

THE CIVIL SOCIETY FUND DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTION

EMPOWERING AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN SIEM REAP AND ODDAR MEANCHEY (EAC)

*Democratic “**COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT**” in Cambodia*

IMPLEMENTED BY

Rural Economic and Agricultural Development Agent (READA)
Community Based Integrated Development Organisation (CIDO)
Rural Community and Environmental Development Organisation (RCEDO)
Khmer Buddhist Association (KBA)
&
Siem Reap Meanchey Union of Agricultural Cooperatives (SMUAC)

UNDER THE OVERALL GUIDANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF

Agricultural Development Denmark Asia (ADDA)

Implementation from June 2020 to June 2022

CISU Development Intervention Proposal: 20190910 | KVN

List of Abbreviations

ACSO	Empowering Agricultural Cooperatives and Civil Society in Oddar Meanchey
ADDA	Agricultural Development Denmark-Asia
CACA	Cambodian Agricultural Cooperative Alliance
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CDHS	Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey
CDP	Community Development Project
CHHRA	Cambodian Health and Human Right Alliances
CIDO	Community Based Integrated Development Organization
CIP	Commune Annual Investment Program
CISOM	Empowerment of Civil Societies in Oddar Meanchey
CISU	Civil Society in Development
COCIS	Cooperative and Civil Society Development in Siem Reap
CP	Community Professional
DANIDA	Danish Foreign Aid
DEU	Delegation of European Union
DFID	Department for International Development
DKK	Danish Kroner
DPAC	Department for Promotion of Agricultural Cooperatives
DRO	Democratic Rural Organisations
EAC	EMPOWERING AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN SIEM REAP AND ODDAR MEANCHEY
EASY	Empowering Agricultural Cooperatives and Civil Society development in SR
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FFS	Farmer Field School
FLD	Farmer Livelihood Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HH	HouseHold
INFOSE	Innovative Approaches to Food Insecurity for Urban and Peri-Urban Poor in Siem Reap Province
IO	International Organisation
IWEP	Integrated Women Empowerment Project
KBA	Khmer Buddhist Association
LEAP	Livelihood Enhancement and Association of The Poor in Siem Reap
LNGO	Local Non-Governmental Organization
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCDD	National Committee of Sub-National Democratic Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPDD	National Program for Democratic Development
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
ODM	Oddar Meanchey
PACU	Provincial Agricultural Cooperative Union
PC	Project Coordinator
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
PDAFF	Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery
PDoWA	Provincial Department of Women's Affairs
PDPAC	Provincial Departments for Promotion of Agricultural Cooperatives
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RCEDO	Rural Community and Environmental Development Organisation
READA	Rural Economic and Agricultural Development Agent
SA	Senior Advisor
SAFPHAM	Sustainable Actions to Fight Poverty, Hunger and malnutrition Village Extension Worker
SMS	Subject Matter Specialists
SMUAC	Siem Reap Meanchey Union of Agricultural Cooperatives ("PACU" established in Siem Reap)
SR	Siem Reap

1. Objective and relevance

Overall Development Objective: Poor people in rural areas of Siem Reap (SR) and Oddar Meanchey (ODM) have increased livelihood; in terms of increased quantity and quality of food production, earnings and sustainability.

14-17 % of the households in rural areas of ODM and SR belong to ID Poor¹ 1 or 2, which are households at severe risk of suffering from lack of food. 90 percent of the poor - and those who have just risen above the poverty line - live in rural areas. Common causes of poverty are identified as (i) Material/asset deprivation (food shortages, lack of land and investments, limited access to credit); (ii) Lack of voice and ability to influence decisions; (iii) Acute vulnerability to adverse shocks (illness, economic shocks, floods); (iv) Lack of access to markets and marketing services, and (v) Low human development (education and health). These factors are very much present in many of the communities and households in SR and ODM. National and international experience suggest that these constraints can only be addressed by initiating policies and programs that support mobilization and empowerment of the poor, especially women, and enhancing opportunities for economic and social empowerment.

Previous projects of ADDA and local NGO partners have led to a significant increase in food security among beneficiaries, rapid social development, lower financial risks, ability to expand micro businesses, improved negotiation & conflict resolution at both Self-Help Group (SHG), Agricultural Cooperative (AC) and household level, as well as improved communication between community members and government authorities. Advocacy skills have meant that SHG members and fellow villagers have been able to analyse their problems; prioritize their needs; dialog with local authority's and other duty bearers to successfully gain a variety of resources: e.g. establishment/rehabilitation of infrastructure, land certificates, introducing electricity, schools, water ponds/wells, mine clearing.

All Agricultural Cooperatives (ACs) and the Provincial Agricultural Cooperative Union (PACU) formed in SR - during previous interventions of the partners - have developed business plans and increased their interactions with private and governmental stakeholders. However, they need additional support to reach their long-term goals: (i) Organisational capacity and self-reliance of the recently formed PACUs to support and deliver requested services all the way through ACs, SHGs to individual farmers, (ii) Expansion of PACU and AC scale of operation, (iii) Increase of PACU/AC capital & commercial sustainability and (iv) Dialog and influence on rural development issues.

