on Public Private Partnerships (PPP) in Agriculture
- 2015 – Capitalisation on Market Information Systems (MIS) for Smallholder Farmers and Traders
- 2016 - Falling Rubber Prices in Northern Laos: Local Responses and policy Options



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Capacity building



- ◎ A number of capacity-building initiatives have been closely linked to the activities of the SWGAB, for example:
 - A task force was created at NAFES in 2009 to bring together projects involved in Agribusiness Advisory Services (ABAS). A series of meetings was held to share materials and practical experience.
 - In 2012, building on the SWGAB studies on contract farming, LEAP produced extension materials on the theme of 'Think before you Sign', including posters, videos and radio spots in three languages: Lao, Hmong and Khmu.
 - In March 2016 the first meeting of the 'FOCUS Group' took place in Oudomxay. This sub-group under SSWG-FAB brings together stakeholders involved in capacity building for Farmer Organisations. A second FOCUS meeting will be held in the South later this year.
 - The latest activities at DAEC also include a partnership with SMEPDO to conduct ToTs on the Business Planning and Management.



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Outcome for Govt and DPs



- SSWG-FAB is the only working group under MAF that has been active for 10 years.
- The group has a reputation for producing interesting reports, conducting stimulating meetings and maintaining useful online information services.
- As a result of these activities, government officials and development partners are better informed about what is happening with agribusiness in Laos, especially the challenges affecting smallholders
- In some areas (eg. contract farming, farmer organisations and farmer debt) the SSWG-FAB has played a leading role in lesson-learning and policy dialogue.



Outcome for small farmers



- ◉ The strategic principle that the Co-Chairs and Secretariat of SSWG-FAB have adopted for promoting the interests of small farmers can be summed up in the phrase 'Voice and Choice'.
- ◉ Starting 10 years ago, the SSWG-FAB started raising awareness of issues affecting smallholders making the difficult transition from subsistence to commercial farming. Through the LFN, these farmers can now speak for themselves.
- ◉ By organising meetings in the provinces, producing videos and using the internet, SSWG-FAB has succeeded in engaging a larger number of people in lesson-learning and policy debate.
- ◉ These activities help everybody become a decision-maker, not just a small group of government officials and foreign experts in Vientiane. Campaigns such as 'Think Before You Sign' have helped many thousands of farmers understand agribusiness options.



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