



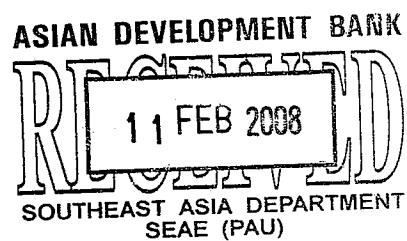
Implementation Completion Memorandum

Project Number: JFPR LAO 36491
Grant Number: JFPR 9034-LAO
10 February 2007

LAO PDR: Reducing Poverty among Ethnic Minority Women in Nam Ngum River Basin.

(Financed by the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction)

Asian Development Bank



JAPAN FUND FOR POVERTY REDUCTION (JFPR)
IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION MEMORANDUM (ICM)

I. BASIC INFORMATION			
1. JFPR Number and Name of Grant: JFPR 9034 : Reducing Poverty among Ethnic Minority Women in Nam Ngum River Basin.			
2. Country (DMC): Lao People's Democratic Republic (LAO PDR)		3. Approved JFPR Grant Amount: \$530,000	
4. Grant Type: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Poverty Reduction Project / <input type="radio"/> Capacity Building		5-A. Undisbursed Amount \$ 11,831	5-B. Utilized Amount \$518,169
6. Contributions from other sources			
Source of Contribution:	Committed Amount	Actual Contributions:	Remark - Notes:
DMC Government	\$20,000	\$84,884	Government Staff salary
Other Donors (please name)	\$	\$	
Private Sector	\$	\$	
Community/Beneficiaries	\$35,000	\$24,216	Labor and material (excluding cost of land for the water facility location).
7-A. GOJ Approval Date:		7-B. ADB Approval Date: 12 November 2003	7-C. Date the LOA was signed (Grant Effectiveness Date): 10 February 2004
8-A. Original Grant Closing Date: 31 December 2007		8-B. Actual Grant Closing Date: 10 February 2008	8-C. Account Closing Date: 10 February 2008
9. Name and Number of Counterpart ADB (Loan) Project: Loan 1933-LAO(SF) Nam Ngum River Basin Development Sector Project.			
10. The Grant Recipient(s): Ministry of Finance, Ban Nongborn, SibSong Singha Road, Sethathirath District, Lao PDR Tel. 856 21 412409,			
11. Executing and Implementing Agencies: Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Patouxay Road, Vientiane Capital City, P.O Box 811, Tel: 856 21 263161, Fax. 865 21 416556			

II. GRANT PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT
12. Description: The JFPR project was designed in conjunction with the ADB assisted Nam Ngum River Basin development sector project when it became clear during social assessments that ethnic minority women who are disadvantaged in many ways, may be unable to participate in project activities and derive benefits thereby. The need for a grant project that would be designed to meet the particular needs of ethnic minority women, led to the preparation of this JFPR project.

13. Grant Development Objective and Scope:

The Project's goal is to reduce poverty and improve the socioeconomic status of ethnic minority women in the Nam Ngum River Basin (NNRB). The immediate objectives are (i) to build capacity of ethnic minority women by organizing them into groups and by training them in variety of areas such as participatory planning, livelihood improvement, and Lao language; (ii) improve health and social status by enabling them to plan and invest in basic social infrastructure; and (iii) improve livelihood by enabling them to plan and manage productive assets.

The seven components conceptualized by the project such as: (i) Livelihood improvement; (ii) Social Infrastructures and Services Improvement; (iii) Training and Skill Development; (iv) Participatory Planning; (v) Baseline survey and Participatory Poverty Impact Assessment; (vi) Consultancies; (vii) and Project Management were appropriated and detailed. Although the number of component should be less numerous: the first three components plus the Project management component should be sufficient.

The Project's goal and immediate objectives are appropriate to the Government Strategy on agriculture sector: equal gender opportunities in rural areas are related to the economic growth with equity. The project was implemented in accordance with the scope.

Implementation arrangements were undertaken as agreed. However, additional agencies such as the District Non Formal Education (NFE unit); and the District Health (Safe Water Unit) were called to support the implementation of activities. Initially, only the District Lao Women's Union (LWU) was mentioned (NGO was not contracted in the project). The duration of the project's implementation over 3 years was appropriated as well as the formulation that includes the extent of stakeholders' participation and ownership.

14. Key Performance Indicators	Accomplishments Rating (HS,S,PS,U ¹)	Evaluation of each Indicator:
Component 1: Livelihood Improvement (i) 30 women's groups are set-up and run (ii) 10 revolving funds are set-up with rules and regulation (iii) 98% of repayment rate achieved (iv) 10 Commodity rice banks are set-up (v) 300 ethnic minority women own productive assets (vi) Beneficiaries' income improves by 5%	Satisfactory	All the following indicators are relevant but almost all of them needed to be monitored beyond Project completion in order to ensure their sustainability: (i) 32 groups of 10 members (ii) 32 revolving funds (22 cattle based, 10 cash based) (iii) 100% achieved in 8 groups. 6 other groups have not results yet. (iv) Not applicable (v) 279 ethnic minority women (cattle, pig, goat, weaving equipment etc.) (vi) Result varies. Vegetables growing groups achieved rapid income increase.

¹ HS=Highly Satisfactory; S=Satisfactory; PS=Partly Satisfactory; U=Unsuccessful

<p>Component 2: Social Infrastructure and Services Improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) 15 social infrastructures are improved (ii) 15 beneficiary groups have contributed 15% of cost in labor and local material for contribution (iii) Community-based operation and maintenance (O&M) are organized (iv) Water quality is improved (v) Time needed to collect water is reduced (vi) Morbidity is reduced (vii) Road accessibility is improved (viii) Behavior is changed 	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>The following indicators are relevant, except the 6th indicators (mobility is reduced) that is not applicable for the Project's villages. New indicators regarding the road access improvement were added. If the O&M is well managed the social infrastructures are expected to be sustainable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Achieved. 17 have been improved (15 water gravity system and 2 roads) (ii) Achieved. The percentage far exceeded the expectation (with exception of 1). Average is 26,3% (iii) Achieved. An O&M fees are collected (iv) Achieved. Water quality is improved (water comes from fresh springs) (v) Achieved. Reduction of 30 minutes to 4 hours (vi) Not applicable (vii) Achieved. Reduction of travel time (4-5 hours on average) to district centers. (viii) Achieved. More income generation opportunities
<p>Component 3- Training and Skill Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) 300 ethnic minority women are trained (ii) 300 ethnic minority women are trained in Lao language (iii) 20 PAFO (Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office) -DAFEO (District Agriculture, Forestry and Extension Office) staffs are trained in each province in gender-sensitive programming and service delivery (iv) 300 ethnic minority women are enabled to participate in mainstream agriculture and livestock training 	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>All indicators are relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Achieved. 3,173 women received technical training (ii) Achieved. 389 women were trained in Lao language (iii) Achieved. 27 PAFO-DAFEO staffs in total were given training and gender sensitization training. Annual workshops were also held. (iv) Achieved. 397 women were able to participate
<p>Component 4- Participatory Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) PAFO -DAFEO staffs are engaged in participatory planning (ii) 30 women's groups are trained in participatory planning (iii) 30 village plans are prepared for livelihood activities: (iv) 15 village plans are prepared for social infrastructures' O&M 	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>All indicators are relevant but should not be separated from the Project Management Component:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Achieved. Village participatory training completed in 30 villages (but project assisted only 28) by PAFO-DAFEO, who were given prior training by consultants. (ii) Achieved. 37 groups were trained (iii) Achieved. 32 village plans (budget, procurement) were prepared for livelihood activities: (v) Achieved. 17 village plans were prepared (the plans includes community contribution in implementation and O&M)

<p>Component 5 - Baseline survey, Participatory Poverty Impact Assessment</p> <p>(i) To build a set of indicators of poverty and ethnicity based disadvantage for monitoring progress and Project's poverty impact assessment</p> <p>(ii) To carry-out a Participatory Poverty Impact Assessment</p>	<p>Partially Satisfactory</p> <p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>(i) The relevance is partially satisfactory because the sampling did not match with the JFPR target villages (sub-groups) and ethnic minority women's groups</p> <p>(ii) The relevance is satisfactory: the post poverty impact assessment focus specifically on 6 JFPR villages and on Project's beneficiaries</p>
<p>Component 6- Consultancy</p> <p>(i) To recruit consultants to meet the requirement support under the Project's components</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>▪ Accomplishment rating is satisfactory: The requirement support under the Project's components has been achieved as requested. The consultants left formal and informal transfer of knowledge, reporting documents (Inception reports, Quarterly Progress Reports, Infrastructure Evaluation Report, Final Report); and useful handbook, training materials and guidelines.</p>
<p>Component 7- Management</p> <p>(i) Project quarterly reports are written by key government staff deployed in each provinces and districts</p> <p>(ii) PAFO, DAFEO, and LWU write quarterly progress reports on deployment of staff for project management coordination and implementation</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>▪ Accomplishment rating is satisfactory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The patterns of decision-making, planning and cost-effective resource allocation throughout the Office of National Project Management (ONPM) has been demonstrated - Report related tasks being efficiently and effectively completed by Project's staff at all level - Local autonomy, decision-making, resource allocation and accountability at the local level has been demonstrated
<p>15. Evaluation of Inputs:</p> <p>The JFPR grant was formulated well. The terms of reference were comprehensive and suit the Government's plans to provide platforms for poor ethnic minority women to come together and access government services and to undertake initiatives to improve their own lives and communities.</p> <p>Performance of Executive Agency (EA – NPM office); Implementing Agencies (PAFO-DAFEO and other agencies); Village Committees and beneficiaries, as well as the consultants' team were found satisfactory.</p> <p>During project implementation, ADB mission held detailed discussions on project related issues, and provided adequate advice to resolve problems encountered.</p>		
<p>16. Evaluation of Outputs and Results:</p> <p>The production of outputs regarding reports, manuals, monitoring formats and guidelines generated was useful and sufficient both for the Implementing Agencies and for the beneficiaries. Compare to planned results, the outputs (especially in number and %) were higher than expected. The recipient and client (beneficiaries) were satisfied with the assets, training and capacity building provided by the Project. The delivery of outputs during the 2nd year 2006-2007 was better managed than the 1st year 2004-2005 (considered as a pilot year). There is a high expectation for the sustainability of activities. However, the exit strategy was discussed and it was agreed that the DAFEO team will monitor and assist the JFPR beneficiaries, in parallel with their monitoring works for the Loan project in the NNBR area.</p>		
<p>17. Overall Assessment and Rating:</p> <p>The project is rated successful: the Project has achieved its immediate objective of improving the livelihood of ethnic minority women and building their capacity to participate in community decision making on livelihood and management of productive assets. With the improved water gravity system, the beneficiaries reported that the time used to collect water is less than 10 minutes in average instead of 30 minutes up to 4 hours; and beneficiaries can collect water at anytime night and day. The water is clean, clear, safe and sufficient all year long; and health and sanitation have improved in many ways.</p>		

18. Major Lessons Learned:

The significant lessons learned that can help improve the formulation and implementation of similar JFPR grant investments are as follows:

1. Community ownership:

- (i) The participatory planning research activities should be carried out with all the socio-economic groups' representation (especially the poorest ones) during the initial group discussions;
- (ii) The principle of transparency was explained to the beneficiaries many times as needed during the monitoring visit by the PAFO-DAFEO teams. Information pertaining to the project was put up on a board in the village;
- (iii) The rules and regulations, specific to cattle revolving fund, were set up with the women's group participation and consensus at the start of the implementation of activities;
- (iv) The decision to procure cattle directly by themselves or not was left to the beneficiaries;
- (v) The community was aware of the value of the contract, their contributions and their role on O&M due to the board that was installed in all Project villages detailing contribution from JFPR/ADB (with the project name), the total outlay provided by the Project, and details of contract values, types and extent of community contributions etc;
- (vi) In all infrastructure construction the communities were able to contribute more than 18% of the total cost (as initially requested by the project) through locally available materials and labor. A format was used for calculating the local contribution in all villages at the start of future construction works.
- (vii) The project built the community ownership and responsibility at the commencement of project's implementation in order to ensure sustainable positive outcomes.

2. Sustainability:

- (i) The principle of sustainability was based mainly on the capacity building of women groups;
- (ii) Sustainability, specific to cattle revolving fund, was based on linkage between the first group and the following groups of beneficiaries;
- (iii) Specific training on O&M, with follow-up were undertaken;
- (iv) The preparation of O&M plan took times and generally not completed prior to undertaking future construction work as requested by the project.

3. Women's participation:

- (i) Training topics proposed to women were appropriated to their interests and needs;
- (ii) The setting-up of Lao language courses was facilitated by the Village Volunteer Teacher; by adequate teaching-learning materials provided to them; and by the monitoring of District Non formal Education pedagogical advisor. The sustainability was at risks with (old) women who are not interested to continue learning;
- (iii) The setting-up of study tour improved the level of women's confidence;
- (iv) Generally women groups were more involved in the type and location of the infrastructure prior to finalization than the technical design.

4. Government ownership

- (i) The EA submitted copies of all withdrawal applications simultaneously to SEAE/ADB when submitting them to Controllers in order to speed up the fund flows.
- (ii) Annual work plans vetted by the ONPM were allowed to be implemented. Copies of these were submitted to ADB by email for speedy approval
- (iii) The Project has been benefiting largely from the strong sense of ownership and commitment of Government of Lao PDR, particularly MAF and DAFEOs. All the Project's activities were implemented by the Government, more specifically MAF and DAFEOs for overall supervision and technical training, Department of Non Formal Education for Lao language training, District Health Office for Water Gravity System, Lao Women's Union for participatory planning staff. There was no provision of international consultant and consulting inputs were kept minimum mainly to provide training of trainers to the Government staff.

19. Recommendations and Follow-up Actions:

Recommendations:

- (i) Adequate training and monitoring material will be provided to the PAFO-DAFEO team before running the participatory planning research activities with women's groups coming from all the socio-economic groups;
- (ii) A close support to the beneficiaries is crucial. The delivery services will explain the principles of transparency, sustainability, and group and community responsibility, participatory O&M to the beneficiaries as much as possible all along the project's implementation, and build the capability of women;
- (iii) The rules and regulations will be set up prior to the commencement of activities, and understood by the first group (as it will be the model for the following ones). The decision to procure cattle directly by themselves or not should be left to the beneficiaries;
- (iv) Sustainability, specific to cattle revolving fund, will be based on the linkage between the first and the following group of members;
- (v) Vaccination should not be the sole responsibility of women as they dislike taking the responsibility to vaccinate the animal.
- (vi) Sustainability, specific to cash revolving funds, will be based on adequate training to the women groups in cash revolving funds including interest rates, savings, and repayment monitoring to ensure that funds keep operating even after the Project is over.
- (vii) Training topics will be appropriated to the women's group interests and needs. Training should be carried out by specific trainers (such as District LWU, District NFE, District Health Unit, and DAFEO teams) under the Project/consultants' supervision.
- (viii) Special encouragement should be done to the younger women who are interested and committed to learn Lao language. Flexibility should be given to older women to attend or not the Lao lessons courses. The setting-up of Lao language courses will be facilitated by the Village Volunteer Teacher; by adequate teaching-learning materials provided to them and by a close monitoring support given by the District Non formal Education pedagogical adviser;
- (ix) Study tours should be set-up to allow both women and men to meet their peers in other province/locations and exchange ideas and experiences and thereby learns from each other;
- (x) Women groups should be fully consulted about the type and location, and even design of the infrastructure prior to finalization even the technical design;
- (xi) The community should be aware of the value of the contract, their contributions and their role on O&M due. An information board will be installed in all Project villages;
- (xii) Community contribution in social infrastructure in labor and local material can be more than 18% of the total cost. Detailed contribution, following a pre-format calculation, will be recorded and reported to the Project as soon as possible.
- (xiii) The various village's committees (procurement, control, operation and maintenance) will be established with role and responsibilities ;
- (xiv) The project will build the community ownership and responsibility at the commencement of project's implementation in order to ensure sustainable positive outcomes.

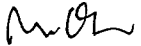
Follow-up by DAFEO team, after the project's completion:

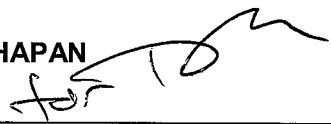


- 1. Support the establishment of new groups by encouraging them;
- 2. Guide and give technical advices to ensure sustainability of activities
- 3. Disseminate advices to old and new group
- 4. Ensure linkage between old and new group
- 5. Ensure that rules and regulations specific payment of interest and transparency of accounting are well understood by old and new members
- 6. Coordinate with district NFE to give a continuous support to Village Volunteer Teacher of the project within their regular works
- 7. Contact Lao Women Union to give a continuous support to the Women's Groups.

20. Additional Remarks, Comments and Suggestions:



The official meetings for handing over the overall responsibility to the District Governors (District Project Steering Committee) and the continuous technical support and regular monitoring tasks to the DAFEO of six districts have been undertaken according to the decision from the Final Workshop held on 21-22 December 2007.