The proposed Action is designed to empower Democratic Rural Organisations (DROs) – PACUs, ACs (and secondarily SHGs) - established by the partners during the last 7 years to boost the evolvement of an independent “agricultural cooperative movement” in Cambodia. EAC is especially designed to (A) Enhance advocacy and representation of the poor at provincial and national level and (B) to empower internal organisational capacity of PACUs and ACs (including their linkage and support to SHGs and members) in order to strengthen DRO service deliveries: (i) cost efficient credit lines (ii) comparatively cheaper farm input supply, (iii) cost efficient marketing of AC member production, (iv) reliable accounting (upwards accountability as well as downwards) and (v) other relevant member services improving livelihood of the poor as well as self-reliance and sustainability of the DROs. Furthermore, close coordination and networking between the ACs and PACUs in ODM in SR is strengthened during the project period by the merging of interventions in SR and ODM – including a strong PACU cooperation on service delivery, capacity building and common policy dialogs at all levels. Relevant findings from investigations of thresholds for evolution of DROs in Africa and Asia (Esbern et al. 2018) has guided the strategic approach of EAC.

EAC further build LINGO capacity and in-depth experience on development of democratic and commercially viable 3rd and 2nd tier DROs. It is foreseen that the project would involve at least 240 SHG and adopt 11 new ACs applying for PACU membership totalling 35 ACs. An AC member base

¹ ID Poor 1 and 2 are the lowest of the poor categories comprising households without land or less than 0,5 hectares per family, no other assets, low education and largely living on hand-to-mouth existence on a day-by-day basis

of 9.000 farmers in ODM and SR is expected by June 2022. The partnership has organised rural poor into democratic civil society organisations. Totally 255 Self Help Groups (SHGs), 21 Agricultural Cooperatives (ACs) and 2 PACUs were formed during previous and on-going projects in the two provinces. ACs formed by other initiatives are increasingly applying for membership of the PACU in SR. Three external ACs have already become members, while additionally 7 ACs have applied.

The development of Agricultural Cooperative organisations reflects growing capacities and expectations by farmers/members concomitant to the evolution of an appropriate legal framework in Cambodia, e.g. aggregated Agricultural Cooperatives, PACUs and a Cambodian Agricultural Cooperative Alliance (CACA) at national level – the latter is expected to be formed within the next year. The cooperative structures are increasingly taking over the previous role and responsibilities of SHGs. Consequently; the number of SHGs is expected to gradually reduce in the future.

The Theory of Change can be outlined as follows:

IF

- Agricultural Cooperatives and Provincial Agricultural Cooperative Unions build stronger internal leadership, stronger organisations with a broad and democratic membership base
- ACs operate improved member services and cooperative businesses
- PACUs, ACs, and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) deliver appropriate services to members (Input supply, marketing/contract farming, credit lines, agricultural and technical training)
- Committees and members of the LNGOs, PACUs and ACs strengthen knowledge on agricultural and rural development policies as well as governance frameworks, and subsequently use this knowledge in their direct dialog with relevant authorities to address the needs of the farmers

THEN

- Farmers improve access to (i) credit facilities at better terms, (ii) lower input prices and (iii) better markets for their production
- Farmers produce more products of better quality, which will increase their nutritional intake, and subsequently reduce poverty and hunger
- AC members produces bigger volumes, adapt species and quality of products to match market demand, increase earnings and sustainability of farmers and their DROs
- Stakeholders in the vegetable, rice, cash crop value chains have established cooperative forums to solve bottlenecks, which may negatively affect any link within the value chain
- Local NGOs, SHGs, ACs, PACUs and an aggregated AC alliance – representing voices of the poor may positively influence local and national decision making on rural development
- Farmers – especially women - are empowered to participate as economic actors, reducing inequality & increase their earnings, which positively affect living standards of households.

Key assumptions for change

Four main assumptions are made: (1) Authorities tolerate the “soft advocacy approach”, where dialog is favoured against confrontation. Dialogs on sensible issues e.g. land rights, human rights continues at local level - during public forums and Commune Annual Investment Program (CIP), (2) Democratically elected PACU and AC committees manage planning and execution of DRO activities independently from governmental direct interference, (3) There is a balance between the management requirements for the ACs and PACUs and the capacity and skills of its members and leaders, and (4) Leaders of SHG's, ACs and the PACU are motivated and committed to overcome challenges and pursue goals of their Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

EAC is strengthening CSOs with rights and equal access to resources and participation

Implementing LNGOs, PACUs and ACs strengthen capacity on legal and human rights, organisational capacity and improve their ability to advocate on behalf of their target beneficiaries. All CSOs are further capacitated to operate according to democratic principles with open and voluntary membership; good governance and transparency and they are successfully undertaking social and commercial activities. Farmers and SHGs prioritise their needs and they are empowered

to influence local political priorities, especially during public forums CIP processes. ACs, PACUs and a national alliance of Cooperatives and LNGOs will represent poor farmers – and their priorities - in policy dialogs at provincial and national level to lobby and advocate for rights and prioritised needs.

