

CENTRE D'ETUDE ET DE DÉVELOPPEMENT AGRICOLE CAMBODGIEN (CEDAC)

Cambodian Center for Study and Development in Agriculture (CEDAC)

Evaluation of how Multi-Purpose Farming impacts the food security of small land-holding farmers in Cambodia

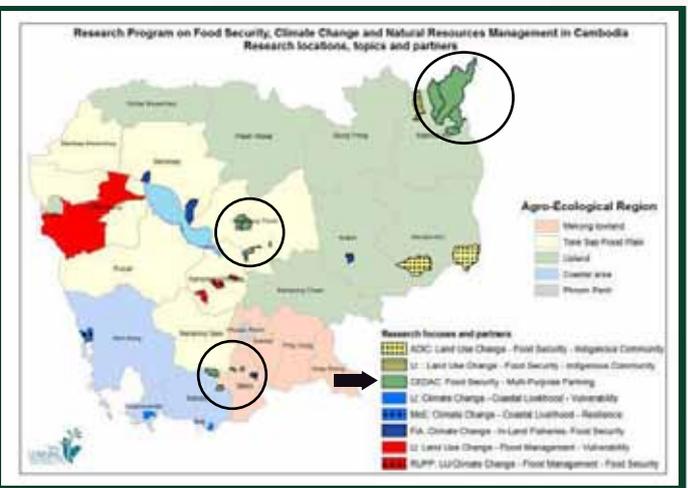
Context and objectives

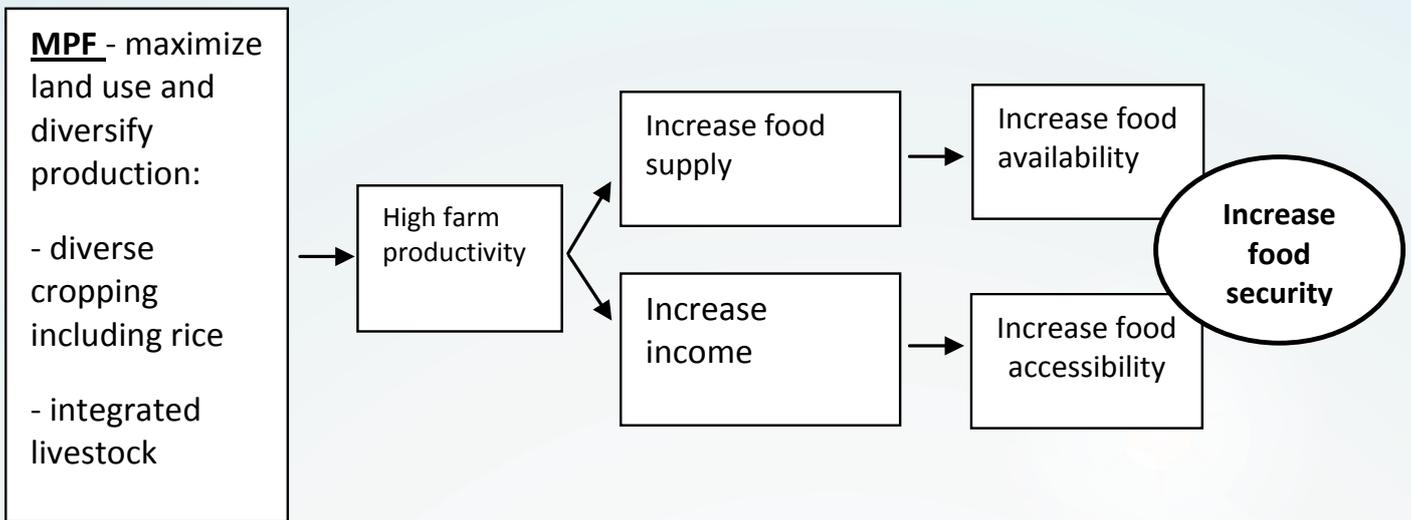
Since 2001, CEDAC has promoted Multi-Purpose Farming (MPF) as an integrated farming technique. Through diversification and improved technical approaches, MPF contributes to producing higher rice yields than traditional mono-crop rice cultivation and diversifies agricultural production to enable farmers to be more food secure. However, to date, little comparative research has been conducted documenting the effectiveness of MPF to improve farmers' availability, accessibility, and stability of food when compared to traditional mono-crop production. This research aims to evaluate the potential impact of Multi-Purpose Farming on the food security of small-scale landholding farmers and its viability as a food insecurity-combating technique. The research also aims to explore the community perceptions of Multi-Purpose Farming concepts and practices and its up-scaling potential

(through farmer-led experimentation) and constraints in different agro-ecological region of Cambodia (in Takeo, Kampong Thom and Rattanakiri provinces).

Methodology

MPF involves maximizing land use and diversifying farm production, to integrate rice-crop and livestock farming systems as well as to improve water management for increased farm productivity. When MPF is improved, the households' food supply is likely to increase and with it, the level of employment and household income. All of these factors may contribute the improvement of food availability and accessibility at the community and household level. MPF may also help people in terms of stability of food provision while they are vulnerable to the environment stress or shock.





Hence, this research will focus on three dimensions of food security such as availability, accessibility, and stability – as measurements to evaluate whether the food security of small-scale landholding farmers is improved as a result of employing Multi-Purpose Farming (when compared with traditional mono-crop farming).

To start with, the research team will reference secondary data sources, including previously conducted baseline surveys in Ratanakiri and Takeo to get a general sense of the current situation in each target province. During a feasibility phase, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions will examine how individual households are using their land; what their current agricultural outputs are; what their current availability, accessibility, and stability to food is; their socio-economic situation and their perceptions about MPF and/or barriers and constraints to adopting MPF. The research will then engage in a documentation phase to do a daily monitoring of the households engaged in traditional rice farming versus multi-purpose farming. This will allow for a detailed calculation of specific production indicators (cost price, labor use, value added, land and labor productivities and profitability of the system). The research will also document the food production, consumption and reliability capacities of Multi-Purpose Farming by calculating the

economics of farm production. These phases represent preliminary steps before an action phase during which MPF innovation will be experimented by new farmers.

Contribution to the program

The research will make an original contribution to the program, as it addresses food security issues which are central to the programme’s thematic focus. The research will look at different dimensions of food security from an agricultural and systemic perspective.

This research asserts that the practice of mono-cropping leads to a low return on labor and input intensification. The documentation of MPF will contribute to clarifying debate on the conditions and constraints faced by farmers to adopt this agricultural innovation. This is seen as a necessary step for policy makers and practitioners to promote the MPF system widely across the country.

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