III. PREPARATION AND APPROVAL

Prepared by:	Name of Person and designation / Name of Institution / Signature	Date
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2. Manager, JFPR-GIU ¹ :	Sisovath Phandanouvong, National Project Director, ONPM, Department of Planning, MAF	
3. Project Officer, ADB:	Ms Mio Oka Social Development Specialist, ADB	 20 February 2008

Approved	Name of Person and designation / Name of Institution / Signature	Date
1. Director General, Department, ADB:	ARJUN THAPAN 	6 Mar '08
2. Division/Country Director, ADB:	 UROOJ S. MALIK 	28/02/08

¹ GIU=grant implementation unit (formerly called PIU=project implementation unit)

4. Head of the Executing Agency:	Dr. Phouang Parisack Pravongviengkham, Director General, Department of Planning, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR 	08 FEB 2008 Phouangparisak PRAVONGVIENGKHAM
5. Head of Implementing Agency:	Sisovath Phandanouvong, National Project manager, Office of the National Project Management. 	08 FEB 2008

Sisovath PHANDANOUVONG

Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

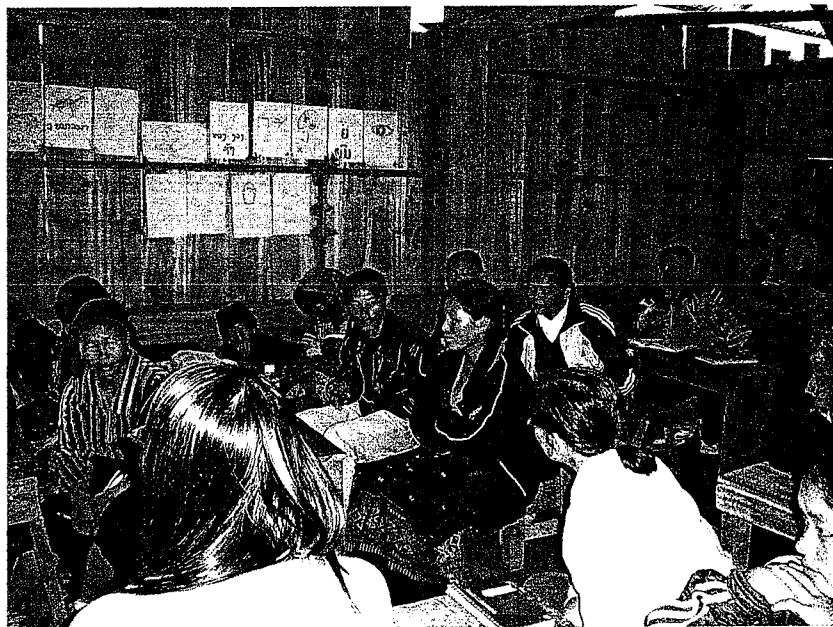
Department of Planning

Office of the National Project Management (ONPM)

Reducing Poverty among Ethnic Minority Women in NNRB

(JFPR Grant 9034 LAO)

Participatory Project Impact Assessment (Benefit Evaluation Report)



Vientiane, 10 February 2008

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INTRODUCTION

The JFPR project was designed in conjunction with the ADB assisted Nam Ngum Basin development sector project when it became clear during social assessments that ethnic minority women who are disadvantaged in many ways, may be unable to participate in project activities and derive benefits thereby. Ethnic minority women were found to suffer the dual disadvantages arising from both ethnicity and gender. They were socially excluded, lacking education and knowledge of Lao language, lacking ownership of productive resources, overburdened with domestic work, and income earning activities including crops production, forest based activities, livestock maintenance, handicrafts among others. Ethnic minority women lack opportunities for participation in communities and external opportunities for training and development. They lack access to water and sanitation and health services, which has negative impacts on their health and workload.

The Project goal is to reduce poverty and improve the socioeconomic status of ethnic minority women. The immediate objectives are to build awareness and capacity among local ethnic minority women's groups to participate in community decision making on livelihood and management of productive assets. In order to support the above objectives the project provided funds for livelihood and social infrastructure and services improvement. In addition, the Project provided training in various field to strengthen their skills and to empower them.

At the end of three years of implementation, starting from August 2004 to July 2007, the JFPR project has reached 28 villages, in 6 districts of 2 provinces, namely Vientiane and Xiengkhouang provinces. More than 300 women (about 30 groups of 10 women) own assets and benefited from the revolving fund in cash or in kind provided by the project; the women groups' income increased much more than 165% per year. They are the main beneficiaries of the water gravity system provided by the project which lighten their daily burden, improve their health and sanitation. They participated in various training which strengthened their skills as expected and many of them feel more confident and their behavior changes have been noticed.

Participatory poverty impact assessment (PPIA)

In 2004, a baseline survey was carried to build a set of indicators of poverty and ethnicity based disadvantage for monitoring progress and Project's poverty impact assessment. However, the proposed set of indicators was not fully useful because the village sampling (villages, ethnic groups and households surveyed) did not match with the JFPR target villages and sub-villages and ethnic minority women's groups; so the baseline data was not appropriated to the needs of the JFPR.

The present PPIA focus on JFPR villages; and on ethnic minority women's groups. The assessment is done on: (i) the existing capacities and skills of women's groups to improve their livelihood and managed their own assets compared to before; (ii) the social infrastructure benefits brought by the Project. It has to be noted that the social infrastructures' Evaluation was conducted between April and June 2007 in the Project villages. Findings and analysis were reported to ADB and the ONPM; and (iii) the gaps in meeting needs, priorities and constraints.

Additionally, the PPIA report will serve as a Project final evaluation, which uses such evaluation criteria as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability; and provide observation and description of activities that did not work well.

METHODOLOGY

1. TOPICS FOR GROUP'S DISCUSSIONS

Group discussion with the Village Committee and/or the beneficiaries, women groups' members or WG Executive Committee, with will be carried-out in six villages, in each of the six districts and two provinces of the Project, as shown below in Table 1:

1.1. Main topics for group discussion with the Village Committee

- (i) **Preliminary evaluation of achievement of the immediate objectives** by the Village Committee: knowledge about the JFPR interventions, benefits and social infrastructure improvement:
 - *What are the grant interventions and benefits?*
 - *Can you evaluate the sustainability of those interventions and benefits?*
- (ii) **Livelihood Improvement:**
Involvement of Village Committee during the Project's implementation (problems handled or foreseen as potential risks), adequacy of solutions adopted and self-evaluation in the project's involvement:
 - *How problems were handled? Whether they were foreseen as potential risks?*
 - *Were the solutions adopted adequate during implementation?*
 - *Could you self-evaluate in the project's involvement?*
- (iii) **Social Infrastructure improvement:**
Impacts of having WGS and road access improvement, current O&M management, and notion of ownership and sustainability:
 - *Currently do all the ethnic minority women's groups have access to social infrastructure improvement?*
 - *What are the impacts of having WGS or road improvement?*
 - *Do you have an O&M management for social infrastructures?*
 - *What should we do to improve or sustain the existing social infrastructure?*
- (iv) **Capacity building:**
Knowledge about the type of training provided to women and behavior changes noticed by Village Committee after the project's completion:
 - *Did the project build the awareness and capacity among local ethnic minority women's groups to participate in community decision making on livelihood and management of productive assets?*
 - *What types of training were provided to the beneficiaries?*
 - *Could you evaluate the understanding and usefulness of the training topics delivered to the beneficiaries?*
 - *What should we do to improve or sustain the skill and training improvement interventions?*

1.2. Main topics for group discussion with the beneficiaries

- (i) **Livelihood Improvement Assessment:**
Participatory planning process:
 - *Have you participate in prioritizing the activities at the start of the JFPR project? Were you satisfied with the choice of the activity? Who selected you to be among the 10 members of the women's group?*
Women work process

- *Do you have a regular meeting? Do the meeting content record? Do you think these meetings are useful?*

Group's responsibility

Behavior changes

Transparency and involvement in procurement of assets

Sustainability of revolving fund in cash and in kind

(ii) Social Infrastructure Assessment

Involvement of women in the selection of social infrastructure (type, design, location and financial plan)

Knowledge about the principle of transparency

Local contribution by women

Satisfaction and benefits

(iii) Capacity Building Assessment

About the type of training given to beneficiaries

Issues of Lao language

Usefulness and sustainability of training

2. SURVEY SAMPLING

The PPIA will be carried out in 6 project's villages of 6 districts (within 2 provinces). The survey sampling responds to the need to include both Year 1 and Year 2 ethnic villages, and different livelihood activities, social infrastructure and services provided to women's groups.

Table 1 - Sampling

Year	Location		Ethnic group	Livelihood Activity	Infrastructure Activity
	Village	District			
	Vientiane Province				
Y1 1	B. Namtae	Xaysomboun	Khmu	Cattle	Water gravity
Y2 2	B. Napho	Hom		Cattle	Water gravity
Y2 3	B. Khonleuang	Feuang	Lao-Thaideng	Weaving	
Y2 4	B. Phouhinlekfai	Kasy	Khmu	Goat	
	Xiengkhouang Province				
Y1 5	B. Meuang Noy	Perk	Hmong	Cattle	Water gravity & Access road
Y2 6	B. Sacksord	Phoukoud	Hmong	Cattle	Water gravity

3. PROCESS OF FIELD SURVEY WORK

The Project's team carried out the group discussions first with the Village Head and its committee and then with the beneficiaries (WG members or WG Executive Committee). The PPIA will ask for documents such as the accounting book notes and other documents that should be kept by the Women's Groups. The PPIA team will go around to examining the assets and social infrastructure provided by the Project.

4. ASSESSMENT

Qualitative data will be grouped by topics to support the PPIA report.

MAIN FINDINGS

I. RESULTS FROM GROUP'S DISCUSSION WITH VILLAGE COMMITTEE

A. Preliminary evaluation of achievement of the immediate objectives

"The immediate objectives are to build awareness and capacity among local ethnic minority women's groups to participate in community decision making on livelihood and management of productive assets; to reduce the domestic drudgery and improve their livelihood and improve the health and social status of ethnic minority women to access opportunities to improve their livelihoods, through skills development, gender mainstreaming of extension services, training, and improvement of access to productive resources, including credit".

1. When asked about their knowledge regarding the grant interventions and benefits: almost all Village Committee's members could respond. They knew the various interventions provided by the Project regarding the livelihood improvement: the choice of livelihood activity's made by women, the amount of fund provided for cash revolving funds or for cattle revolving fund, the various training held to empower women. They indicate that those main information are on the board located generally at the entrance of the village.

2. They evaluated the interventions and benefits provided by the project as highly satisfactorily as they permitted the community, especially the women, to be directly the beneficiaries. They mentioned many times that the improvement of water gravity system reduces the burden of women but improve as well the community's health and sanitation, especially the young children.

3. Generally they did not provided observation and description of issues encountered during the project's implementation as they were too grateful to the project to support them; and found the minor issues not worthy to be reported to the team. So the team has to analyze what they found during the discussion by themselves.

B. Involvement in Livelihood Improvement and Self-Evaluation

4. The Village Committee's members told that they were involved at the start of the Project's implementation and no issues impeded the livelihood and/or social infrastructure improvement aspects as well as training ones. However, discussions carried out with some Village Committees enlightened issues which were not seen as potential risks. This situation was the case in Ban Meuang Noy where the Village Committee did not foreseen as potential risks the delay of organizing the 2nd cattle group of beneficiaries. This 2nd group's members (futures beneficiaries – mainly the poorest in the village) were identified and linked already with the 1st group of beneficiaries but then they refused to be part of the JFPR project because they were afraid not be able to reimburse the credit in case something wrong happens. The assessment team recommended to the Village Committee's members to be more attentive to those people and to get them back by clarifying and/or explaining the cattle rules and regulations.

5. The Village Committees were found supportive to the project; they understood well the principle of ownership. The Committees were proud to report that they encouraged women to set-up regular meeting and helped resolving technical problems such as vaccinating the cattle because the women dislike to do it (B. Meuang Noy); to attend the Lao language courses and to study after they went back from the field work (B. Saksod); and to be more participative during the various meeting held with officials (to speak in Lao and to express their feelings).

6. The village committees self-evaluate their involvement as satisfactorily.

C. Involvement in Social Infrastructure Improvement and Self-Evaluation

7. All villages were highly satisfied to get the water gravity system. They confirmed that both men and women contributed in labor and material (Ban Meuang Noy, Ban Namtae, and Ban Saksod) and even in cash (Ban Napho) to improve the water gravity system.

8. The Team did not discuss in depth with the participants as they knew already from the social infrastructure evaluation, conducted between April to June 2007 that the beneficiaries were grateful and enthusiastic about the social infrastructure they received from the Project. The main findings showed that the WGS has improved the water quality and reduced the time to collect water. The time spared in Ban Namtae was close to 2 hours, in Ban Meuang Noy and Ban Saksod to 1 hour, and in Ban Napho to half an hour per day. *Ban Khonleuang and in Ban Phouhinlekfai got the water gravity system by the Red Cross respectively in 2003 and in 2005.*

9. The O&M system is well organized in villages where the WGS has been provided: the O&M fees are collected monthly, around 1000 kips per household. Since 2006, the villagers of Ban Meuang Noy paid the maintenance's fees of about 12,000Kips/household for the entire year. During the visit in Ban Saksod, the assessment's team found that the Elder of Ban Saksod is dedicated to the village's development; they heard him explaining the notion of ownership to the community. The Elder mentioned that he gave regular encouragement to both men and women and indicated as well that the O&M Committee's members are carrying presently their duties voluntary because the fund for maintenance is still too low.

10. Case of Ban Namtae and Ban Nagnao where the cooperation did not work well: Currently Ban Namtae is sharing the pipeline's maintenance with its surrounding village, Ban Nagnao. It has been observed that Ban Namtae and Ban Nagnao maintain the pipeline from the tank to their respective village but both of them reject the responsibility to maintain the pipeline between the river source and the tank. Discussion is still on going in order to find an adequate sharing of responsibilities/maintenance duties.

D. Capacity building and behavior's changes

11. The Village Committees believe that the type of training provided to women by the project is appropriated and has upgraded the women's skills in many ways: especially the technical training on cattle raising and forage growing. The Assessment Team note that the overall community (both men and women) participated in Training on Gender; and Training on Sanitation. The high attendance's number in noticeable up to 61 for women only in Ban Khonleuang and 32 in Ban Namtae. The Village Committees reported that they appreciated to be invited in the study tour organized by the Project and that they made in practice what they learned from it.

12. They noticed that women are more confident in raising cattle, except for the vaccination aspects because the women request their help, they do not want to do it, and participate more in meeting (B. Meuang Noy); and in managing well the cash revolving fund (Ban Khonleuang).

II. RESULTS FROM GROUP'S DISCUSSION WITH WOMEN'S GROUPS

E. Livelihood Improvement Assessment

13. *Participatory planning research activity process:* The women confirmed that they were involved at the start of the project in the participatory planning research activity and that they were very satisfied with the choice they made. In Ban Saksod, among the cattle group's members, 7 of 10 indicated that their preferred activity among those provided by the Project was "having cattle to raise" (2 having WGS, and 1 getting training).

14. When asked why they were selected to be the beneficiaries, generally the interviewees responded "because we are poor". In fact, the selection criteria were based on socio-economic status but also on individual character in order to ensure the Group's sustainability. It was true that some of the beneficiaries came from the poor households but generally they are medium poor household. In addition to the initial selection criteria, the beneficiaries were chosen for their skills (weaving skills in Ban Khonleuang so they can transfer informally their knowledge to the following groups) or for their ability – educational level – or even for their better-off socioeconomic situation so they can have more time for the group (WG Head in Ban Namtae).

15. Observation: during the project's implementation, the Project already knew that the 1st women's group will serve as model for the followings ones because the poorest women were afraid to take risks and preferred to wait the second round to benefit from the project that is the reasons why the very 1st group has to be an example that deserves to be imitated.

16. *Women Group's work process:* The assessment team found the work process strengthened in many ways: the women reported that they have regular formal - and informal meeting – set-up each month, mainly for paying the interest of the revolving fund to the group (Ban Khonleuang, Ban Phouhinlekfai) or sharing information regarding the caring of cattle (Ban Namtae, Ban Napho, Ban Meuang Noy, and Ban Saksod). They indicated that generally there is no problem of attendance (Ban Saksod). If a WG member cannot come to the meeting, she can meet informally the WG's Head (Ban Meuang Noy).

17. Observation: However the assessment team found that in some assessed villages that the women's groups still needed the guidance from DAFEO team after the Project's completion: in Ban Meuang Noy, apart of succinct cattle accounting notes (even though they can tract the cattle birth and death accounting), the meeting's content is still not well recorded or done regularly due to the difficulties encountered by the WG Executive Committee to write in Lao language. It was arduous both for the Implementing Agencies' side (DAFO and LWU teams) to train and build the capacity of ethnic women's groups and for the beneficiaries' side to apply formally and regularly what they learned from the project.