The EAC project revitalises opportunities for the ACs and the PACUs to fulfil their visions and missions for further development within their communities. By implementing the project, they will be able to strengthen strategic services, build organisational capacity and improve their ability to advocate on behalf of their members and target beneficiaries. PACUs and ACs gain an even better reputation and higher appreciation from people, authorities and other concerned stakeholders. This also applies for LNGOs who will acquire in depth experiencing on further development of aggregated AC and PACU structures having a leading role in organisational capacity building and transfer of knowledge at local, provincial and national level. It is foreseen that the project will build significant capacity and add value to each AC and the PACUs within the partnership. The CSOs will advocate on behalf of their members, support SHGs and their ability to bring about change in their local area of operation and network with like-minded organisations. Consequently, EAC will strengthen organisational capacity thus contributing to develop even stronger civil society organisations in SR and ODM.

EAC contribute and bring about lasting improvements for poor and vulnerable target groups

EAC represents a chance to: (i) Strengthen LNGOs, PACUs, ACs and their links to local communities/SHGs (comprising more than 80% women), (ii) Upscale and diversify cooperative services/business activities and improve income of poor people, (iii) Further involve SHG and AC members as well as fellow villagers in commune planning processes (CIPs), Commune Forums and Community Development Projects (CDPs), (iv) Advocate at local levels and (v) strengthen PACUs entering into policy dialogs at provincial and national levels in collaboration with LNGOs.

Democratic processes and proper representation of the poor are employed internally in the ACs, PACUs and SHGs. ACs and SHGs involve representatives from the entire village to discuss “dreams”, action plans and achieved results, not only during the project lifespan, but also in the future. SHGs invite and involve fellow villagers when developing Community Development Plans (CDPs) to discuss most needed interventions and the design of joint plans of operation in their local community. DROs organise meetings for members to discuss opportunities, challenges, plans and results. Such processes have created - and will continue to create - experience and a solid ballast for involvement and representation of rural poor in future DROs and processes.

Relevant aspects of the context in which the intervention is to take place

Poverty rate of Cambodia has dropped from more than 50% in 2004 to about 14% in 2016 due to rapid economic growth during last decade. However, Cambodia’s economic success is largely an urban phenomenon. Rural poverty has declined at a much slower rate and remains a major concern. 17,1 % of the households in rural areas of ODM and 13,9 % in SR belong to ID Poor 1 or 2. 90 percent of the poor and those who have just risen above the poverty line live in rural areas, like SR and ODM provinces in north-western Cambodia. Most people make their earnings from cultivation of rice, cash crops and small-scale production of vegetables and small livestock. A high proportion of rural poor does not even earn USD 2 a day, which means that they live below the poverty line, and struggle every day to provide an income for their families. ODM province is one of the three poorest in the country, but security and accessibility has improved over the last two decades. A large number of previously landless families from more populated provinces of Cambodia are attracted by ODM in their search for land to farm.

Agriculture and market

Agricultural production is challenged by costly and poorly regulated farm inputs. Case studies found that ineffective regulation has resulted in low entry barriers, which lead to the distribution of poor-quality agricultural inputs, e.g. up to 10 % of fertilisers were counterfeit. Future actions must focus on removing constraints on agricultural input supply. Farmers in SR and ODM express a need for high quality seed, those widely available from the market are of poor quality and the supply is inconsistent. Another key deficiency in agricultural product markets is uneven distribution

of market information resulting from widespread informal trade. In the absence of formal sources of market information and trade frameworks, brokers, who are able to exploit information asymmetries to the detriment of small and/or individual farmers, determine prices and terms informally.

Poor organization within the farming community is a vast problem, which is interlinked to poverty and opportunities of further development. Better organisation and higher capacity of the poor farming community is recommended to improve market linkage, better credit terms for poor people, cheaper and better-quality input supply. The proposed Action addresses better organisation and higher capacity of DRO of the poor farming community. Working with the poorest farmers, however, requires a higher focus on day-to-day needs and debt repayment; which is quite easily managed at SHG level. Expansion of businesses and loans using AC and PACU services, require additional financial recording capacity, in short - it requires comparatively high levels of skills, planning and execution capacity as well as RDO organisational accountability.

Specific EAC project context

Over the last 12 years, ADDA and partners have supported poor communities in SR and have developed a comprehensive and scalable approach improving livelihoods, reducing poverty and hunger, developing social networks, addressing prioritised needs of rural poor using a right based approach to increase representation of the poor in policy dialogs. 155 SHGs, 12 ACs, and a PACU have been established in SR: Siem Reap Meanchey Union of Agricultural Cooperatives (SMUAC). These CSOs have significantly contributed to reduce poverty of direct beneficiaries & empowered communities to enter into constructive policy dialogs and better public services at local levels.

