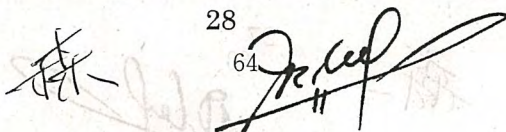


that the Project Purpose might be well achieved, especially in terms of employment rate of the graduates, popularity of FEM, and satisfaction with lectures, in spite of a few matters left to be completed.

From the view point of five evaluation criteria, it was recognized that the Project is in conformity with the development policy of the government of Laos, and needs of human resource development for contributing to the development of market economy, and also with ODA policy of Japan. While the effectiveness of the Project was evaluated to be in a good level in general, there had still been a few matters to be achieved because of the lower achievement of some Outputs, as mentioned above, which may lead to a little room for improvement in the fulfillment of the Project Purpose. Efficiency of the Project has maintained a certain degree in general, mainly owing to highly motivated Lao counterparts and an effort of Japanese experts, although some hampering inputs are observed at the points of timing of dispatch of a few Japanese experts and inputs of Lao side. As for the impacts of the Project, there have been a good impact such that some graduates entered the core governmental organizations related to economic policy of the country, including Bank of Laos, Ministry of Finance and Committee of Planning and Investment (CPI), and contributes to the policy making process to some extent. Besides, many graduates are working in the private sector, which means there is an important impact on the enhancement of market economy. However, we need a few more years after the completion of the Project to evaluate a real impact of the Project on the Lao economy. The Team recognized that not a little progress had been made in terms of sustainability of FEM. For instance, establishing their own funds, such as Revolving Fund and Common Fund, can be highly evaluated for improving financial sustainability. However, there are still some weaknesses about the sustainability of the Project such as technical sustainability of the research capability of lecturers and development of teaching materials of FEM lecturers, and sustainability of the management of FEM.

Based on a series of discussions with relevant Lao officials, Executives of NUOL, counterparts of FEM, and Japanese experts and on the results of the surveys conducted by the Team, the Team concludes that the Project will mostly achieve the Outputs and the Project Purpose within the Project period. However, due to several unpredictable factors and inadequate inputs from Japanese and Lao sides, some important Outputs would not be achieved until the completion of the Project. Also, the Team assesses that, even though the capacity of FEM has been much developed during the Project period, it is possible that, if the Project terminates on the 31st August, 2005 as initially planned, FEM may not be able to keep their sustainable development mainly due to the rapid expansion of FEM of recent years. In that case, the effectiveness of the Project Output

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might be gradually lost and the Overall Goal of the Project may not be satisfactorily achieved.

As the relevance of the Project is quite high and most of NUOL and FEM counterparts recognize the significance of the Project activities and keep high motivation in contributing to the Project implementation, the Team concludes that the follow-up activities are necessary especially in the fields of the development and revision of textbooks, research capability development of FEM lecturers, and improvement of the faculty management.

6. RECOMMENDATION AND LESSONS LEARNED

6.1 Recommendations

(1) Necessity of follow-up activities for assuring the Project Purpose and Overall Goal

As mentioned in the Conclusion, the Team evaluates that follow-up activities are required for assuring the achievement of Project Purpose and Overall Goal of the Project, even though the contents and length of activities should be thoroughly examined and determined between Lao and Japanese sides. As for the contents, we suggest that the main activities during the follow-up period would be dispatch of long-term expert to provide advices for the improvement of research capability of lecturers and development of textbooks. Several times of dispatch of short-term experts may also be required for supporting the development of management capacity of the faculty.

Dispatch of lecturers for getting master or higher degrees abroad are continuously needed and the follow-up support from Japanese side should be kept until they have degrees as originally planned. The number, period and way of dispatch during the follow-up period are to be further scrutinized based on the discussion between Lao and Japanese sides. In particular, as for a repeated short-term dispatch of lecturer for doctorate degree, the system of dispatch has to be elaborated more thoroughly for assuring a continuous support by Japanese side.

(2) Recommendation to the activities in the remaining period of the Project (by the end of August 2005).

1) Continued support for revision and new creation of textbooks and its publishing.

According to the plan of textbook publication (see Annex 3.11), the development or improvement of around 40 textbooks are considered to be necessary at the moment. The careful review of the current curriculum of FEM and the necessity of each book are required with the support of Japanese experts. The realistic implementation plan of the development or improvement of textbook should be made up by the Lao side for this 1 or 2 years at least, and enough human resources input of FEM lecturers are required for the implementation.

Also, the enough attention is to be paid to the quality assurance of textbook with the advice from Japanese experts. Besides, technical transfer for writing textbooks from Japanese experts to FEM lecturers is crucial for sustaining the quality textbook at FEM.

2) Technical transfer on field work survey and research activities

It is necessary to make more effort on technical transfer to teaching staffs of FEM for strengthening their capacity on the field work survey and research. At the moment, only a few FEM lecturers could publish the papers in the Journal based on the results of their own survey. Even if they could, the quality of the papers contributed to the Journal by them leaves room for improvement. Through the intensive and appropriate advices of Japanese experts, knowledge and skills for conducting survey and research should be continuously transferred in order to improve the research capabilities of FEM lecturers, hopefully to the level of publishing the qualified papers in the FEM Journal.

It should be also assured by Lao side that they have a workable plan of lecturers' dispatch to study abroad while sustaining the activities at FEM. In addition, FEM lecturers who currently study abroad to get master or higher degrees will be expected to return to the faculty after the graduation and play a main role for the further development of FEM in research and teaching.

3) Strengthening of management capacity

Strengthening of management capacity of FEM is crucial for ensuring organizational and financial sustainability of the faculty. It should be highly evaluated that FEM established two kinds of funds, Revolving Fund and Common Fund for publishing textbooks and research activities respectively, which would strengthen the financial sustainability of FEM. However, considering that FEM plans to enlarge their activities in specialty and size, a feasible plan of operation after the completion of JICA cooperation should be made up jointly with counterparts and Japanese experts. As for the financial sustainability, the well-balanced management of the evening course is essential as it is a main resource of the faculty revenue, as taking a social responsibility of FEM and a future trend of the number of students into consideration.

As for the administrations of FEM, the number of staff has been mostly appropriate, but one more administrative personnel is necessary for facility maintenance. Additionally, with a good application of skills and knowledge learned through the technical transfer, they need to improve the efficiency and capacity of organization more. For instance, more frequent and timely information sharing among staff members of FEM might be one ways of improvement.