18. *The Group responsibility* is well understood and handled satisfactorily as shown:

- (i) By the regularly meeting held monthly and by the regular payment of interests done by the beneficiaries in Ban Phouhinlekfai: currently, they are taking action by notifying to the members that they can repay 50% of the lending money (about 1,000,000 Kips) to the group by December 2007 to reduce the monthly interest amount. They even planned to lend a portion of money collected from the interest rate to a new group of 5 women for pig raising activity (before they got the total lending money from all the members and to restart a new round of revolving found for goat raising activity);

- (ii) By the regularly meeting held monthly and by the regular payment of interests done by the beneficiaries in Ban Khonleuang as well. The WG Executive Committee is strong and manages well the various groups (Group 1, 2 and soon Group 3) that are growing fast and led the Assessment Team felt confident regarding their sustainability: the payment for the two first rounds of revolving fund is completed 100%. The group is growing fast The 1st round of cash revolving fund was done from 1/07/2005 to 30/06/2006 and the repayment rate was 100% completed (lending money is 400,000 Kips/person, the interest rate is 1.7% per month and the lending period is 12 months). The 2nd round of cash revolving fund was done from 10/10/2006 to 31/10/2007. The repayment rate was 100% completed. The 3rd round of cash revolving fund will be given to a new group by December 2007 for a 12 months lending period.
- (iii) By the efficient decision making done both by the Women's Group and the Village Committee in Ban Meuang Noy regarding the departure of an initial cattle raiser: they named the new beneficiaries and compensated the initial raiser in giving 1 of 3 calves born during the time she was caring the animals.
- (iv) By the attendance of the 2nd group's members (futures beneficiaries) during the meeting held by the 1st group (Ban Saksod) or during the various training set-up by the DAFEO team and other parties.
- (v) By the local contribution in labor and material provided by the women's groups in all assessed villages.

19. *Behavior changes:* The changes due to beneficiaries' income improvement are noticeable in Ban Khonleuang where the women asked the project a small revolving fund of 500 USD for starting the weaving activity. Before the women weaved the textile for their own use. Now, they sell the textile production and have a regular income of about 200,000 Kips to 400,000 Kips/month in average. More family's members are involved in the weaving activity; and in some house, there are up to 4 looms for each family's member - men weaved as well and even the children. The beneficiaries told that they bought assets that benefit to the family such as roof material, ventilation, TV, dish satellite and motorcycle made in China. They planned to get more housing assets because they know that they have a regular additional income; they even specified that they can pay those assets in several payments to the Chinese traders.

20. The changes was noticeable as well in Hom District, it was reported that two beneficiaries stopped shifting cultivation because they said they are now raising cattle and growing forage that they expect to sell in the near future.

21. *Assessment regarding the sustainability of revolving funds by the Team:* the Team believes that the revolving funds could be sustainable because it is well managed by the WG Executive Committee, understood by the WG members, and supported by the Village Committee. However, some issues could put the revolving fund in kind or in cash at risks and actions should be taken with the continuous monitoring by DAFEO team after the project's completion:

- (i) In Ban Meuang Noy, the sustainability of the cattle revolving fund activity was found at risk if the 2nd group of women is reluctant to be part of the activity. Currently, the 1st group is not link yet to the 2nd group because the list of the 2nd group's members has not been formally done. More than three quarters of the 2nd group listed are afraid to take the risk to raise the cattle because they are unsure to give the cattle/reimbursement back if something happens. More explanation has to be given to this 2nd group as they are the target population of the JFPR project.

- (ii) In Ban Phouhinlekfai, the sustainability of the cash revolving fund (goat raising activity) could be at risk if the Village Head newly appointed does not have the same Village Committee's members. The project requested that there is no replacement regarding the existing Village Lao Women Union's representative who is as well the WG Head.
- (iii) In Ban Khonleuang, the sustainability is not at risk although there was a market issue that has been resolved: the weaving patterns were changed to match with the needs of the market in order to maintain the selling price (changes that B. Nakob cannot make because their skills are still too low compared to B. Khonleuang).

22. *Transparency and involvement in procurement of assets:* Beneficiaries confirmed that they selected and procured the cattle (Ban Meuang Noy and Ban Napho) and goats (Ban Phouhinlekfai) by themselves. They knew the exact prices for each animal and are satisfied with the choice they made. Thus the transparency and involvement in animal procurement is 100% reached in those villages.

23. *Local contribution in livelihood improvement:* the local contribution was found satisfactorily in all villages. In Ban Khonleuang, the area for raising livestock, growing forage, wood and labor for building shelters and fences for cattle were contributed by the village and by the beneficiaries; in Ban Phouhinlekfai, the local contribution was in cash for the procurement of seed (forage), labor and wood contribution for grass growing and for sheds' building respectively; and in Ban Khonleuang, each WG member has contributed an equivalent of 100,000 Kips (about 100 USD for the Group) for the loom procurement (cash) or for the loom's construction (wood provided).

F. Social Infrastructure Assessment

24. *Involvement in the selection of social infrastructure, type, design and location and financial plan.* Generally, the WG in Ban Namtae, Ban Napho, Ban Khonleuang and Ban Saksod reported that they were involved in the type of social infrastructure (water gravity system) at the start of the project. Afterwards, they were not involved in the technical design and the financial plan but mainly in the location of the taps. However they know the total budget granted by the project because it is written on the board to be seen by the community.

25. *Local contribution in social infrastructure improvement:* The beneficiaries confirmed that they contributed mainly in labor and in food preparation as well. Generally the youngest members worked harder than the older ones as reported by Meuang Noy. After the completion of the WGS, they paid regularly the fees for the maintenance as requested by the O&M Committee.

26. *Satisfaction and benefits:* Beneficiaries confirmed that they are satisfied with the social infrastructures provided by the Project. The WGS impacts were evaluated in the "Social Infrastructure Evaluation Report" and were found numerous in reducing the women's burden, in improving health and sanitation aspects and in increasing time for other income generation.

G. Capacity Building Assessment

27. *Type of training given to women:* When asked about the type of training they received, the beneficiaries can cite all of them: training on basic accounting, on animal raising techniques and veterinary (or weaving technique), on gender, sanitation, and cooking/nutrition and on Lao language.

28. *Lao language courses issues:* it was confirmed that the Lao language courses did not work so well. In Ban Meuang Noy, Hmong ethnic women told that the Lao language courses stopped since October 2006 because some members have completed the primary education and the others do not want to continue because they felt too old, they cannot make progress. Thus they were not motivated to continue. However the Lao language is sustainable in some villages where the motivation is high among younger ethnic minority women groups such as in Ban Sacksod, where the Hmong ethnic minority women continue to attend the Lao language courses because they have a dedicated village volunteer teacher and are encouraged by the Village Committee (the Elders) to persevere despite problems or difficulties (after a hard day in the fieldwork, they studied twice per week under the candle light because there is no electricity in the village yet). In Khmu villages such as in Ban Phouhinlekfai, the Lao language is understood and is spoken by all beneficiaries so only writing remains an issue for the beneficiaries.

29. *Usefulness and sustainability of training provided:* the beneficiaries found the training useful and were proud to know that those training were addressed to them in particular. For all technical training, they mentioned that their knowledge/skills have improved but they might not be sufficiently attentive to the animals caring - like cleaning their sheds regularly (Ban Sacksod). Women in Ban Meuang Noy indicated that they appreciated the training on cooking but they cannot make it in practice yet because they do not have the appropriated cooking utensils. They are interested on getting more lessons on cooking or dress-making. In Ban Khonleuang, the weaving skills continue to be transferred from one person to another informally.

III. CONCLUSION

30. The women's outlook is changing gradually, and compared to before, the assessment team found that their capacities and skills improving. The team felt the project has empowered and built the women's groups and make them stronger so they can deal better with daily life: this can be done because of the willingness of the women supported by the Village Committees; and through appropriated training and close monitoring by the DAFEO team and by the local implementing agencies (District LWU, District NFE, and District Health unit).

31. In this JFPR, there is no gap in meeting needs. The priorities were foreseen as cattle, goat and weaving activities for livelihood improvement, water gravity system for social infrastructure improvement, and basic training. Those activities were requested by the beneficiaries themselves. The time constraints were more manageable due to the water gravity system provided by the project.

32. The PPIA team went around examining the assets for livelihood improvement and social infrastructure: they can easily see the weaving material (looms) below the beneficiaries' house (Ban Khonleuang); sheds for cattle in the other assessed villages but cannot look over cattle and goat as they were generally kept in upland location. They noticed that many villagers, not only the beneficiaries, grew forage. And that the production areas are bigger each year. They felt the women's satisfaction and their aspiration to sustain and to develop their group.

33. The team looked at the water tanks that were in good location and the water taps that were operational; they observed clean children playing near the water taps, women washing clothes, and noticed newly toilets constructed.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Namtae is a mixed village composed by ethnic Khmu and Lao. Total household is 75: the Khmu group is in majority and counts 74 households and the Lao group 11 households. The total families is 86 and the population 469 inhabitants, about 250 are women.
2. In 1980, 6 Khmu families, from Ban Xone fishery unit (district of Keo Oudom) joined the fishery area 1 of Nam Ngum Management Project under Keo Oudom district recommendation. Later on, other 6 khmu families decide to joint them. The Nam Ngum Management Project stopped in 1984. During 1984-2000 many other khmu fishermen and their families went to stay in the islands because the location is seen as a prosperous area. In 1991, the Lao people went to establish in the area as well. But the fishery activity declined and was not as good as before. In 2000, about 70 households under the recommendation of Phoun¹ district decide to move from the islands to the present location in Ban Namtae to be closer to the road and other facilities (such as dispensary - even if it is still 2 hours from Ban Namtae instead of 4 hours before - or secondary school - about 1 hour from Ban Namtae); and to change their main fishery occupation to the rice farming occupation.
3. The village is located on the bank of the Nam Ngum Reservoir in the former Saysomboun Special Zone². Currently, the villagers are still fishing in the reservoir and in the river, even if the fishery declined a lot. Currently, they are doing mainly shifting cultivation and for a small part paddy cultivation³. Each farmer has about 1-2 ray of rice field. The village raises livestock⁴ and cattle are left both in the island and in the mainland. Depending of the season, the villagers collect NTFP such as sugar palm fruit, hem, and broom grass for selling.
4. From the survey carried out in October 2004, about 87% of household did not have enough rice over the past 12 months. In 2004, the village got once the rice assistance from SIDA: the project gave 25kg of rice per person. Ban Namtae is a poor village with 42 poor, 30 medium and only 3 better-off households.
5. The villagers did not have experiences in credit. When the ADB Nam Ngum River Basin Project came to collect information on people's needs. Villagers showed a notable interest in having a group's credit on animal breeding and on trees' growing such as fruits trees like orange, lemon, mangoes, aquilegia and rubber plants.
6. Men and women both Khmu and Lao ethnic groups said that they help each other in any type of labor. However, it appears that in 2-3 Khmu families that the women (wives) do all the hard works such as collecting woods or participating in the community contribution while the men (husbands) stayed at home with the children. The division of labor regarding the cattle raising: the men are mainly responsible for the fences' construction and the women for almost all the remaining tasks such as cutting forage and caring the cattle. Generally, the children help as well in releasing the cattle in the upland field and bringing them back home. Together, wives and husbands decide when, why and how much, they want to sell the cattle. The cash from the cattle's selling is kept by the women who will be in charge of spending/using the money (as planned by both of men and women) such as

¹ Phoun District does not exist anymore since January 2006. It belongs now to Hom District.

² The Special Zone does not exist anymore since January 2006. It belongs now to Vientiane Province.

³ From the survey carried out in October 2004, the total area is 6,301 ha: 1,310 ha of forest land area; 13 ha of paddy land and 37 ha of swidden land.

⁴ About 40 cattle, 60 buffalo, 30 pigs and 1500 poultry in total.

sending money to the children for their schooling when they have to study far away from home or such as buying all the needed goods.

7. There is an unpaved road: the nearest town is Keo-oudom, 45 Km from the village; a complete primary school but in bad condition. No village dispensary, the closest in at 2 hours from the village. The common health problems in this area are malaria and tuberculosis diseases. No water gravity system: Until now the villagers need at least 1 hour during the rainy season (when the water is high) and 2 hours during the dry season to fetch water in the River.

II. JFPR ACTIVITIES

A. PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

8. In October 2004, Ban Namtae was ranked as a prioritized village by the district and province government staff and approved by the Project following the selection criteria⁵. The process is similar to other JFPR villages: all women in the village were called by the Village Committee for an open meeting; the participatory planning was carried by the local consultant assisted by the PAFO-DAFEO, DLWU and the village head who served as translator/facilitator. The participatory planning process lasted at least 5-6 hours in total. The women understood the purpose of the meeting and showed their interest and participated actively to the discussion.

9. The selection of beneficiaries to constitute a group of 10 was undertaken under the following criteria: (i) poor but are responsible; (ii) hard-workers, not lazy and honest; (iii) have solidarity with other members; (iv) can make a fast decision making; and (v) are not afraid to take risks. The final decision to put the beneficiary's names into the starting Group 1 was done by the women. Four more groups of ten women are already listed and are waiting their turn to benefit from the project.

10. Among the ten women of the first group: Mrs. Santi, Head of WG is Lao and the nine remaining women are all Khmu. Mrs. Santi was chosen by the group's members because she has a better standard of living, and they believe that she can lead and provide a good support to them: she has time to care of all the general works for the groups - such as setting-up meetings at her place or disseminating information - and has the understanding to be the main interlocutor with the PAFO-DAFEO-Consultants.

11. The members selected the executive committee is composed by four members: Mrs. Santi, Head of WG, responsible for general work; Mrs. Di, First Deputy Head, responsible for technical field; Mrs. Boun, Second Deputy Head, responsible for accounting field; and Mrs. Fong, cashier.

12. In addition to the Executive Committee, there is an Advising Committee composed by three members: Mr. Khamvixay, Village Head; Mr. Khamxay, Party's Secretary; and Mr. Bounthon, Elder's Representative. On October 2005, the consultants suggested that Mrs. Da, Village LWU's Head should be part of the Advising Committee.

⁵ (i) ethnic village; (ii) poor village; (iii) located in the Nam Ngum watershed area; (iv) interested of getting the project; (v) social infrastructures that need to be improved/constructed, and (vi) accessible village

B. LIVELIHOOD AND CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

1. Cattle raising activity

13. The cattle raising activity⁶ was chosen by the Women's Groups to improve their livelihood. The main reason was that the JFPR project gave them the opportunity to get cattle that they cannot afford to buy by themselves. Other reasons were mentioned as well such as they can be help by other family's members; they have enough land to raise the cattle; and they can grow forage for the cattle because they will get water from the JFPR water gravity system.

14. The JFPR project for the procurement of 20 indigenous female cattle was 5,935 USD (64,156,000 Kips); and the community contribution was 1,092 USD (11,250,000 Kips) and represented 15% of the total JFPR project. The local contribution in material and labor for constructing fences and sheds. The expenses for cattle procurement such as transportation:

Table 1 - Community Contribution in Ban Namtae Cattle Raising								
Items	Contribution	Unit	Quantity	Unit	Quantity	Rate (Kips)	Total (Kips)	Total (USD)
1	Labor for fences	Person	10	Day	7	25,000	1,750,000	0
	Labor for sheds	Person	10	Day	30	25,000	7,500,000	170
	Procurement	Person	2	Day	40	25,000	2,000,000	728
2	Material						0	194
							0	0
						Total	11,250,000	1092

15. The October 2005 monitoring of activities showed that only 5/20 cattle were bought due to the difficulties (i) to find cattle during the rainy season – cattle were brought in the upland areas; (ii) to decide the cattle's owners to sell their animals because they want to store them as wealth-bank; (iii) to find a good indigenous female cattle; and (iv) to purchase the cattle for USD200 as planned.

16. On May 2006, the monitoring fieldwork found that: the women group did not monitor (and use the monitoring form) the accounting of cattle's birth and death. At the time, the procurement of cattle is 16 and there is still a remaining 4 cattle to be procured; 5 calves were born but one died. In total 20 cattle. It was recommended to keep a precise accounting of the number of cattle (birth and death); and to report the fund status to the Project. The cattle procurement⁷ started on October 2005 and was completed on June 2006.

17. Community contribution in labor and material amounted to 11,250,000 Kips. The calculation of the community contribution was done by the Village assisted by DAFEO and consultant team.

2. Training and capacity building

⁶ During ADB Mission on November 2005, the women were interested in getting weaving activities. The Project was seeking the possibility/way to implement this activity: regarding availability of the budget and the structure of local implementers – Villages, Province, Districts.