The same approach is in principle implemented by the “new” LNGO partners: CIDO, RCEDO and KBA in ODM under the overall guidance of READA – since 2013. Significant positive changes are reached by previous projects: EASY, CISOM and ACSO interventions in the target areas according to internal impact assessment and final evaluation of the projects. However, some challenges remain and target CSOs and communities request longer-term support. *“While PACUs and ACs have developed business plans and increased their personal interaction with private and government stakeholders, they need additional support to reach their long-term business goals: (i) PACU-management strengthening, and extending support from ACs as a whole to farmers, (ii) PACU expansion, (iii) increasing AC capital & commercial sustainability and (iv) Influence and advocacy”*, (Recommendations by Davies & Bunheng, 2019 from the final evaluation of EASY).

Civil society organisations and political conditions

An independent and more influential civil society obtained favourable conditions in 2005 – at least in principle. By that time, the Cambodian government adopted the strategic framework on decentralisation and de-concentration reform (D&D), with the goal to create a governance system at the sub-national level based on the principles of strengthening local democracy, promoting community development, and reducing poverty. The first three years implementation program (IP3) 2011–13 of the government represented the road towards promoting good governance by implementing its policy of Sub-National Democratic Development (SNDD) and the newly created Sub-National Administration (SNA) called for management systems and capacity to implement council decisions to implement the political reform. It was – and remains – a challenge to involve poor people within the districts, communes and villages. Citizen participation is mandated in the law and the decree issued by the government; however, experience has shown that support is necessary to catalyse implementation and multiply local involvement in e.g. CIP processes.

Cambodia conducts periodic elections at subnational and national level. In two different staggered ballots, voters elect commune councillors and members of the National Assembly (the second legislative chamber) every five years. The last electoral period coincided with new legal restrictions, Supreme Court repression against the opposition, and increased distrust towards CSOs, especially those addressing human and land rights (Mooney, L. and Baydas, L. 2018). It is not straightforward to convince stakeholders and beneficiaries to undertake an advocacy approach, because progress may be slow, time consuming and advocacy goals are often

misunderstood - initial perception by duty bearers often include suspicion that the opposition may be involved. However, ACs and PACUs benefit from a clear legal framework and are able to implement a “soft” advocacy approach – where dialogs and solutions are favoured.

Legal framework and status regarding Agricultural Cooperatives and AC Unions

Cambodia's National Assembly adopted a law on farmers' cooperatives in May 2013 supporting government policies in bolstering the agricultural sector, with an initial focus on rice value-chains. Agricultural cooperatives may (i) improve farmers market position (ii) increase access to financial support, (iii) increase scale of operations and (iv) receive technical guidance from the Provincial Departments of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery (PDAFF) on legal and operational issues related to cooperatives/unions and disputes.

The two PACUs in SR and ODM (PACU in ODM under formation) supported by ADDA and LNGO are formed according to the bill “prakas” issued by Ministry of Agriculture, Fishery and Forestry (MAFF). It is an opportunity for ACs with similar economic activities, or with economic relationship to mobilize production capacity, production means & to expand service delivery to the agricultural sector. Development of aggregated AC structures is considered an important step forward.

PDAFFs in SR and ODM are deeply engaged in the development of ACs; whereas the Department for Promotion of Agricultural Cooperative (DPAC) from (MAFF) has/is supporting the formation of PACUs in SR and ODM. Local authorities in ODM and SR acknowledge that CSOs established by ADDA/LNGO partners are comparatively strong; however, long-term NGO support to further capacitate PACUs and ACs is recommended & requested by local authorities to expand operations.

PDAFF is urging ADDA and LNGOs to develop PACU and AC capacities and pay special attention to the capacity of their committees, because well-functioning farmer cooperatives have great potential to improve livelihood of poor farmers in a self-reliant and sustainable manner.

Starting point regarding women's, men's, girl's and boy's needs, roles and interests

Key issues constraining women in agriculture are less access to capital, less access and control over resources, as well as less access to land. (Lina, H. 2012). These constraints limit the opportunities for women's agriculture and it hinders them in engaging in new methods and techniques that require capital and secure access to land. Women represent the majority of beneficiaries in the project and hold key roles in CSOs: SHGs, ACs and PACUs. Impact assessments of previous projects CISOM and EASY has revealed that women benefit from greater technical skills, social skills and financial capacity; and they take lead regarding decision-making about sale of agricultural products (Sinang, & Kimleng, 2015 & 2018, Sophin, P., 2019). *“More women have become active leaders; they play a very important role domestically; several have built leadership capacity and are actively involved in their local communities representing and speaking out on behalf of women. This reveal, that women will actively use their abilities e.g. raise their voices during local meetings, manage CSO savings/loans and support other villagers, when women get the opportunity to learn and to work within their community”.*

2. Partnership

Experiences, capacities and resources of participant partners and other actors

ADDA has worked extensively with agricultural development, empowering women and strengthening of civil society organisations in Cambodia since 1996. ADDA has (i) transferred knowledge to rural poor on best agricultural practices, marketing and (ii) improved business opportunities; (iii) established independent and democratic SHGs, ACs and PACUs. These initiatives have created awareness of the rights of rural poor and they have advocated for their interests. ADDA has built effective partnership institutions at all levels (e.g. MAFF, PDAFF, Departments of Women Affairs, Public vocational training centres) local partner organizations (e.g. READA, RCEDO, CIDO and KBA) and numerous external local and international NGOs during the implementation of projects in Cambodia. ADDA is also a member of various networks in Denmark and Cambodia: The Danish NGO education network, the Danish Vietnamese Association, Civil Society in Development (CISU), the Cambodian gender and development network, the National

climate change network, Council for Agricultural and Rural Development. The ADDA board, senior advisors and the Country Coordinator have long term experience and a strong professional approach regarding rural development, DROs and agriculture.

READA – located in SR - is the lead implementing LNGO, registered by the Ministry of Interior (Mol) in January 2005 (N.090). READA was established to support the vulnerable rural communities, conserve natural resources, empower the community's voice, favour gender issues and ensure equality between woman and men. READA has great experience and skills in project implementation; embracing improved food security, income generation, development of DROs, supporting infrastructural development, Community Development Projects, gender and equality, marketing, water and sanitation. READA has built strong relationship and network with local authorities as well as all other NGOs working in SR and ODM – incl. partner LNGOs in ODM.

Partner LNGOs in ODM: CIDO, RCEDO and KBA have been operating from 15 to over 20 years on a number of projects related to agriculture, food security, community development & community-based organizations, good governance, water and sanitation. Each LNGO operate in distinct districts of ODM. They are very familiar with local conditions; they have outstanding sector specific expertise and long-standing relationships with project stakeholder's e.g. they have strong relationship with local authorities, target groups & final beneficiaries, NGOs and projects in ODM. They have experience, technical and management expertise very suitable for implementation of the project in ODM.

ADDA and READA have cooperated since 2009 on the implementation of IWEP, COCIS, CWM and EASY in SR; CISOM and ACSO in ODM Provinces. READA is implementing project activities, which have included strategic services, capacity building, formation of SHGs, Agricultural Cooperatives (ACs) and PACUs as well as advocacy at all levels on behalf of poor people.

A well-functioning partnership between **ADDA, READA and the three LNGOs** in ODM was initiated in May 2010. The partnership has analysed problems and opportunities alleviating problems of poor people in ODM province using a participatory Logical Framework - and Theory of Change approach (a very detailed LFA is elaborated for EAC). Local implementation, ownership, LNGO training needs and division of roles within the partnership has been intensively discussed and is clearly defined.

Siem Reap Meanchey Union of Agricultural Cooperatives (SMUAC) become partner of EAC
SMUAC has developed into a comparatively strong DRO since establishment in January 2018. The constitutional aim of SMUAC is contributing to agricultural production development, increased productivity, agricultural diversification and agricultural commercialization ensuring food security, promoting rural economic development and national economic growth. SMUAC is efficiently supporting 15 AC members. Strengthening of service delivery and organisational capacity building has potential to significantly expand operations, membership base, increase capital, commercial sustainability as well as advocacy & influence on rural development. SMUAC has potential to increase AC member base, capacitate ACs, and legitimacy to represent members according to the final EASY evaluation (Davies and Bunheng, 2019): *“The SMUAC platform is designed to absorb as many ACs as possible, and SMUAC don't foresee this as a constraint, as it is part of the strategic plan. New ACs go through an evaluation prior to acceptance to identify weaknesses”. “Training given directly by SMUAC to ACs is dependent on the specific needs of each AC. Training given includes more complex accounting, providing orientation and training on loan negotiation with formal MFIs, working with officials, training on how to deal with big companies, strategic planning, logistics, product re-selling, business advocacy, and market access understanding, along with support study tours”. “The SMUAC is a well-accepted institution to advocate and raise issues”.*

ACs and the PACU under establishment in ODM are aspiring partner of EAC

ACs and the PACU under establishment in ODM are aspiring partners of EAC. ACs in SR were established from 2012 to 2015, whereas ACs in ODM were established from 2016 to 2017 (Table 1) by the assistance of LNGOs and the PDAPP, meaning that CSOs are rather young with only limited experience. The global objective of the ACs and their PACUs is to address members' needs e.g. marketing and/or adding value to the production of their members, and/or to provide comparatively

cheap agricultural production inputs and relevant services to their members, including credit services. The sphere of activities covers the agricultural sector as a whole.

Table 1. Characterisation of SMUAC and Agricultural Cooperatives in SR as well as ODM