⁷ The Procurement Committee is composed by Mrs. Santi, Head of Women Group, Mr. Bounpheng, Deputy Head of Ban Namtae, Mr. Khamsing, Head of District Livestock Unit and Mr. Anong, Deputy Provincial Coordinator

18. To empower the women, the project built the capacity of women in various fields: rules and regulations for cattle revolving fund management; basic finance and accounting skills; animal raising techniques; veterinary skills; and Lao language course.

19. Cattle Revolving Fund Management: The WG of Ban Namtae finalized the rules and regulations⁸ for cattle revolving fund management by June 2005. There were no additional articles to the draft prepared during the Workshop at Huay Pamon in January 2005 with PAFO-DAFEO and some Villages' representatives. On November 2005, it was recommended that the cases of 100% return, the cases of non return and other cases have to be listed⁹ in details by the WG.

20. The theoretical training on animal raising techniques and veterinary topics started by November 2005. Training was carried out by PAFES assisted by PAFO-DAFEO. The veterinary demonstration was done early December 2005 (as soon the beneficiaries get the animals). The training on basic finance and accounting by December 2005.

21. Lao Language lessons started on November 2005 with 12 women. The lessons' frequency was between 3-4 times per week during 2-3 hours depending on the availability of the WG. The Lao language courses was taught by Mr. Bounpheng, Second Deputy Village's Head, aged 34 years old¹⁰.

22. Participatory process is used in every step such are in the selection of activities, establishment of women's group, identification of Executive Committee's roles, establishment of rules and regulations for cattle revolving fund. Participatory planning is applied for each activity such as the setting-up of WG meeting, training schedule or community contribution in labor for social infrastructure construction.

23. Main issues found during the monitoring of livelihood activities: (i) the fund was disbursed late - on August 2005 - and during the rainy season: it was difficult to purchase/select cattle that were parked in upland fields; (ii) the implementation of activities was difficult to undertaken during the rainy season; (iii) the training steps was not followed regarding the cattle raising techniques - including seeds plantation and forage growing - and vaccination that should be done before purchasing cattle.

C. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE ACTIVITIES

24. The water gravity system was selected by the WG. Until now the villagers need at least 1 hour during the rainy season (when the water is high) and 2 hours during the dry season to fetch water in the river. It is planned that the JFPR water gravity system's

⁸ The rules and regulations are as follows: The 10 selected families will receive each of them 2 female cattle. The repayment will be in kind; each family should pay back 4 calves (2 calves per each original female cattle) to WG. The 2 original female cattle will be kept by the raisers; the 4 calves are given back to WG when their weight reaches 100-110 kilograms. Contract and engagement between WG and cattle receiver should be done before receiving the cattle. Such contract must be certified by the village authority. Cattle receiver/raisers will be responsible for securing food and medicine to cattle; and to follow the raising technique as provided by the Project. In case of cattle death or accident, cattle receiver/raisers should refund for WG according to different cases.

⁹ Such as in Ban Meuang Noy, Xiengkhouang Province: 1) Cases of 100% return include the thievery, the cow falling death from the hill or depth hole; 2) Cases of non return include the thunder's case, tree fallen on cow, wide plague; 3) Cases of return 1/3 include the cow eats inch worm and cow killed by snake.

¹⁰ He has completed the lower secondary educational level (G3) and used to be primary school teacher. He was selected by the District and the Village Head to attend the Training on Lao Language Teaching held by the Non Formal Education Development Centre (KM8-Vientiane) on 24-29 April 2005. Mr. Bounpheng received the Teaching Handbook for level 1, 2 and 3. The handbook for learners was sent by the Project by the end of November 2005.

construction will be completed in December 2005 and that the installation of seven taps within the village will reduced the fetching time from 1-2 hours to 10-15 minutes.

25. It was estimated that the local firm inputs, including the survey and design, equipment and materials such as sand and concrete, technical advises for the overall construction, tank and taps' construction, will cost US\$ 6,208.

26. Labor and material contribution by the community reaches 17% of the total construction cost and is estimated to be: US\$ 1,096. During October 2005, the Village Head reported that each household (about 80 HH) contributed with 1 piece of wood: 4 m x (20cm x 2,5cm). Ban Namtae and Ban Nagnao (500 m from Ban Namtae) contribute in labor by assembling approximately 120 persons x 4 days. During November 2005, they organized seven teams of 18 persons to dig out the soil in order to install the water supply. Three teams come from Ban Nagnao and four teams from Ban Namtae. The "easy" digging section is about 300 m long and the difficult one is about 500 m long.

27. The maintenance was shared between the two villages: Ban Namtae and Ban Nagnao. The Village Committee planned to ask 500-1000 per month per HH for the fund of maintenance. The regulations have not been drafted yet. They will be done, finalized and disseminated after the WGS completion in December 2005.

28. Fund transfer and disbursement status¹¹. By October 2005, it was planned that the fund will be transferred to the district as soon the JFPR fund's replenishment is done at central level.

III. INFORMATION ON BENEFICIARIES

29. The general profile of the first group of women in Ban Namtae is based on woman individual interview¹². On October 2005, the ten interview were carried out by DAFEO and can be summarized as follows:

30. One woman, the WG Head is Lao and all the ten other women are all Hmong. They are all married and are in average 34 years old (23 years old up to 40). They have in average 5 children (2 up to 9) and almost two third of those children are currently going to school. The beneficiaries' level of literacy and education is low. Among the ten beneficiaries interviewed: four of them can understand only the Lao language; five beneficiaries have some primary education level (grade 2 and grade 3) and one woman reached low secondary education level (grade 1 only).

31. The beneficiaries complained that they have headache and pain over all their body due to the hard work they carried out every day. They seek care by themselves by buying medicines or by taking traditional medicines. It seems that they never took day-off for resting even they have often/permanent headache or nerves' pain over their body. Four women told that they never been sick.

32. Main occupations: Only half women mentioned that they did paddy land cultivation¹³. Only one woman (Mrs. Santi, WG's head) told that she cropped 0.2 ha of swidden land and that all the production of chilli was sold, and the selling amounted 4,800 000 kips the previous year. Women who did not do paddy and/or swidden land cultivation were mainly

¹¹ Appendix 2: Budget Status Summary

¹² Appendix 4: Monitoring Sheets – Beneficiaries' Profile

¹³ in average, the paddy land cropped is 0.6 ha (0.3 ha up to 1 ha) and all the production - about 0.7 tons - is for their own-consumption

involved in NTFP collection¹⁴. Only four women indicated they sold animals during the previous year 2004-2005 and got an average income of about 1,100,000 kips among three women and for the fourth woman, it is exceptionally 20,000,000 kips.

33. Other types of income were mentioned by women such as selling labor (4/10) and selling stuffs in the retail shop (2/10). It was difficult to estimate the income from the labor's selling because the beneficiaries did not remember how many days they worked out (the current daily rate is about 15,000 kip/day); the income from the retail shop is about 4,000,000 kips in average.

34. It is difficult to estimate the total beneficiary income's average due to (i) the missing amount of income from labor's selling; and (ii) the huge income of Mrs. Santi (about in total 24,000,000 kips from chilli and cattle's selling). However, for those women who did not have income from labor's selling at all, it is about 4,000,000 kips (4/10). The case of Mrs. Santi was not entered into account.

35. The main beneficiaries' expenditure is for food stuffs and clothes, follows by education, medicine and rice¹⁵ and the amount varies a lot from one beneficiary to another. Almost all beneficiaries spent for maintenance, production and social events.

36. Regarding the current assets, the beneficiaries mentioned that they do have house but generally their houses are not permanent (6/8) or only semi-permanent (2/8); livestock (5/10); and radio (4/10). It has to be noted that two women have a lot more assets such as: motorboat, T.V and cassette tape. Planned assets focus on the need to get more livestock and fish pond to improve their livelihood; and to build a house.

37. Beneficiaries did not give sufficient information regarding their problems/concerns and expected solutions to be brought by themselves or by other parties. Only credit issue (1/10) and more livestock to raise (2/10) were pointed out. Almost all the beneficiaries dreamed to get a permanent house (9/10), to be self-reliance (3/10) and to have more cash income (1/10) and to see their children reaching the highest level of education (1/10)

IV. MAIN FINDINGS FROM PARTICIPATORY POVERTY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A. Results from discussion with the Village Committee

38. The Village Committee evaluated the interventions and benefits provided by the project as highly satisfactorily and appreciated all activities provided by the Project. They noticed that the various training and the WGS received, has impacted in the women's behavior.

B. Results from group's discussion with the women's groups

¹⁴ The products were principally berberin vine, sugar palm and fishes and the total income from selling is about 2,520,000 kips (600,000 kips up to 5,000,000 kips) per year.

¹⁵ Three emerging groups can be seen:

- Food stuffs: less than 200,000 kips (6/10), between 500,000-600,000 kips (2/10); and more than 1,500,000 kips (2/10)
- Clothes: Less than 300,000 kips (5/10); between 500,000-600,000 kips (4/10); and 2,000,000 kip (1/10).
- Education: Less than 200,000 kips (5/9); between 300,000-400,000 kips (2/9); and 1,000,000 kips (1/9).
- Rice: Less 200,000 kips (2/3) and more than 400,000 kips (1/3).
- Medicines: Less than 30,000 kips (7/10); 100,000 kips (1/10); and between 500,000-600,000 kips (2/10)

39. **Livelihood Improvement Assessment:** The women confirmed that they were involved at the start of the project in the participatory planning research activity and that they were very satisfied with the choice they made which were the cattle raising activity for livelihood improvement; and the water gravity system for social infrastructure improvement. In this village, the members' selection criteria did not apply to the WG Head. Mrs. Santi is Lao and has a better-off standard of living. But she was chosen by the group's members (all Khmu) because they believe that she can lead them, support them and has enough time to care of all the general works for the groups.
40. The assessment team found the work process and the group responsibility well understood: currently the setting-up of meetings and the accounting of cattle's birth and death are done regularly.
41. The Assessment Team found during the PPIA that Ban Namtae is the first village to give back the calves to the second round of beneficiaries: the 1st group of beneficiaries gave formally 2 calves to each of the 5 members of the 2nd group. Even though the calves have not reached yet the specifications (weigh/measurement) defined in the "cattle revolving fund rules and regulations", the reasons given by the beneficiaries were understood by the Assessment Team: the livestock is kept in the same area and the owners thought that in given the calves before their reach the weigh/measurement is a way to encourage the 2nd group of beneficiaries (already selected and linked to the 1st group of members) to learn from them.
42. Assessment regarding the sustainability of cattle revolving funds by the Team was found satisfactorily. The number of cattle has doubled from 20 cattle procured initially the current number is 45 cattle; and a 2nd group of member has started to raise their cattle. The Team believes that the cattle groups will expand.
43. The beneficiaries confirmed that they contributed in labor and material and made sheds, fences and grew forages.
44. **Social Infrastructure Assessment:** the women reported that they selected the WGS and were very satisfied with the choice they made. They confirmed that they contributed in labor and in material like the overall community.
45. During the PPIA, the Assessment Team found that the cooperation did not work well between Ban Namtae and its surrounding village, Ban Nagnao: none of them did the maintenance between the river source and the tank. They just maintain the pipeline between the tank to their respective village. Discussion is still on going in order to find an adequate sharing of responsibilities/maintenance duties.
46. Satisfaction and benefits from infrastructure improvement were reported in the Social Infrastructure Evaluation Report" that was conducted between April-June 2007.
47. **Capacity Building Assessment:** the beneficiaries cited the various training they received such as rules and regulations for cattle revolving fund management; basic finance and accounting skills; animal raising techniques; veterinary skills; gender, cooking/nutrition, sanitation, which they found very useful.
48. Regarding the Lao language courses issue: about 14 beneficiaries attend currently the courses.

SELECTED TABLES

Table 1 - Community Contribution in Ban Namtae Cattle Raising								
Items	Contribution	Unit	Quantity	Unit	Quantity	Rate (Kips)	Total (Kips)	Total (USD)
1	Labor for fences	Person	10	Day	7	25,000	1,750,000	0
	Labor for sheds	Person	10	Day	30	25,000	7,500,000	170
	Procurement	Person	2	Day	40	25,000	2,000,000	728
2	Material						0	194
							0	0
Total							11,250,000	1,092

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Ban Napho is 100 % Hmong ethnic. The total population is 754 people (359 are women). There are 110 households or 113 families (7 women household heads). Originally, Ban Napho was a Lao Loum village, named as Ban Vangluang. The Lao Loum group migrated to other location due to the war. In 1985 under the Government recommendation, 15 Hmong families moved from Phou-Sai, Nam Ngum Dam area to re-establish in Ban Napho because there were paddy lands, garden and some basic facilities.
2. Traditionally the Hmong group is familiar with upland cultivation. But surprisingly the main village occupation is paddy land cultivation; and the villagers do raining and dry season cultivations. There are 82 ha of paddy land. However, 15 poor families are still doing shifting cultivation. Livestock raising is an importance source of income generation. Seasonal vegetable growing is mainly for own-consumption. The collection of non timber forest products such as rattan and sugar palm seed is an alternative source for poor people in time of rice shortage.
3. From the field survey on 10 December 2005, the village main income as mentioned by the village head comes from rice and livestock selling. However about 20 families, who have no paddy land, had not enough rice over the past 12 months (over 5-9 months). Among 8 families, there were mainly new couple (new family) and women head households.
4. They were supported by two projects in 1994 and 2002, for rice planting technique assistance and rice seed and for canal construction assistance. The village has a small saving fund with 45 members and the purposes of the saving fund are to run small business and to seek health care.
5. The village has electricity since 2002; a permanent primary school and a lower secondary school (2 classes); no dispensary but only medicine boxes with one volunteer who was trained by Hom district hospital. Normally, people go to Ban Xiengmy dispensary, about 6 Km from the village. The villages constructed three wells by themselves but the water is unsafe, not clean enough and difficult to fetch (depth: 7 m).

II. JFPR ACTIVITIES

A. PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

6. On December 2005, Ban Napho was ranked as a prioritized village by the district and province government staff and approved by the Project following the selection criteria¹. The teamwork met the village head, elders and women representatives. The Provincial project coordinator explained the purpose of the JFPR Grant and asked if the village was interested to get the Project. Interviews were carried out in order to get general information and data of the village. The objective and description of participatory planning process were added by provincial project coordinator who conducted participatory planning with women in the village². The meeting took over one day³. The cattle raising was selected for livelihood

¹ Selection criteria: (i) ethnic village; (ii) poor; (iii) located in the Nam Ngum watershed area; (iv) interested of getting the project; (v) social infrastructures that need to be improved/constructed; and (vi) accessible village.

² The participatory planning research activity was undertaken similarly to the other JFPR villages. Only women voted the prioritized activities as they needed, men and village authority served as facilitators and help DAFEO in terms of translation. Women understood the purpose of the meeting and showed their interest and actively discussed and voted the prioritized activities.

improvement activity and the water gravity was selected for social infrastructure improvement in this village.

7. An initial selection of Women's Group Executive Committee was undertaken during the meeting. The three women's names, basically certified by the Village Head, were as follows: Ms. Malee, Women Group's Head, Responsible for general work; Ms. Payang, WG Deputy Head 1, Responsible for accounting field; and Ms. Barlor, WG Deputy Head 2, Responsible for technique field. In addition to the WG Executive Committee, there was an Advising Committee⁴.

8. On January 2006, the ten first beneficiaries were selected by the WG Executive Committee, the Village Authority-DAFEO-LWU under PAFO advisory. The following selection criteria were notified: (i) poor but are responsible (i) poor ethnic woman; (2) villager with family identity book; (3) hard-workers, not lazy and honest; have solidarity with other members; and (4) agree to follow the group's regulations.

B. LIVELIHOOD AND CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

1. Cattle raising activity

9. The cattle raising is seen by women as the first priority for livelihood improvement activity. The JFPR budget for the 20 indigenous female cattle (2 cattle per woman) was about 5,325 USD (54,110,000 Kips). The community contributed in labor and material for about 1,186 USD (11,390,000 Kips) that represents 17% of the total budget.

Contribution	Total (Kips)	Total (USD)	Remark
Cash	300,000	31	
Labor and material for sheds	740,000	77	
Labor and material for forage growing	800,000	83	
Labor and material for fences	9,150,000	953	
Cattle procurement	400,000	42	Vehicle rental, gasoline & other
	11,390,000	1,186	

2. Training and capacity building

10. To empower the women, the project built the capacity of women in various fields: the training on rules and regulations for cattle raising started first in December 2005 followed in January 2006 by the basic accounting; the training on animal raising technique was carried-out in October 2006 and on veterinary topics in April 2007 by PAFO-DAFEO team. Training topics were given on Gender (December 2006) and on Cooking/nutrition by District Lao Women Union's representatives; and the last Training on Water Gravity System O&M by the District Health Unit on April 2007 assisted by DAFEO team.