Siem Reap province		Established	# of members		# member shares		Geograp. coverage	Assess- ment	Total balance	Own Capital	Total Loan	Profit	Profit plan
Name	District	Date	Originally	jun-19	Originally	jun-19	# villages	June 19 1-4*	June 19 USD	June 19 USD	June 19 USD	2018 USD	2019 USD
SMUAC		15.01.2018	10	15	101	422**	204	3	201.041	116.875	84.166	10.400	22.202
Speanthnout	Chikreng	14.10.2014	108(87)	570(475)	170***	20310	18	3	117.399	75.061	42.339	12.035	20.142
Kouk Thlok Kroum	Chikreng	04.11.2014	69(54)	564(481)	94***	9383	34	4	118.739	41.947	76.792	8.347	19.776
Raksmey	Chikreng	27.03.2012	58(50)	313(268)	116	2884	16	3	56.419	19.300	37.119	3.879	7.764
Kouthok Lue Meanchey	Chikreng	08.11.2017	297(223)	378(361)	1064	2617	10	3	27.902	9.596	18.306	2.320	3.915
Satrei Phouk Phal [N]	Chikreng	29.01.2016	82(79)	145(123)	182	623	12	2	29.247	9.221	20.026	1.484	-
Samraong Samaki	Sotr Nikum	02.10.2014	92(69)	313(277)	248	2537	19	4	46.277	46.277	0	4.397	7.979
Neang Noun	Sotr Nikum	29.02.2012	63(53)	293(269)	123	1082	15	3	72.563	28.648	43.915	4.830	7.430
Popel Roung Roeng	Sotr Nikum	28.09.2016	100(86)	164(142)	105	401	9	2	45.685	29.435	16.250	2.500	7.130
Rolus Meanchey	Prasat Bakong	29.03.2012	66(57)	344(314)	335	2185	21	4	97.100	50.850	46.250	6.838	9.487
Kantrung Balang	Prasat Bakong	25.11.2014	56(45)	299(252)	101	1989	16	4	74.360	42.541	31.819	8.207	12.494
Tani Samaki	Banteay Srei	18.09.2014	83(70)	226(186)	92	1702	10	3	107.965	37.965	70.000	8.159	10.143
Khum Khnart	Pouk	18.12.2014	55(44)	251(209)	100	2103	5	4	93.871	47.671	46.200	7.152	9.549
Lvea Sorsor sdom [N]	Pouk	16.11.2017	75(67)	149(141)	122	381	7	3	24.018	6.363	17.655	1.018	2.373
Yeang Meanchey [N]	Pouk	20.04.2018	86(64)	93(68)	227	239	4	2	92.998	92.748	250	0	-
Prammouy Svaychek	Angkor Thom	01.11.2014	74(51)	159(114)	135	620	8	3	38.657	14.871	23.786	1.973	3.058
AC Total Siem Reap			1.364	4.261	3.214	49.056	204	3,1	1.043.199	552.492	490.707	73.139	121.242
Female			(1.099)	(3.680)									
Oddar Meanchey province													
Kork Khpos Smaki	Banteay Ampil	05.09.2016	184 (129)	262(189)	265(189)	207	10	3	17.248	7.198	10.050	3.443	6.725
Beng Samiki Akphiwat	Banteay Ampil	10.01.2017	126(92)	133(101)	137(98)	170	10	3	9.971	471	9.500	1.253	4.868
Prasatsing Mean Chey	Banteay Ampil	01.02.2017	120(97)	142(119)	142(119)	177	5	3	14.553	10.053	4.500	2.831	4.367
Kork Phlok Akphikwat	Koun Kriel	06.09.2016	93(68)	117(82)	132(92)	107	3	3	13.401	5.151	8.250	1.281	2.677
Kouk Chhouk Samaki	Samraong	11.01.2017	80(65)	104(80)	109(82)	100	3	3	16.521	7.021	9.500	1.568	3.462
Chongkal Akphiwat	Chong Kal	02.02.2017	77(65)	83(70)	101(87)	86	8	3	12.422	5.422	7.000	863	3.114
Phaav Samaki Kiri	Trapang Prasat	14.09.2016	127(80)	149(101)	148(91)	201	7	2	10.071	5.286	4.785	1.296	4.850
Lomtong Meanchey	Phaav Samaki	28.12.2016	111(68)	141(91)	166(111)	186	7	3	18.065	8.529	9.536	2.877	5.652
Prey Saark Meachey	Anlong Veag	29.12.2016	61(23)	114(43)	115(48)	76	5	3	7.754	3.754	4.000	705	4.941
AC Total ODM			979	1.245	1.315	1.310	58	2,9	120.008	52.888	67.121	16.118	40.656
			(687)	(876)	(917)								

* SMUAC and AC assessment, June 2019: (1: weak; 2: below average; 3: above average; 4: strong)

*** (AC Committees decided to reduce "threshold"/cost per share from 12,5 USD to 2,5 USD)

** Cost per SMUAC share USD 250 (all SR ACs are members)

[N]: New - external ACs have become SMUAC members

The ACs do not yet have capacity to qualify for a full project partnership; however, they have the aim and will to develop professional capacity, improve strategic planning capacity, ensure transparency and accountability in financial and administrative procedures, work for democratic processes, develop their organisation - including leadership - and they are executing sound cooperative business activities. The number of members has increased significantly - reaching 5.506 members in May 2019. 83% of members are female. The ACs are based on open and voluntary membership. The ACs have reached fine results and they have acquired fine reputations within their local communities. It is expected that geographical coverage; number of ACs; as well as members of each AC will increase significantly in the years to come. 9.000 AC members are expected in 2022.

Member shares constituted initial capital, which further increased by the profit generated from cooperative business activities, MFI loans and additional member shares. Total balance of ACs was USD 1.163.207 USD by May 2019. AC capital has increased significantly compared to the capital at start, but it is evident that AC in SR are stronger and more developed compared to ACs in ODM. A rather high proportion of cooperative profit is divided to members, which is hampering comparatively fast accumulation of AC capital, but it is also attracting new members ("Money better be in the pockets of farmers" – which is similar to statements by members of West-European ACs). Cooperative business activities are established according to the demand of members, market opportunities and cooperative capacity. Credit schemes and input supply (fertiliser, seed, plant

protection, feedstuff etc.) are highly demanded and therefore operated by ACs. Marketing/contract farming is increasingly requested and is expected to become a fully integrated service of ACs.

Describe the roles and areas of responsibility of the partners and of any other actors

READA is lead implementing LNGO. READA is capacitating/assisting SMUAC in Siem Reap (SR), whereas EAC is implemented in close collaboration between READA, & the three LNGOs in ODM to capacitate the PACU and ACs in ODM. The LNGOs in ODM comprises (i) CIDO covering Koak

Table 2: Key roles and responsibilities of SMUAC and NGO partners

Partners		Responsibilities
ADDA		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out specific training activities and capacity development of LNGOs and PACUs Backstopping the overall project implementation according to Theory of Change principles Guide learning, planning and approve quarterly and annual activity plans linked to budgets Ensure accountability regarding all fiduciary management of the project Conduct Steering Committee Meetings and project learning workshops involving all partners M&E and project communication/information in accordance with guidelines and agreements Facilitate Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia
READA is implementing activities in Siem Reap & transferring lessons learned to ODM	READA is lead LNGO implementing in SR Transferring best practice from SR to ODM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for day-to-day coordination, implementation and overall management of the project in accordance with project policies, procedures, approved work plans and budgets. Carry out training/capacity building of project staff, district and local facilitators on project concepts, procedures, and project objectives in close cooperation with ADDA. Chairing an EAC project coordination unit comprising representatives from all partners EAC financial management, procurement, and administrative procedures and ensure compliance by all project staff and consultants. Monthly, quarterly and annual reporting systems, including monitoring and learning systems Contracts/norms for NGOs, service providers, organizations and individuals Maintain a reliable two-way information flow from - and to - final beneficiaries Ensure information sharing, dissemination and learning platforms Monitor project implementation progress against plans and provide regular reports Coordination with the Cambodian Ministry of Interior and MAFF
	SMUAC Apex DRO Union of 15 ACs in SR Formed Jan. 2018 New partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand internal capacity and build further capacity of ACs to facilitate members access to: (i) Cost efficient credit lines, (ii) Comparatively cheaper farm input supply, (iii) Cost efficient marketing of AC member production, (iv) Reliable accounting and (v) Other member services Support ACs in preparing micro-plans, sourcing finance and implementation Technical training of ACs, who - in turn - train SHGs Facilitate linkages with relevant stakeholders at local, district, provincial and at national levels Promote establishment of the national Cambodian Agricultural Cooperative Alliance Participate in PSC meetings, the EAC Project Coordination Unit (PCU) & other EAC meetings Coordinate with provincial line departments, district governments, and commune councils Participating in policy dialogs at provincial and national levels to promote rural development
	CIDO imp. in Banteay Ampil, ODM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build further capacity of SMUAC in SR and PACU in ODM, ACs (and subsequently SHGs) in order to facilitate self-reliance and sustainability of existing as well as new coming CSOs Provide training on best practice, norms, guidelines and skills to PACUs and ACs regarding democracy, leadership and management, businesses, accountability, social solidarity etc. Support ACs and PACUs in preparing business plans, sourcing finance, and implementation Coordinate activities at AC and SHG levels within LNGO geographical area of operation Facilitate linkages with relevant stakeholders at local, district and provincial levels and manage the interface between provincial and local authorities, e.g. commune councils etc. Track and follow up on advocacy cases in SR and ODM, e.g. clear ID of staff monitoring each negotiation case. LNGOs are responsible for liaison with duty bearers at all levels; securing that prioritised requests for support from are brought to the attention of duty bearers at local, provincial and/or at national level Advocate on behalf of the poor community and facilitate advocacy by representatives of the target group to relevant authorities and duty bearers at all levels. Monitor project implementation progress at local level and provide regular reports
	RCEDO imp. In Chong Kal & Samrong, ODM KBA - Anlong Veng & Trapang Praesat, ODM	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CIDO, RCEDO and KBA are responsible for day-to-day management and coordination in ODM with reference to READA in their respective geographical area of operation according to project procedures, work plans & budgets CIDO, RCEDO and KBA participate in M&E, PSC, the EAC project coordination unit (PCU) and similar relevant forums.

Khpos and Koak Mon commune in Banteay Ampil district, (ii) KBA covering Chong Kal and Samrong districts and (iii) RCEDO covering Anlong Veng and Trapeang Prasat districts. READA is assisting SMUAC in Siem Reap to capacitate ACs, build further capacity of SMUAC itself and last - but not least - transferring knowledge from SR to LNGOs in ODM to build further organisational capacity and advocacy skills of the LNGOs, ACs and the PACU based in ODM (figure 1 & table 2).