11. Lao Language courses issue: The training for Village Volunteer Teacher has been set-up on April 1-7, 2006 at Non Formal Education Development Center (NFEDC), Km8, in Vientiane Capital. Mrs. Mali, 37 years, a Hmong woman who has completed her secondary

³ On December 2005, all women in the village were called by the Village Committee for an open meeting. The participatory planning was carried out by the PAFO-DAFEO team, the village authority was used as facilitators and the back stopping was done by PAFO.

⁴ Composed by: the Village Head; the Party's Secretary; the Elder's Representative; and the Village LWU Representative

educational level and attended the training for her village. Afterwards, the Lao Language courses for Group's Members assisted by the District Non formal Education (NFE) Unit.

C. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE ACTIVITIES

12. The water gravity was selected for social infrastructure improvement in this village. By March 2006, the survey has been carried-out by the District Health Unit. The Village Construction, Procurement and Control Committees⁵ were established by June 2006. And the WGS was completed on February 2007.

13. The JFPR budget was 6,806 USD (68,056,600 Kips) and the total village contribution in cash, labor and material about 2,669 USD (25,620,000 Kips) as shown in the following table and represents 27% of the total cost:

Contribution	Unit	Quantity	Rate (Kips)	Total (Kips)	Total (USD)
Cash				2,000,000	208
Labor	Person	957	20,000	19,140,000	1,994
Material	Gravel	15	70,000	1,050,000	109
	Sand	15	70,000	1,050,000	109
	Wood(2*20*300)	116	15,000	1,740,000	181
	Wood(4*8*300)	60	9,000	540,000	56
	Wood	50	2,000	100,000	10
			Total	25,620,000	2,669

14. The WGS Evaluation was carried out between April and June 2007 by PAFO-DAFEO assisted by consultants. The findings were summarized in an Evaluation Report remitted to the ONPM and ADB on June 2007.

III. INFORMATION ON BENEFICIARIES

15. Profile and Status: The Project has collected the beneficiaries' profile regarding their name, age, ethnicity, marital status, No. of children and No. of household members; education and health issues; main occupation; income and expenditure; current and planned assets; main problems and proposed solutions; and dream. The beneficiaries' profile for the Cattle Group can be summarized as followed:

16. The beneficiaries are Hmong women, almost all of them married, aged 22 years old up to 37, with 4 children in average. Their level of literacy and education in Lao language is relatively good compare to other JFPR Hmong villages. The beneficiaries can read and write Lao language, and attended primary school (only one woman stopped at G4). Ms. Maihua Yang is the sole who understand Lao language but has never been school.

17. Only three women indicated that they have never been sick during the past previous year, and seven mentioned that they got mainly stomachache "due to lack of food and

⁵ Generally, the chart of the 3 committees is as follows:

(1) The Village Committee for Construction comprises 3-5 members (based on the size of the construction): the Village Deputy-Head; Lao Front for Reconstruction's Representative; Women's Groups Head; Ethnic Group Representative - Elder; and Women's Representative;

(2) The Committee for Procurement of Material comprises 5 members: Chairman of the Village Construction Committee; District Health Unit (Safe Water); District Project Coordinator; Project Steering Committee at district level; and Province Project Coordinator; and

(3) The Control Committee comprises 5 members: Village Head; Project Steering Committee at district level; District Coordinator (LWU); District Health Unit (Safe Water); and Province Project Coordinator.

inappropriate/irregular time to eat"; and allergy "due to the seasonal changes of weather". Three women among them mentioned that have to rest 2-6 days/year; and one all the time due to the nephropathy disease she got but she would not take any medicines. Generally, the other women seek care by themselves in getting traditional medicines (5/7 beneficiaries) or buy some medicines (1/7) at the nearest pharmacy.

18. Almost all beneficiaries cultivated paddy land⁶ and raised animals⁷. However, only one woman mentioned that she grows vegetable in the family's garden and another one sews clothes for selling⁸. Surprisingly, none of them did swidden land cultivation, collected NTFP and sold labor for others. It has to be noted that in Ban Napho, the beneficiaries got a very high financial support from their relatives living in USA. They received about USD330 in average from their relatives living in USA (except Mrs. Pa Yang and Ms. Maihua Yang). This irregular earnings from relatives represents the sole income for three women and at least two third of the total income for the remaining ones.

19. The beneficiaries got an income of 3,350,000 kips and expended 2,795,000 kips in average during the previous year 2005. They spent their annual income mainly for the following types of expenditure: (1) clothes for about 850,000 kips; (2) foodstuffs for 570,000 Kips; (3) medicine for 370,000 Kips; (4) production for 383,333 Kips; and (5) education for 277,778 Kips. As she did not have a paddy land, Ms. Maihua Yang is the sole woman to buy rice for about 800,000 Kips and to not spend her money for production; and neither for education (her child is too young to go to school). One beneficiary mentioned that she spent money up to 4,000,000 Kips for maintenance; and another one about 100,000 Kips for social events.

20. Assets: no current asset was mentioned by the beneficiaries; and more than half beneficiaries mentioned that they plan to buy animals. The beneficiaries indicated that they lack animal raising technique, village veterinary, and credit to buy animals and requested support from the project. All beneficiaries dreamed to be rich, to be "a better-off household", to have lot of animal and become a farmer.

III. MAIN FINDINGS FROM PARTICIPATORY POVERTY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A. Results from discussion with the Village Committee

21. The Village Committee evaluated the interventions and benefits provided by the project as highly satisfactorily and appreciated all activities provided by the Project: especially with the cattle raising activities. They indicated that the women participated fully in the cattle procurement as they choose by themselves their own animals in the surrounding villages; and they confirmed that the water gravity system brought safe, clear and sufficient water to all the community. Women do not need strength anymore to pull off water from the well; and there is no risk that the children fall down in the well.

B. Results from group's discussion with the women's groups:

22. Women confirmed their involvement in the participatory planning research activity at the start of the project and their high satisfaction regarding the fund for the cattle procurement and the WGS provided by the project.

⁶ Paddy land cultivation: Nine beneficiaries (except Ms. Maihua Yang, the single woman) cropped 0.65 ha of paddy land/per year in average. The yield is about 2.29 tons of rice in average per household. All the production is for their own-consumption.

⁷ Animal raising: all beneficiaries raise pigs and poultry: four beneficiaries for their own-consumption; and six beneficiaries for selling. During the previous year 2005, the income for selling was about 1,716,667 Kips in average per household (500,000 kips up to 4,000,000 kips).

⁸ Addition income: 1,000,000 Kips for vegetable selling; and 600,000 kips for clothes selling.

23. The women explained that they procured by themselves the cattle: they choose and negotiated with the cattle sellers in the surrounding villages. They reported that they encountered any issues and felt completely satisfied with their choice and the value of the cattle they bought.

24. They indicated that they raised well their livestock: from 20 cattle procured initially, the livestock increased to 36 cattle, and none of them died since the start of the cattle raising activity. The linkage with 2nd group of future beneficiaries is done and the members from both groups shared the cattle caring. Some cattle are kept in the communal land at 4-5 km from the village. They contributed in labor and material for making shed and fences. Some beneficiaries started to grow forage from the seeds given by DAFEO team.

25. The assessment team felt that the cattle revolving fund is well understood and well managed; and that the cattle revolving fund activity will be sustainable.

26. **Social Infrastructure Assessment:** The women were grateful to the Project to provide them the water gravity system. They confirmed that they contributed in labor and material. The Assessment Team found the O&M system well organized: the monthly O&M fees are 1,000 Kips/household.

27. **Capacity Building Assessment:** The beneficiaries were satisfied with the types of training carried-out by the project, especially for them. They found those training practical, especially the training on cattle raising and veterinary.

28. Lao language courses issues: the Lao language courses stopped by the end of year 2006, because the women were busy with the paddy fieldwork and tired after they came back home.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Ban Khonleuang is a mixed village comprising of Tai Phuan (Xiengkhouang Province), Tai Yuan (Xieng Tung) and Tai Xam (Huaphanh Province) people who are the sub-groups of Lao-Tai branch assimilated to the Lao Loum group. Later on a Khmu ethnic group (Vientiane Province) joined them. In November 2004 there were 96 households, 119 families, 621 inhabitants 9301 are women.

2. Ban Khonleuang is an old Buddhist, small village and was established more than 200 years. In early 1990s, a noticeable migration followed the first group due to the abundance of land and water resources, and the closeness to Pheueng District (30 km from the village). In 2004, 10 Khmu families migrated from Ban Nongsad, Hinherb District (Vientiane Province) to the village for the same reason. There is a good village organization, consisting of 7 persons (woman 1) covering all politic and economic fields.

3. The main village's occupation is paddy land cultivation (150 ha). The yield is about 5 tons per ha instead of 1.2 tons in 1984 before the village got the irrigation scheme (at the time the rainfall was short). The village grows many fruit trees and crops vegetables (about 2 ha). However, the cost of transportation is high and many outside traders are not interested in small quantity of products. So the selling price for agricultural products is low. The village raises livestock as well for selling. Other incomes come from retail shops, rice mill and pharmacy. They are important cash income for the better-off groups. For the poor, especially women, weaving provide an alternative source of income during the dry season.

4. In the sixties there was a shortage of food. After 1984, irrigation scheme was constructed by the villagers and the production is better now. However, the Village Head reported that 14 families (11 families are the khmu families who migrated in 2004 in the village) did not have enough rice over the past 12 months. The social stratification showed that there were 14 poor households; 114 medium households and 18 better-off households.

5. The land was allocated to the village in 2000: 171 ha of agricultural area: 171 ha; 26 ha of shifting cultivation area; and 385 ha of conservation forest. The village has electricity since 2002; a complete primary school, for the secondary school, students have to go to Nong Peth, 6km from the village; no dispensary but the village has a village health volunteer and a midwife who usually look after the small pharmacy. In serious cases, the villagers go to the dispensary in Kengxieng (10 km) and/or the district hospital (30 km). The common health problems in the village are cough and diarrhea diseases. No birth control: in average 6 children per family (up to 12 children). There is no toilet or septic tank system. Six standard wells provided by Red Cross in 2003 and eight constructed by the village. An irrigation scheme, constructed by the village, covers 36 ha (enough for two seasons of rice plantation). The road access is the village main problem – it is an unpaved and dirty access road.

II. JFPR ACTIVITIES

A. PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

6. The participatory planning process held on 30 October 2004 followed the various steps of prioritization: the weaving activity was the preferred activity chosen by the women. However, it was found as well that the participatory planning was carried out with the Taideng women's group only and that the Khmu women who migrated in the village just few months ago and who are the poorest people in the village were not called to the meeting. It was recommended that the establishment of the second group in June 2006 should involve those women.

7. The establishment of the Women's Group and its Executive Committee was set-up the same day. The Executive Committee is composed by three women: Mrs. Khamphong, Head of Women's Group, responsible for general work; Mrs. Keo Noy, First Deputy Head, responsible for technical aspects; and Mrs. Naly, Second Deputy Head, responsible for accounting aspects. And the Advising Committee is composed by two members: Mr. Bounhieng, Village Head and Mr. Xiangchang, Elders' representative. On 16 May 2005, the revolving fund rules and regulations were accepted by the beneficiaries.

B. LIVELIHOOD AND CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

1. Weaving activity

8. On October 2004, the women prioritized the weaving activity as the first priority to lift their livelihood because they have a long weaving tradition behind them and the skills.

9. On June 10, 2005 in cooperation with the DAFEO, the District Lao Women Union (DLWU) remitted officially a total amount of 5.1 millions kips (as revolving fund) to the Women's Group. Each member received a lending capital of 400,000 kips; the monthly interest agreed was 1.7% and the total period of lending was 12 months, starting from July 2005 to end of June 2006. As planned, the revolving fund was provided to buy equipment and material (silk and cotton); and the local contribution will be in material (wood) and in labor (to construct the 10 looms) and was estimated to be 8% (about US\$ 43). The total amount of the interest collected will be used as follows: (1) 30% for administration matters: 8/10 for the group's management and 2/10 for the village; (2) 70% will be add to the Project revolving fund for the awaiting women's groups.

10. On May 18, 2006, consultant and DAFEO team held a meeting with the Village Committee and the Weaving Women's Group members in order to evaluate the repayment rate (lending capital and interest) and to recapitulate the production and income generated by the group's members during the past ten months.

11. The monitoring process was done as follows: (1) notification to the Village Committee and the Weaving Women's Group about the meeting purpose; (2) discussion/recapitulation with the villagers/women regarding the previous implementation of the weaving activity, resolving issues altogether if any; (3) control the accounting – bookkeeping of the weaving group as well as the recording of the previous meetings; (4) after discussion and consultation, give final recommendation; (5) go and see the weaving activity/textile products done by the members.

12. Monitoring results: No main problems were encountered by the beneficiaries. The monitoring team found the accounting bookkeeping and the recording of the meeting in order: (1) the monthly meeting was held regularly, usually when the district LWU came to get the textile products for selling; (2) the meeting recorded the number of participants; the production done by each member and the repayment status. The beneficiaries indicated that they were satisfied with the amount of cash revolving fund they received; and they are satisfied to have a market through the district LWU, even the selling prices are not as high as they would like them to be, because they can get a regular income from the selling of their products. In any case, the beneficiaries can trade with other buyers if they find better/higher prices.

13. Recommendations from consultant: the recommendations were almost the same as previously given during the past monitoring fieldwork: Regarding the market, the beneficiaries should continue to find new markets – maybe in Vientiane Capital - in order to value their work and get higher prices. Regarding the cash revolving rules and regulations:

they should pay regularly the monthly interest amount as agreed and all members should attend the meeting. Regarding the selection of second group of members: this should be done carefully and should involve the Khmu women (in minority in the village).

14. It has to be noted that on May 2006, the group got a total income of about 9,048,000 Kips for the selling of textile products for 10 months of activity (about 900,000 Kips per member in average). On 30 July 2006, all members of the first group have paid the capital plus interest as shown by the following table:

**Table of production, income and repayment status by the beneficiaries
(30 July 2006)**

	Names	Production (ເຄືອ)	Income* from Selling (Kip)	Lending Capital (Kip)	Interest repaid (Kip)	Capital + interest repaid (Kip)
1	Mrs. Khamphong	6	936,000	400,000	84,000	484,000
2	Mrs. Nali	8	1,248,000	400,000	84,000	484,000
3	Mrs. Keonoy	7	1,092,000	400,000	84,000	484,000
4	Mrs. Kham	6	936,000	400,000	84,000	484,000
5	Mrs. Lam	4	624,000	400,000	84,000	484,000
6	Mrs. Douan	5	780,000	400,000	84,000	484,000
7	Mrs. Keohean	6	936,000	400,000	84,000	484,000
8	Mrs. Ha	7	1,248,000	400,000	84,000	484,000
9	Mrs. Seng	4	624,000	400,000	84,000	484,000
10	Mrs. On	4	624,000	400,000	84,000	484,000
	Total		9,048,000	4,000,000	840,000	4,840,000

* Income for 10 months of activity (not yet updated for 12 months of activity)

15. Due to the interest of more women to get the cash revolving fund, some changes have been discussed among the women, Village Committee, District LWU and consultant regarding the establishment of a new group; its number and the amount of cash revolving fund available for each new member: the number of the second group might be up to 12 women; and the amount will be given depending of the needs of each member: some women have already the loom and material and they might need about 300,000 Kips only, less than the initial 400,000 Kips given to the first group.

2. Training and capacity building

16. To empower the women, the project built the capacity of women in the field of finance and accounting, and weaving skills. It was agreed at district level that the LWU will assist the WG in setting-up the looms, conducting necessary training and starting activities. The District LWU will also further help find the market for villagers' products.

17. On December 2005, the monitoring status showed that the capacity building of the Women's Group have to be strengthened and receive more support from the District Lao Women Union regarding:

- (i) Training on revolving fund and basic accounting: the revolving funds have been set-up with rules and regulations on May 16, 2005 for weaving activities with 13 participants (10 women). However, until now, the formal document has not been signed and disseminated to the members; and the responsible person for accounting receive only training on book keeping. Her overall comprehension has to be improved for monitoring (regarding the regular payment of interest by the lenders) and management purpose.

- (ii) Technical skills should be improved in all fields: the WG did not receive the technical training on raw material preparation for weaving instead of buying refined/processed material (in this case the material's cost is higher);
- (iii) Market knowledge: the WG do not know about the market's access, prices and opportunities. The District Lao Women should explained to the WG the connection they have with the traders (from Xiengkhouang) and the price they got for textile selling so the WG have the choice to manage by themselves the selling of their textiles instead to go through the District Lao Women Union (and be paid 20,000 kips/textile, twice per month).

18. Lao language: No Village Volunteer Teacher has been sent for the training at NFEDC in Vientiane in April 2005. In this village, the Taideng women – assimilated to Lao Loum group – can generally understand and speak Lao language. The beneficiaries' profile showed that only one woman did not attend school. Generally they will have some primary or even some secondary schooling level. Only some of them are interested to improve their educational level.

19. On 30 August 2006, the monitoring work showed that two trainings on Gender and on Cooking/Nutrition were carried-out by the District LWU: 117 participants (61 women) and 23 participants (19 women) respectively participated to those training held on 16 August and 25-27 August 2006 following the similar training content and methodology as for the other JFPR villages.

C. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE ACTIVITIES

20. *The safe water was provided in 2003 by the Red Cross. No support was given to the village yet. However, there are two social infrastructures that should be improved: (i) Access road in the village and Sanitation improvement (construction of toilet or septic tank system).*

III. INFORMATION ON BENEFICIARIES

21. The general profile of the first group of women in Ban Khonleuang is based on woman individual interview. The ten interviews were carried out by DAFEO on December 2005 and can be summarized as follows:

22. The beneficiaries are all Taideng people (sub-group of Tai-Lao branch, assimilated to Lao Loum group), all married, 30 years old with 4 children inaverage. It has to be noted that among the four women, between 35-40 years old, the average is higher and is about 7 children. Birth control program has not been introduced yet in the village.

23. The level of literacy and education in Lao language is higher than the other JFPR village. Among the ten beneficiaries: 6 have some primary education (1 completed G5); 3 have some lower secondary level (G1 to G3) and only one woman, 38 years old with 6 children, did not attend school.

24. The beneficiaries' health status is in general acceptable. During the past 12 months, four women told that they were never sick; four women complained that they had headache and stomachache and were sick 3-5 days and two women told that they had to rest for 40 days and 120 days because they had headache and vertigo due to blood disease (light blood). It has to be noted that there is no toilet or septic tank system in the village.

25. Occupation: The main occupation and income for the beneficiaries are paddy land¹ cultivation, livestock raising² and weaving that is perceived as another main source of income. Very few did swidden land cultivation and collected NTFP.

26. Income and Expenditure: the ten beneficiaries got an income of around 3,860,000 kips and expended 3,345,000 Kips during the past 12 months. The type of expenditure is mainly for (1) education, in average 1,100,000 Kips – More than 100,000 Kips/child; (2) clothes, in average 600,000 kips; and (3) foodstuff and medicine, in average 290,000 kips each. Some women mentioned that they spent in production, farm inputs or other, in average 760,000 Kips; and in weaving equipment and materials, in average 300,000 kips. Two women indicated that they have maintenance expenditure of about 30,000 kips and 2,600,000 Kips.

27. The main assets owned and mentioned by the beneficiaries were tractor, television and CD, livestock and permanent house (1 woman) and retail shop (1 woman). The beneficiaries planned to construct permanent house (4 women); to get electricity (1 woman) and to buy buffalo and pig (1 woman). They indicated that their main problem is a lack of toilet and clean water. The beneficiaries dreamed to get a permanent house (3 women); high education for their children (3 women); to run a small business (1 woman); to have cash to buy paddy land and to send children to higher education.

IV. MAIN FINDINGS FROM PARTICIPATORY POVERTY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A. Results from group's discussion with the women's groups:

28. Preliminary evaluation of achievement of the immediate objectives

29. Livelihood Improvement Assessment

30. *Participatory planning research activity process:* The women confirmed that they were involved in the participatory planning research activity. However, they added that their decision to choose the weaving activity was already made long before PAFO-DAFEO and consultants went in the village to start the process.

31. *Women work process:* the women reported that they are doing very well. At the beginning, the Village Committee and especially the men were skeptical, now they felt perfectly confident that the WG Executive Committee can manage the group and make the revolving fund grown. The Village Committee even comes to learn from them. The Executive Committee indicated that the women group's members attended regularly the monthly meeting, mainly to pay the interest of the revolving fund to the group but also to report to the Executive Committee the number of piece of textile they can sold during the previous month (in order to follow the income generated by the activity as requested by the Project).

32. Group and community responsibility is well understood and handle as shown by the regularly meeting held monthly and by the regular payment of interests done by the beneficiaries. The WG Executive Committee is strong and manages well the various groups (Group 1, 2 and soon Group 3) that are growing fast and led the Assessment Team felt confident regarding their sustainability: the payment for the two first rounds of revolving fund is completed 100%. The 1st round of cash revolving fund was done from 1/07/2005 to

¹ In average 1.5 ha of paddy land are cropped by 9 beneficiaries. The yield is about 4.5 tons of rice in average per household and 75% of the production is for their household own-consumption and 25% for the selling. The income from selling is in average 1,700,000 kips. Only two women of nine kept all the production for their own consumption;

² The livestock's selling is among the main source of income for seven of ten beneficiaries. During the previous year 2004-2005, it was about 1,400,000 Kips in average per household (500,000 kips up to 3,600,000 kips).

30/06/2006 and the repayment rate was 100% completed (lending money is 400,000 Kips/person, the interest rate is 1.7% per month and the lending period is 12 months). The 2nd round of cash revolving fund was done from 10/10/2006 to 31/10/2007. The repayment rate was 100% completed. The 3rd round of cash revolving fund will be given to a new group by December 2007 for a 12 months lending period.

33. *Behavior changes due to beneficiaries' income improvement:* The women told that before the women weaved the textile for their own use and there were not many weavers. The support from the project changes the women's outlook who are now the traders, because they sell the textile production and have a regular income of about 200,000 Kips to 400,000 Kips/month in average. More family's members are involved in the weaving activity; and in some house, there are up to 4 looms for each family's member - men weaved as well and even the children. The beneficiaries told that they bought assets that benefit to the family such as roof material, ventilation, TV, dish satellite and motorcycle made in China. They planned to get more housing assets because they know that they have a regular additional income; they even specified that they can pay those assets in several payments to the Chinese traders.

34. They confirmed that the revolving fund was provided to buy weaving equipment and material and they know their price. WG member has contributed an equivalent of 100,000 Kips (about 100 USD for the Group) for the loom procurement (cash) or for the loom's construction (wood provided).

35. The Assessment Team believes that the cash revolving fund is sustainability in the village. The WG Executive Committee said that this fund is "their fund" and they will never let it down or share it with another party.

36. **Capacity Building Assessment:** The beneficiaries reported that they transfer their weaving skills knowledge from one member to another one. They received various training on revolving fund and basic accounting; on Gender and on Cooking/Nutrition carried out by the District LWU. The number of participants regarding the Training on gender reached in total 117 participants (61 women). They found them very useful.

37. *Observation:* In this village, the Taideng women – assimilated to Lao Loum group – can generally understand and speak Lao language so the Lao language was not an issue. The beneficiaries' profile showed that only one woman did not attend school. Generally they will have some primary or even some secondary schooling level. Only some of them are interested to improve their educational level.

38. *Note: The safe water was provided in 2003 by the Red Cross*

SELECTED TABLES

Table 1 – Social Stratification

Poor HH	Medium HH	Better-Off HH
14 HH (9 Khmu HH)	114 HH (0 Khmu HH)	18 HH (0 Khmu HH)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 ray of paddy land or/and only swidden land - No livestock, some poultry - No permanent house - 1-2 labors - Shortage of rice over 9 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 – 4 ha of paddy land - 2-7 livestock and 20-30 poultry - Semi-permanent house - 2-4 labors - Enough rice over all the year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5-6 ha of paddy land - More than 8 livestock and 40-50 poultry - Permanent house - 5-6 labors - Selling rice surplus - Own equipment for production (tractor, rice mill)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION¹

1. Ban Phouhinlekfai is animist and 100% Khmu ethnic. The total household is 26 (women head: 3), 28 families and the population is 150 inhabitants, about 79 are women. In 1998, Ban Phouhinlekfai moved from Nongxiane, Kasy District, under the recommendation of local authority in order to stop shifting cultivation and be closer to the road and other facilities. Militia of Ban Phouhinlekfai was assigned from local authority to provide the security of the road between their villages to Ban Dendin.
2. The village is located on Road 13 North, and about 24 Km far from the district capital. Ban Phouhinlekfai is situated very close to main roads which have been already asphalted and electrified. However the village is located on upland and surrounded by mountains: no land for paddy and upland cultivation, only the gardening activity that accounts for 25.95 ha. About 5 families use to do bamboo handicraft; and the collection of Non Timber Forest Products such as sugars palm, mulberry paper, broom grass and bamboo shoots are identified as income generation for the village. Some villagers have some livestock but they preferred to raise goats because the hill is suitable to lodge in place the animals.
3. From the survey held in October 2004, about 12 families did not have enough rice over the past 12 months; and in the previous year, 18 families did not harvest their yield due to insects and rats' damage. Ban Phouhinlekfai is a resettled and poor village with 12 poor, 8 medium and only 6 better-off households, and high number of illiteracy (53 persons, in which about 50% are women). The total land area is 234.7 ha: 171 ha of forest and 25.95 ha of swidden land.
4. Ban Phouhinlekafai has electricity and an old water gravity system but cannot use it anymore. No dispensary or medicine box; only one health village volunteer, trained from district hospital, who does not receive financial support from the villagers or the government. In serious case, the villagers go to Kasy District Hospital, 24 km far from the village. The common health problems are cough, diarrhea and tuberculosis. The incomplete primary school is in bad condition (G1 and G2).

II. JFPR ACTIVITIES

A. PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

5. In October 2004, Ban Phouhinlekfai was ranked as a prioritized village by the district and province government staff and was approved by the Project following the same criteria² as for the other JFPR villages.
6. The participatory planning process was undertaken on 22 October 2005: all women were called by the Village Committee for an open meeting. The participatory planning was carried out by the PAFO-DAFEO team, the village authority was used as facilitators and the back stopping was done by the local consultant. The meeting lasted 5-6 hours in total. Total numbers of village participants is 24 (women 14). The village especially women understood the purpose of the meeting and showed their interest and actively discussed and voted the prioritized activities. Only women ranked and voted the prioritized activities as they needed, men were observers, village authority served as facilitators and help DAFEO in terms of

¹ Information collected in 2004

² The selection criteria were as follows: (i) ethnic village; (ii) poor village; (iii) located in the Nam Ngum watershed area; (iv) interested of getting the project; (v) social infrastructures that need to be improved/constructed, and (vi) accessible village.

translations: the goat rising was selected for livelihood improvement activity; and water gravity construction was selected for social infrastructure improvement in the village.

7. The selection of Women's Group Executive Committee to manage and administrate the group activities and the selection of the first 10 beneficiaries were conducted and completed by 7 November 2005 by DAFEO-LWU-Village Authority under PAFO advisory. The following selection criteria were notified: (i) poor ethnic woman; (2) villager with family identity book; (3) hard-workers, not lazy and honest; have solidarity with other members; and (4) agree to follow the group's regulations.

8. The Wg executive committee is composed by 3 members: Mrs. Onechanh, Head of WG, responsible for general work; Mrs. Touy, First Deputy Head, responsible for technical field; Mrs. Mouy, Second Deputy Head, responsible for accounting field. On July 2006, Mrs. Gna was assigned to responsible for cashier by Women Group. In addition to the Executive Committee, an Advising Committee is set-up with three members: Mr. Somchanh, Deputy of Head Village, Mr. Bounchanh, Elder's and Mrs. Nee, LWU Representative.

B. LIVELIHOOD AND CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

1. Goat raising activity

9. Goat raising activity was prioritized by women due to the village location, the hill is suitable goats and there is abundance of forage, and good raising experiences from some villagers.

10. Livelihood budget for the procurement of goat and other matters was planned for about USD 2,000 by WG Committee assisted by Village Authority and DAFEO team. The community participation is estimated to be 5,505,000 Kips³ (USD 551).

11. The goat procurement⁴ was carried out between October-November 2006. The beneficiaries (final decision makers) got about 4-5 goat/member or equivalence to 2,000,000 kip/member. On December 2006, the field monitoring team reported that the first payment of interest was done by all members and that the book keeping was well recorded by Mrs. Nuck, the Second Deputy Head of WG assisted by her husband, Village Deputy Head. The cash collected from the payment of interest by the WG members was saved in District Bank, as advised by the DAFEO team.

12. Between April-June 2007, the field monitoring showed that all WG members paid regularly the monthly interest as well as the monthly management fees of 2000 Kips/member. At the end of June 2007, Women Group has a total cash amounting 2,195,000 kip, kept in district bank. The WG has 31 new goats.

2. Training and capacity building

13. The training budget was transferred to the District Bank by April 2006. On 28 March 2006, the training on cash revolving fund rules and regulations for goat raising started and the drafting was undertaken: the period of lending was 18 months (9/11/06-9/4/2008) with a monthly interest rate of 1.7% but the villagers could payback the capital any time after they sell the goat.

³ Ref: Table 1 – Community contribution for goat raising

⁴ Procurement Committee consists of four members: (1) Deputy of District Authority (2) DAFEO (3) District Project Finance and (4) Representative of WG.

is little income earnings from labor selling (weeding) or from retail products⁹ selling among the beneficiaries:

21. **Income and Expenditure:** For Year 2005-2006, the ten beneficiaries interviewed got an income of 4,514,500 kips in average and would expend about 3,411,800 Kips. The cash income will be spent for the following types of expenditure: mainly for (1) rice for about 2,028,667 kips in average; (2) clothes for 575,000 Kips and (3) medicine for 540,000 Kips in average. Some 7-8 beneficiaries expended cash income for (4) foodstuffs, (5) maintenance and (6) education for 307,143 Kips, 266,250 Kips and 181,250 Kips respectively. Three women disbursed cash for social events for 110,000 Kips in average and only one woman (Mrs. Nga) spent 200,000 Kips for production.

22. Only one woman indicated that she has TV and CD, the other beneficiaries told that they owned "nothing". Half beneficiaries planned to build a house and the other half to buy animals. However, all of them needed support from the project to realize their "plan" and "dream". The main problems they mentioned were no cash and no skills; no production land and no wood for building permanent house. They dreamed to get a permanent house, a motorcycle, sewing machine and freezer, a lot of animals, and capital for production.

IV. MAIN FINDINGS FROM PARTICIPATORY POVERTY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Results from discussion with the Village Committee and with the women's groups:

One group discussion was set-up with the Village Committee's members and women's groups

23. **Livelihood Improvement Assessment:** women work process was strengthening and behavior is changed. It can be seen through the cash revolving fund that is well managed by the Women Group Executive Committee. The lending money is 2,000,000 Kips per person; the interest rate is 1.7% per month and the lending period is 18 months. The group's members paid regularly the interest since 10 months. The total amount of interest collected is about 3,000,000 Kips and is kept in Bank account. The Bank deposit is done each 2 months for about 900,000 Kips. The Deputy Head, responsible for accounting aspects, is assisted by her husband. With the lending money, the beneficiaries have procured the goats by themselves.

24. *Transparency and involvement in procurement of assets:* The beneficiaries were the final decision makers regarding the selection of the goat. They know the exact price for each animal and are satisfied with the choice they made. Thus the transparency and involvement in goat procurement is 100% reached.

25. *Group and community responsibility* is shown by the regularly meeting held monthly and by the regular payment of interests done by the beneficiaries. In order to reduce the monthly interest amount, 50% of the lending money (about 1,000,000 kips) would be repaid to the group by December 2007.

26. *The sustainability of the cash revolving fund* (goat raising activity) could be at risk if the Village Head newly appointed does not have the same Village Committee's members. The project requested that there is no replacement regarding the existing Village Lao Women Union's representative who is also the WG Head. Note: only 2 of 10 beneficiaries

⁹ Other Income: One beneficiary has a retail shop and has a regular income of about 500,000 kips per year. She is the older woman in the group (48 years old) and currently is the one who get the higher income of 9,000,000 kips per year. Two women do weeding for other to get some wages.

have difficulties to raise the goats. It is planned to lend the amount of money, collected from the interest rate, to a new group of women for pig raising activity.

27. The beneficiaries indicated that they contributed in cash for seed, labor for grass growing and for sheds' construction; and in local material (wood).

28. **Capacity Building Assessment:** the beneficiaries were satisfied with the training on goat raising technique, on basic accounting, on gender, sanitation, and cooking/nutrition and on Lao language. They found all training topics useful; and Lao language courses are not an issue for them as they can speak and understand.

29. *Note: The Project does not provide social infrastructure. The Red Cross provided to Ban Phouhinkekfai the water gravity system in 2005-2006.*

SELECTED TABLES

Table 1 – Community Contribution for Goat Raising

	B. Phouhinlekfai Contribution	Unit	Quantity	Rate (Kips)	Total (Kips)
1	Cash for seed	Kg	3.5	30,000	105,000
2	Labor				
	for grass growing - 10 persons*	Day	2	20,000	400,000
	for sheds – 10 persons*	Day	7	20,000	1,400,000
3	Material for sheds:				
	Big tree	Tree	20	25,000	500,000
	Small thee	Tree	50	20,000	1,000,000
	Grass tree for roof	Sheet	300	2,000	600,000
	Wall (wood 1.5*20*400)	Sheet			700,000
	Front (wood 1.5*20*400)	Sheet			800,000
	TOTAL				5,505,000

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. At the time of the survey in 2004¹: Ban Meuang Noy is entirely a small Hmong village with only 29 households and 34 families. The total population accounts for 242 people, in which 112 are women. Only one household has a woman as household head. In 1981, Ban Meuang Noy moved from Ban Nasala - Perk District - to look for paddy land. The villagers' main occupations are paddy and swidden land cultivation, livestock raising and NTFP collection. The village's income comes mainly from the selling of livestock² and from some NTFP. It was estimated by the village head that the village's income from animal and rice selling for the previous year 2003-2004 reached approximately 13,000,000 kips per year and for the NTFP about 2,900,000 kips.

2. The village counted 5 better-off; 19 medium and 5 poor households. The land allocation was not done yet³. It was found that the female illiteracy is far higher (90%) than men (10%). Although, the non-formal education courses are carried-out in the village for 40 learners, in which 18 are women. Regarding villagers' primary health care: there is a volunteer practitioner and a shaman in the village; and a dispensary, 5 km far from the village, where the villagers used to seek care but not so often, even the service is acceptable. Generally, the villagers prefer to go to the district hospital (55 km far from the village) where they use to buy medicines as well. It has to be noted that the villagers received polio and avian flu vaccination; and birth control assistance from the district health unit.

3. Compared to men, the women's workload is higher for almost all activities (household, agriculture, animal raising, NTFP collection and trading) except for off-farm and social activities. The informants from October 2004 survey agreed that women work more in terms of quantity but their duties are light work whereas men are likely to do more heavy work. Through the group discussion with men and women, no gender conflict issue was raised and requested to be improved, this may due to culture and custom.

4. Although the road is unpaved, it is easy to access Ban Meuang Noy in both seasons (55 km from district center). The village has an incomplete primary school (only Grade 1 and Grade 2) and no dispensary. The permanent source of drinking water is from the unclean Ngae River, and from the Kha River. About 20 households among 29 households boiled water. The major constraints for village development is related to the poor access road conditions and to the lack of good drinking water; the potential resided in a large area of land that can be used for animal raising, cash crops and fruit trees' growing. The village organization is good with a high sense of solidarity.

II. JFPR ACTIVITIES

A. PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

5. In October 2004, Ban Phonsa-ad was ranked as a prioritized village by the district and province government staff and was approved by the Project following the same criteria⁴ as for the other JFPR villages.

¹ Data regarding duration of rice shortage and credit were not collected

² From the survey held in October 2004, the total number of livestock raising in the village is as follows: 200 cattle, 110 buffalo, 25 horses, 12 goats, 30 pigs, 500 poultry.

³ Total village land area: 140 ha (26 ha of forest land area, 14,80 ha of paddy land area, and 4 ha of shifting cultivation area)

⁴ The selection criteria were as follows: (i) ethnic village; (ii) poor village; (iii) located in the Nam Ngum watershed area; (iv) interested of getting the project; (v) social infrastructures that need to be improved/constructed, and (vi) accessible village.

6. The participatory planning was undertaken by Mid-February 2005 in Ban Meuang Noy, and was carried out by the PAFO-DAFEO and District LWU team. It was recommended to follow the Project selection criteria⁵ for the first group of 10 beneficiaries. In fact, the poorest women were afraid to take risks so almost all the beneficiaries (8/10) in the first group are mainly from medium and some from better-off households. The poor women will be part of the following groups after they learned from the first group.

7. The organization chart⁶ of the Women Group has been undertaken. The group's management was organized and their roles were defined. The chart comprises: (i) The Executive Committee, selected by the group's members, is composed by three women: Mrs. Ji Ya, Head of WG, responsible for general work; Mrs. Kia Lo, First Deputy Head, responsible for technical aspects; and Mrs. La Va, Second Deputy Head, responsible for accounting aspects; and (ii) The Advising Committee, composed by four members: Mr. Xay Veu Lo, Village Deputy Head; Mr. Neng Che Lo, Elders' Representative; Mr. Va Keu Moua, Village Forestry; and Mrs. Mai Yae Lo, Village LWU.

B. LIVELIHOOD AND CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

1. Cattle raising activity

8. The cattle raising is seen as the first priority for lifting the standard of living of people in this remote area because there is enough land for cattle to graze and good income opportunities: the cattle of Xiengkhouang are famous for supplying the market in Vientiane Capital. Before the cattle's meat was sent by plane to Vientiane because the capital was not accessible by road. So far, in this area the price of cattle's meat never goes down.

9. It was estimated that the 20 indigenous female cattle (2 cattle per woman) plus the seed for forage growing, veterinary equipment, nails and other materials for cow-shed will cost around USD 4,166. The local contribution in material and in labor was estimated to be USD 333 (8% of USD 4,166 JFPR fund, mainly in material (wood for making fences) and in labor (growing forage and securing water source for cattle). By July 2005, the 20 cattle were purchased by the Procurement Committee, which comprises the Head of Women Group, the Village Head, the PAFO and the DAFEO and were distributed to the WG members. The DAFEO person came from the District Livestock Unit. It has to be noticed that the price to get a good indigenous female cattle was higher than USD200 as planned.

2. Training and Capacity building

10. In order to empower the women, the project provided various training to women as follows: in animal raising techniques and veterinary skills, accounting skills, Lao language course and various training in gender issues, cooking/nutrition, and sanitation. Regarding the training on cattle revolving fund: the basic rules and regulations⁷ initiated at the Huay

⁵ Selection criteria: (1) poor ethnic woman; (2) villager with family identity book; (3) hard-workers, not lazy and honest; have solidarity with other members; and (4) agree to follow the group's regulations.

⁶ Appendix 1: Chart of Women's Group

⁷ Basic rules and regulations: the 10 selected families will receive each of them 2 female cattle. The repayment will be in kind. Each family should pay back 4 calves (2 calves per each original female cattle) to WG. The 2 original female cattle will be kept by the raisers. The 4 calves are given back to WG when their weight reaches 100-110 kilograms. Contract and engagement between WG and cattle receiver should be done before receive cattle. Such contract must be certified by the village authority. Cattle receiver/raisers will be responsible for securing food and medicine to cattle; and to follow the raising technique as provided by the Project. In case of cattle death or accident, cattle receiver/raisers should refund for WG according to different cases as follows: 1) Cases of 100% return include the thievery, the cow falling death from the hill or depth hole; 2) Cases of non return include the thunder's case, tree fallen on cow, wide plague; 3) Cases of return 1\3 include the cow eats inch worm and cow killed by snake. All the above-mentioned cases will be study case by case depending on WG, village authority and district livestock common recommendation.

Pamom Workshop for PAFO-DAFEO on February 2004 were accordingly refined by the Women's Group and Village Authorities. On May 2006, the Women Group's Executive Committee disseminated the rule and regulations to their members. The monthly payment for management tasks (1,000 kips per member) to the Executive Committee was undertaken during the group's meeting; the meeting's attendance and content were recorded as well. The Women's Group and the village authority identified a second group of 10 beneficiaries to be connected to the first group in order to sustain the group responsibility.

11. Participatory process is used in every implementation of activities' steps: selection of activities, establishment of women's group, identification of Executive Committee's roles, establishment of rules and regulations for cattle revolving fund. Participatory planning is applied for each activity such as the setting-up of WG meeting, training schedule or community contribution in labor for social infrastructure construction and Lao Language course frequency/schedule as well.

12. The Lao language teaching courses started early August 2005. The teaching time was not fixed and was based on adult learners' availability. Generally, the frequency was two times per week (Saturday and Sunday). The total number of participants was 22 (18 women). Mr. Sipang, 28 years old, Village's Head, is the Village Volunteer Teacher. He has a lower secondary educational level completion (G3) and attended the training on Lao Language held by the Non Formal Education Development Centre (NFEDC) –KM8 Vientiane on 24-29 April 2005.

13. Mr. Sipang explained that the learners have different literacy levels but he cannot divide into proper groups because his time is limited; in addition he did not remember well the method of teaching because the training he attended in Vientiane took place in April 2005, five month ago. However, all the WG attended the courses regularly and those, who were motivated, were learning faster. By Mid-October 2005, PAFO-DAFEO team joined the District Education Bureau to evaluate the learning-teaching process and to confirm if the learners can move to the second level of Lao language courses. It has to be noted that the project provided NFE teaching handbooks to Mr. Sipang and learning handbooks for the learners. On May 2006, the monitoring fieldwork indicated that the Lao language courses were functioning well; and there was coordination⁸ between District Education Bureau (NFE unit) and PAFO team.

14. By July 2005, theoretical training on grass growing and cattle's vaccination were carried out by PAFO-DAFEO; and DAFEO provided the seed of grass to cattle receivers (200 grams per woman). It has to be noted that by October 2005 the forage growing was done by 4/10 WG members who prepared the land on time. By March-April 2006, the other WG members joined them, the surplus of forage – and seeds – was planned to be shared to other villagers.

15. During the monitoring of livelihood activities, there were no main issues compared to other Y1 villages: (i) the fund was transferred on time before the rainy season; (ii) the cattle was purchased by the Procurement Committee - under the beneficiaries request who did not want to purchase by themselves the cattle for economic reasons (cost of transportation) and

⁸ On 23 October 2005, 22 Learners (women: 20) have finished first level, and received a certificate from District Education Bureau on 4 February 2006. On 30 March 2006, 25 learners (women: 20) started the second level of Lao language courses. The frequency time is 8:00 am -11: 30 am and 1:00 pm-3: 30pm. 2 days per week (Saturday and Sunday). The place of learning is school and the village. It was noted that District Education Bureau had followed up the learning-teaching process 2 times per month and wrote report to PAFO and Province Education Bureau.

On April 2006, information regarding the number of student and their educational level (currently level 1) has been collected by District Non Formal Education Unit; the lessons courses will re-start after the rice plantation season (June-July 2006); and the teaching-learning books will be provided to the teachers in the meantime.

for the lack of time - and was distributed to the beneficiaries; (ii) the training steps were respected regarding the cattle raising techniques - including seeds plantation and forage growing - and vaccination schedule.

16. The monitoring work undertaken on June 2006 showed that good progress has been made during those previous months by the WG Committee and the members: the group conducted a regular monthly meeting. During the meeting, they discussed mainly on the caring of cattle; the payment of management's fees by members (1,000 k/month/member) has been done regularly and the sharing of the fees' amount among the WG Executive members was shared following the rules initially agreed. The Cattle Accounting monitoring tables are used currently by the Women Group and the DAFEO team.

C. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE ACTIVITIES

17. Two social infrastructures were prioritized and provided to Ban Meuang Noy: the water gravity system and the road access. The local firm inputs, including the survey and design, equipment and materials such as sand and concrete, technical advises for the overall construction, tank and taps' construction, cost (i) US\$ 5,599 for the water gravity system renovation; and (ii) US\$ 3,236 for the road access renovation.

18. Labor and material contribution by the community: The community prepared all the needed wood both for the road renovation and WGS since July 2005. Details regarding the community contribution, the organization of operational teams and maintenance teams were reported to the project. The road access renovation and the water gravity system started and finished on November 2005.

19. The community contributed in labor and material for about 2,680,000 Kips⁹ (USD 255) for the road access renovation; and contributed in labor and material for about 12,029,280 kips¹⁰ (USD 1,146) for the water gravity system renovation. In percentage of JFPR fund, the contribution for WGS and road access improvement is 14% and 7% respectively. A notice board with the project name detailing the total outlay provided by the Project and details of contract values, types and extent of community contributions completed by May 2006.

20. The members of the Operation and Maintenance Committee¹¹ are the same people as for the Village Construction Committee. On 21 November 2006, O&M for Water Gravity System¹² was drafted. There were 10 participants (7 women).

21. On May 2007 the roles of O&M committee were reviewed. The meeting selected Mr. Cheu-Ya and Mr. Kouamoua for daily taking care of WGS from March 2007 to February 2008. It was agreed that: the monthly fee is 1,000k per household for O&M fund. The amount collected will be used as follows: 60% for maintenance fund; and 40% for administration purpose (for the salary of 2 acting people and for the O&M committee: 20%, 10%, and 10% respectively).

22. WGS Assessment has been undertaken on 26 April 2007¹³

⁹ Ref. Table 1 – Road Access Community Contribution

¹⁰ Ref. Table 2 – WGS Community Contribution

¹¹ Ref. Table 3 – Composition of O&M Committee

¹² Ref. Table 4 – Responsible persons for the water tap's maintenance

¹³ Appendix II : Social Infrastructure Evaluation Report

III. INFORMATION ON BENEFICIARIES

23. The general profile of the first group of women in Ban Meuang Noy is based on woman individual interview. On October 2005, DAFEO interviewed 8 of 10 women; and on August 2006 the remaining number of women. The beneficiaries' profile can be summarized as follows:

24. The beneficiaries are all Hmong people, all married and are in average 32 years old (21 years old up to 50). They have in average 7 children and almost two third of those children are currently going to school meaning that the cost of schooling, including clothes are high.

25. The level of literacy and education in Lao language is very low. Among the ten beneficiaries interviewed: three of them cannot understand - speak Lao language and only one woman can understand; five beneficiaries have some primary educational level (three women attended grade 1, one woman grade 3, one woman completed grade 5); and only one reached grade 2 of secondary educational level.

26. The beneficiaries' health status seemed generally acceptable: seven women told that they were sick in average three days and did not mention the type of health disease they encountered. Only one of the seven women told that she used to have an intestinal problem and was sick during one week. Generally they sick care by themselves (buy medicines from small pharmacies) or after medical consultation (buy medicines from hospital). Two women mentioned that she sick care with the village shaman to get traditional medicines.

27. All women are involved in paddy¹⁴ and swidden land cultivation¹⁵, and livestock raising¹⁶. Only three of them mentioned that they collected NTFP¹⁷; and only one woman explained that she worked hard to sew clothes and to get an income of approximately 1,400,000 kips for the selling and that she received 3,000,000 kips from relatives living abroad (USA). No women mentioned that they did some gardening to grow vegetable or other products. Only one woman declared that she

28. The JFPR targeted beneficiaries got an income of approximately 5,000,000 kips and expended 4,000,000 kips in average during the previous year 2004-2005. The type of expenditure is mainly for clothes; followed by medicine – education – food stuffs and rice.

29. Generally, the current assets mentioned by the beneficiaries were paddy land, house and livestock, and two of them a fish pond. Five of eight beneficiaries indicated that they have as well: radio (3 women); CD tape (1 woman); sewing-machine (1); television (1); motorcycle (2); tractor (1); rice mill (1). The beneficiaries planned to get more cattle (4/8), paddy land (2/8) and fish pond (1/8).

30. The beneficiaries indicated that their main problems are related to infrastructure issues: road access (5/6), electricity access (2/6) and water gravity system access (1/6). None of them mentioned livelihood, social or health problems they encountered. The beneficiaries

¹⁴ Regarding the paddy land cultivation, 0.9 ha in average are cropped by the beneficiaries. The yield is about 2.4 tons of rice in average per household. Generally, they kept the production for their household own-consumption. Except one woman who got 500,000 Kips from the rice selling

¹⁵ Regarding the swidden land cultivation, about 0.4 ha in average is cropped per household and the production is about 1 ton. Eight women kept production kept for the family and/or for the livestock's consumption. Two women indicated that they were able to get about 180,000 Kips in average from the crop's selling.

¹⁶ The livestock's selling is the main source of income for six of eight beneficiaries. During the previous year 2004-2005, it was about 4,887,500 Kips in average per household (100,000 kips up to 10,000,000 kips). Except the poultry, none of them ate their own animals.

¹⁷ They got about 500,000 Kips from the selling of wild vegetable, animal and fish. It is interesting to note that two among those three women did not sell any animal (or did not raise animal for selling) during the previous year

dreamed to get electricity generated through water-drop (3/5), to have a lot of paddy land, animals, road and electricity (1/5) and to be self-reliance (1/5).

IV. MAIN FINDINGS FROM PARTICIPATORY POVERTY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A. Results from discussion with the Village Committee:

31. Preliminary Evaluation:

- (i) Preliminary evaluation of achievement of the immediate objectives: The Village Committee told that they were involved in the Project's implementation but they did not encounter any problems regarding the livelihood and social infrastructure improvement aspects and/or training ones. The Village Committee found the interventions and benefits provided by the project highly satisfactorily as they permitted the community, especially the women, to be directly the beneficiaries. They are highly satisfied with the access road and water gravity system improvement.
- (ii) Livelihood Improvement: the Village Committee did not foresee as potential risks the delay of organizing the 2nd cattle group of beneficiaries. This 2nd group (future beneficiaries – some are the poorest in the village) were identified and linked already with the 1st group of beneficiaries but then they refused to be part of the JFPR project because they were afraid to not be able to reimburse the credit in case something wrong happens. Solutions adopted were smooth as the Village Committee did not encounter big issues: they encouraged women to set-up regular meeting and help resolve technical problems such as vaccinating the cattle because the women do not want to do it. They self-evaluate their involvement as satisfactorily.
- (iii) Social Infrastructure improvement: The Village Committee indicates that the entire community benefits from the social infrastructures improvement. They are highly satisfied with WGS that reduces the women's burden and health disease, especially diarrhea, and improves health and sanitation. The O&M system is organized: annual fees of about 12 000 Kips/households were collected since 2006.
- (iv) Capacity building and behavior's changes assessment: The Village Committee knows the type of training provided to women by the project. They found the technical training on cattle raising and forage growing especially appropriated for the WG Group; and appreciated to be invited in the study tour, and made in practice what they learned from the study tour. In B. Meuang Noy, they noticed that women are more confident in raising cattle (except for the vaccination aspects because they do not want to do it) and participate in meeting.

B. Results from group's discussion with the women's groups:

32. **Livelihood Assessment:** the women work process is strengthened and the behavior is changed: the beneficiaries reported that the WG meeting is held monthly and that the cattle raising activity is mainly discussed and information shared among the members. If some difficulties/issues arose, the member uses to talk informally to the Group's head as well. They find the monthly meeting useful and will continue to maintain it. The assessment team found that apart of succinct cattle accounting notes, the meeting's content is not well recorded due to the difficulties encountered by the Executive Committee to write in Lao language.

33. Group responsibility is shown by the decision making done both by the Women's Group and the Village Committee regarding the departure of an initial cattle raiser: they

named the new beneficiaries and compensated the initial raiser in giving 1 of 3 calves born during the time she was caring the animals

34. Transparency and involvement in procurement of assets: The beneficiaries selected and procured by themselves the cattle. They know the exact price for each animal and are satisfied with the choice they made. Thus the transparency and involvement in cattle procurement is 100% reached.

35. The sustainability of the cattle revolving fund activity was found at risk if the 2nd group of women is reluctant to be part of the activity. Currently, the 1st group is not link yet to the 2nd group because the list of the 2nd group's members has not been formally done. More than three quarters of the 2nd group listed are afraid to take the risk to raise the cattle because they are unsure to give the cattle/reimbursement back if something happens. More explanation has to be given to this 2nd group as they are the target population of the JFPR project.

36. Local contribution was found satisfactorily: the area for raising livestock, growing forage, wood and labor for building shelters and fences for cattle were contributed by the village and by the beneficiaries.

37. **Social Infrastructure Assessment:** The women were grateful to the Project to provide them the water gravity system, and the road access. They confirmed that both men and women contributed in labor and material and mainly the youngest ones contributed in food preparation and labor. The Assessment Team the O&M system well organized: the O&M fees are collected annually (not monthly) since 2006 for maintenance's fees of about 12,000Kips/household.

38. Note: Ref. The "Social Infrastructure Evaluation Report" showed the numerous benefits impacted on the livelihood of Ban Meuang Noy villagers.

39. **Capacity Building Assessment:** The deputy head of the women's group was able to cite all the various training given to women's group. They found the training useful; even the training on cooking that they cannot practice yet due to the lack of cooking material. They are interested to get more lessons on cooking Lao dishes, dress making and on weaving. Women told that the Lao language courses stopped since October 2006 because some members have completed the primary education (G5) and the others do not want to continue because they felt too old, they cannot make progress. Thus they were not motivated to continue.

SELECTED TABLES

Table 1 – Community Contribution for Road Access Renovation

Items	Contribution	Unit		Quantity	Rate (Kips)	Total (Kips)	Total (USD)
1	Labor	Person		45	25,000	1,125,000	107.14
2	Material	Concrete	m3	5	200,000	1,000,000	95.24
		Sand	m3	3	150,000	450,000	42.86
		Rice	Kg	30	3,500	105,000	10.00
					Total	2,680,000	255.24

Table 2 – Community Contribution for Water Gravity System Construction

Items	Contribution	Unit		Quantity	Rate (Kips)	Total (Kips)	Total (USD)
1	Labor	Person		224	25,000	5,600,000	533.33
2	Material	Concrete	m3	12	200,000	2,400,000	228.57
		Sand	m3	10	150,000	1,500,000	142.86
		Wood (2.5*20)	m3	1.2		1,405,800	133.89
		Wood (4*8)	m3	0.92		843,480	80.33
		Wood	Trees	80	3,500	280,000	26.67
					Total	12,029,280	1145.65

Table 3 – Composition of Operation and Maintenance Committee

Mr. Cheukong-Veu	Committee's Head, responsible for general work
Mr. Year Houa-Ya	Deputy Head, responsible for technical field
Mr. Va Houa-Lor	Committee's member, responsible for accounting field
Mrs. May-Lor	Committee's member, cashier
Mr. Pa Yae-Ya	Committee's member, responsible for policies in case of conflict among ware users.

Table 6 – Responsible persons for the water tap's maintenance

Mr. Year Houa-Ya	Head of water tap no.1 - composed of 5 households.
Mr. Xay Veu-Lor	Head of water tap no.2 - composed of 2 households
Mr. Norleu-Lor	Head of water tap no.3 - composed of 4 households
Mr. Neng Nou-Ya	Head of water tap no.4 - composed of 4 households
Mr. Pa Bria-Tor	Head of water tap no.5 - composed of 5 households
Mr. Va Keu-Moua	Head of water tap no.6 - composed of 4 households
Mr. Xia Por-Lor	Head of water tap no.7 - composed of 7 households

taps, is completed¹⁰. Village selected Mr. La and Mr. Cheutong-ya for daily taking care of WGS from March 2007 to February 2008. Currently, they are carrying their duties voluntary due to the small village contribution. It was agreed that: the monthly fee is 1,000k per household for O&M fund. The amount collected will be used as follows: 50% for maintenance fund; and 50% for administration purpose (including the salary of 2 acting people and for the O&M committee). The water gravity system budget was transferred to Ban Saksod on April 20, 2007 and the board information was installed.

14. The WGS Evaluation was conducted between April and June 2007. The findings were reported in the Evaluation Report of June 2007.

III. INFORMATION ON BENEFICIARIES *(before the replacement of some members¹¹)*

15. The Project has collected the profile of the first group of beneficiaries' profile in 2005 regarding their name, age, ethnicity, marital status, No. of children and No. of household members; education and health issues; main occupation; income and expenditure; current and planned assets; main problems and proposed solutions; and dream. The women group's profile can be summarized as followed:

16. The beneficiaries comprise 10 Hmong women, all married, aged 27 years old in average (17 years old up to 40) with 4 children in average. The oldest woman, 40 years old, has 10 children. Five women mentioned that they have other household members in charge, between 1-5 persons.

17. The level of literacy and education in Lao language is not so bad compared to other JFPR villages. Among the ten beneficiaries interviewed, six women had some primary educational level (grade 3 - grade 5) and one woman, Mrs. Palee, the Head of Women's Group, attended the secondary educational level (grade 2); the three other women understand Lao language only but cannot speak, read and write.

18. The beneficiaries mentioned that they were never sick. However, it has to be noted that all of them bought some medicines, assuming for their family's members.

19. In this village, the types of occupation and cash income earnings varied from one beneficiary to another one. Some women indicated that they cropped rice on paddy field¹², did upland cultivation and gardening¹³ but it would be generally for their family own-consumption. The main cash income earnings come from the selling of NTFP¹⁴, animals¹⁵ and handicrafts¹⁶ (clothes sewing). Three women mentioned that they got an income from running a rice mill, a retail shop or from their relatives' financial support. It has to be noted that Mrs. Kaxualee, married, 20 years old with one child, lived in self-sufficiency and has no income at all.

¹⁰ Ref. Table 6 – Repartition of responsibility for pipe maintenance

¹¹ The interview was carried out just before the final composition of the cattle group

¹² Paddy land cultivation: Eight beneficiaries cropped 0.75 ha of paddy land in average and the yield was about 1.79 ton of rice in average per household. All the production is kept for the household own-consumption

¹³ Family's garden: Four beneficiaries mentioned that they grow some vegetables for their own-consumption (0.21 ha of land in average).

¹⁴ Three women collected orchids. The income from the selling is about 1,067,000 Kips in average (300,000 Kips up to 2,500,000 Kips).

¹⁵ Animal raising: Seven beneficiaries raised large animals (buffalo and/or cattle) and small animals (pig and poultry); only three women raised small animals. The selling of animals allowed five beneficiaries to get an income ranging from 100,000 Kips to 5,000,000 Kips.

¹⁶ Handicraft: Two women indicated that they sew clothes and got an income from the selling of 600,000 Kips and 1,000,000 Kips. For Mrs. Mai-Ya, 22 years old with 4 children, the 1,000,000 Kips cash earning was her sole income.

20. Nine beneficiaries got an income of 3,454,444 Kips in average. The expenditures were 1,491,500 Kips that have been used by the ten beneficiaries mainly for buying clothes for about 645,000 Kips, medicines for 253,000 Kips and foodstuff for 238,000 Kips in average. None of them needed to buy rice. Seven women indicated that they spent about 243,571 Kips for education and four women about 278,750 Kips for production. Expenditures for social events were mentioned only by three women for around 83,000 Kips. Only Mrs. Xaomoua spent 450,000 Kips for maintenance.

21. At the time of the interviews, seven beneficiaries owned both large and small animals; and three of them only small ones. All beneficiaries plan to buy more animal (mainly cattle and pigs); tractor (2 of them) and motorcycle (one of them).

22. Beneficiaries indicated generally that they have no opportunities for cash income earnings; no fund; no drinking water; and too many children. They requested a financial support from the project and training on birth control.

23. Almost all beneficiaries dreamed to have a lot of animals, high skills and knowledge related to livestock rearing and health care, to have fund/credit for livestock purpose and water gravity system. They wish to be self-reliance. Only three of them specified that they dreamed to buy a motorcycle or tractor.

IV. MAIN FINDINGS FROM PARTICIPATORY POVERTY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A. Results from discussion with the Village Committee

24. The Village Committee evaluated the interventions and benefits provided by the project as highly satisfactorily: They supported completely the cattle raising activity that will help the women to improve their daily life; and the various training provided by the project to upgrade their knowledge and skills. They saw the water gravity system as the main benefit for the overall community, and especially for women and children. The Village Committee confirmed that they encountered any issues during the project's implementation.

25. They encouraged women to undertake the activities provided by the Project: to set-up regular meeting, to manage the assets following the guidance of the DAFEO team; to attend the various training, especially the Lao language training. The elder is especially dedicated to the village development: he was proud to tell the Assessment Team that the women studied Lao language in late afternoon even after they returned from their fieldwork (and under the candle light).

26. They self-evaluate their involvement as satisfactorily and highly supportive.

B. Results from group's discussion with the women's groups

27. **Livelihood Improvement Assessment:** The women were involved at the start of the project in the participatory planning research activity. They were very satisfied with the cattle raising activity's choice they made. When asked, if they have only one choice to make what will be their preference between having cattle to raise, training to upgrade their skills, and having WGS? 7 of 10 cattle group's members indicated that their preferred activity among those provided by the Project was "having cattle to raise" (2 having WGS, and 1 getting training).

28. Strengthening women work process: the 1st cattle group declared that they met each other regularly and that the futures beneficiaries (2nd group) joint them. They shared

information regarding the caring of cattle, the cattle accounting (birth and death) and others related matters. Group responsibility is found satisfactorily due to the attendance of the 2nd group who showed interest and solidarity with the 1st group. Thus the cattle revolving fund is expected to be sustainable.

29. Behavior is changed among the cattle group: there is more income generation opportunities (with the selling of forage and/or the selling of cattle – if needed – by the owners). However the behavior changes are less noticeable than the weaving or vegetable groups in other target villages.

30. The cattle were procured by the Cattle Procurement Committee under the women group's request. The beneficiaries were satisfied and knew the price of the cattle. They contributed in labor for sheds, land preparation, forage growing and cattle procurement (investigation – transportation cost).

31. **Social Infrastructure Assessment:** The women reported that they selected the water gravity system as social infrastructure improvement; and the location of the water taps. They were not involved in the technical design and the financial plan. However they were informed of the total budget granted by the project.

32. They indicated that they contributed in labor (they even work harder than men because they wanted to see the WGS completion) and in material. After the completion of the WGS, they paid the fees for the WGS maintenance.

33. Beneficiaries are highly satisfied with the WGS provided by the Project. The WGS impacts were evaluated in the "Social Infrastructure Evaluation Report" and were found numerous in reducing the time to collect water close to 1 hour, and in improving health and sanitation aspects.

34. **Capacity Building Assessment:** the beneficiaries were satisfied with the training on cattle raising technique, on basic accounting, on gender, sanitation, and cooking/nutrition and on Lao language. They found all training topics useful; and Lao language courses are not an issue for them. They are still attending the courses even after a hard day in the fieldwork.

SELECTED TABLES

Table 1 – Composition of Women's Group Executive Committee, Cattle Procurement Committee and Village Development Fund Committee (for Livelihood Improvement)

I. Women's Group Executive Committee:	
1. Ms. Palee (A)	Women Group Committee's Head
2. Ms. Yeu-Vang	First WG Deputy Head - Technique field
3. Ms. Xao-Moua	Second Deputy Head - Accounting field
II. Cattle Procurement Committee:	
1. Mr. Pabria	Village's Representative
2. Mrs Yeu-vang	First WG Deputy Head - Technique field
3. Mr. Kokham	DAFEO
4. Cattle's Receiver	
III. Village Development Fund Committee:	
5. Mr. Pabria	Development Fund Committee's Head
6. Mrs. Mee	Deputy Head
7. Mr. Phay	Accounting
8. Mr. Yeu	Secretary
9. Mr. Vapor	Committee's member
With a Control Committee:	
1. Mr. Chansy	Control Committee's Head
2. Bounpone, Deputy	Deputy Head
3. Mrs. Noy, Committee	Committee's member
4. Mr. Yia leu, Committee	Committee's member

Table 2 – Composition of Village Construction Committee, Procurement and Control Committee (for Social Infrastructure Improvement)

I. Village Construction Committee:	
1. Mr. Pabria (Deputy of Head village)	Village Construction Committee's Head
2. Mr. Yearlor (Elder)	Deputy Head
3. Mr. Yao (Youth)	Deputy Head
4. Mr. Kim (village volunteer)	Committee's member
II. Village Procurement Committee:	
1. Mr. Pimpa (PAFO)	Procurement Committee's Head
2. Mr. Phonphaneth (DAFEO)	Deputy Head
3. Mr. Sonephet (Health Unit)	Committee's Member
4. Mr. Pabria (Deputy of Head Village)	Committee's Member
III. Control Committee:	
1. Mr. Vanthong (Deputy of District Governor)	Control Committee's Head
2. Mr. Somboune (Provincial Project Coordinator)	Deputy Head
3. Mr. Chanthanome (DAFEO Head)	Committee's Member
4. Mr. Somdy (Health Unit Head)	Committee's Member
5. Mr. Chansy (Village Head)	Committee's Member

Table 3 – Contribution by the Cattle Raising Group 1

WG Contribution	Unit	Quantity	Unit	Quantity	Rate (Kips)	Total (Kips)
Labor :						
for 10sheds (3x4m)	Labor	10	days	3	20,000	600,000
for land preparation	Labor	20	days	7	20,000	2,800,000
for forage growing (5ha)	Labor	20	days	3	20,000	1,200,000
for cattle procurement	Labor	10	days	7	20,000	1,400,000
Material:						
grass for shelter			piece	1,000	1,500	1,500,000
wood for sheds			shed	10	200,000	2,000,000
					Total	9,500,000

Table 4 – WGS Community Contribution

WGS – Local Contribution	Unit	Quantity	Rate (Kips)	Total (Kips)
Cash:				3,000,000
Food (fish, rice and meat)				384,500
Labor	Person	1,152	25,000	28,800,000
Material:				
Wood (4*8*400)	m3	1.63	350,000	570,000
wood (2*20*400)	m3	2.048	400,000	819,200
wood trees	tree	64	1,000	64,000
				34,438,000

Table 5 – Composition of Operation and Maintenance Committee

Operation and Maintenance Committee	
1. Mr. Sengthong	O&M Committee's Head, responsible for general work,
2. Mr. Yeulor	Deputy Head, responsible for Technique
3. Mrs. Thone	Committee's Member, responsible for Accounting
4. Mrs. Bounmy,	Committee's Member, responsible for cashier
5. Mr. Cheuthay-ya	Committee's Member, responsible for policies in case of conflict among ware users.

Table 6 – Repartition of out of water pipe

1. Mr. Vang-menglor	Head of Pap no.1 - composed of 22 households.
2. Mr. Pa-yeulor	Head of Pap no.2 - composed of 12 households
3. Mr. Kou-yang	Head of Pap no.3 - composed of 7 households
4. Mr. Tong-yanglor	Head of Pap no.4 - composed of 4 households
5. Mr. Pheng	Head of Pap no.5 - composed of 7 households
6. Mr. Bounpone	Head of Pap no.6 - composed of 9 households