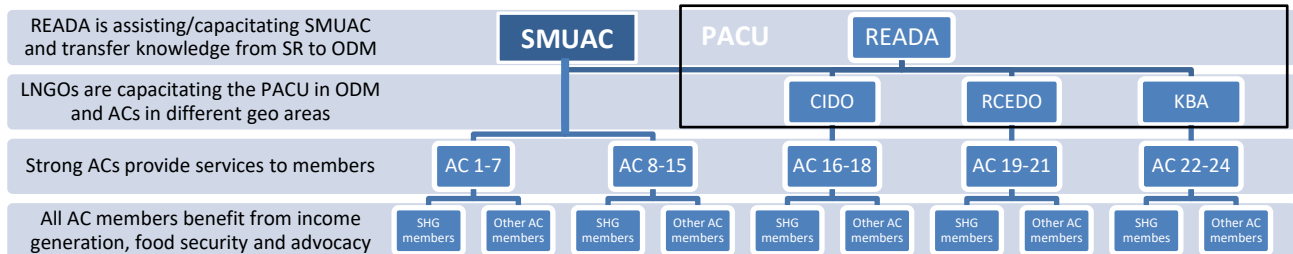


Figure 1: The local organisation 2020. SMUAC in SR is assisted by READA. The PACU in ODM is under establishment by 9 ACs under overall LNGO and DPAC supervision during autumn 2019.

The target groups and previous cooperation have fed constructively into EAC design

The relationship with the target group is very close, because EAC is targeting PACUs, ACs, SHGs and poor farmers addressed during previous interventions. All analysis for the current project proposal is based on results of the previous EASY, ACSO and related project. The design and concept of EAC is based on (i) findings and recommendations from ACs, PACUs and SHGs during project implementation, (ii) discussions during final evaluation and internal assessment of the EASY and CISOM projects as well as (iii) recommendations from the EASY and ACSO Steering Committees. SMUAC, PACU, ACs, MAFF, PDAFF, Provincial Departments of Women's Affairs (PDWA) and LNGOs, were all deeply involved during project preparation. Results and recommendations along with interviews and dialogs with final beneficiaries, as well as village, commune and provincial governing bodies are built into this project proposal. Leaders from PACUs, ACs and SHGs express that EAC project is in line with their "dreams" and the concept is highly demanded to reach higher degree of self-reliance and sustainability of their organisations".

The intervention develops the relationship between the partners

The organizational structure of the proposed project, roles and responsibilities assigned to each of the partners favours collaboration, exchange of ideas and utilisation of lessons learned between ADDA, LNGOs, SHGs, ACs and the PACUs. A Project Coordination Unit (PCU) is designed to facilitate a fruitful and learning partnership between the ADDA, LNGOs and SMUAC during: Monthly project coordination meetings, regular steering committee meetings and frequent meetings involving all project staff, including occasional exchange visits. Key roles and responsibilities are in line with previous organisation; however, linkages between SMUAC in SR and the newly formed PACU in ODM is strengthened to improve exchange of knowledge, bargaining power and voice.

The partners are catalysts - building relations, mobilising and cooperating with other actors

The concept of cooperative societies in the North, cooperative development, values, principles and actions are intensively shared and frequently discussed between ADDA, LNGOs, PACUs and other stakeholders at regional and national level in Cambodia, e.g. MAFF and the Provincial Departments for Promotion of Agricultural Cooperatives (PDPAC) in SR and ODM. Sharing of lessons learned in the North and South catalyses evolvement of strong CSOs/DROs, well-functioning PACUs and ACs.

Relations; mobilising and cooperating with development programs and other actors

Several international and local organizations operate in SR and ODM provinces. Organisations and their projects are well known to ADDA/LNGOs and these interventions are fully coordinated and interlinked with EAC activities wherever possible. Interventions to be highlighted:

- Habitat for Humanity improve access to decent housing, water and sanitation, land and sanitation rights especially for vulnerable Cambodians. 2 ACs in SR are operating "Habitat"

supported boreholes, water bottling/refilling stations, including distribution of bottled clean water, because these ACs are assessed very qualified Rural Democratic Organisations with adequate management capacity. EAC will continue close cooperation with Habitat and expect that more ACs will qualify for management of Habitat supported strategic deliveries.

- Banteay Srei (BS) <http://banteaysrei.info/> is a Cambodian women's NGO empowering vulnerable women to improve their political, economic and psychosocial situation through implementation of community development projects and advocacy work. BS grass roots development model involves the appointment of capable community facilitators and an understanding of community needs. BS is strong on formation of 1st-tier Community Based Organisation (258 CBOs formed in SR). However, BS is investigating opportunities for aggregation of CBO organisations into 2nd and 3rd - tier DROs and may use a concept similar to the ADDA/LNGO approach and/or link CBOs to existing AC/SMUAC structures.
- Several projects are assessing and promoting external ACs ability to apply for membership of the SMUAC in SR in order to boost activities and sustainability of external ACs. The Civil Society Fund managed by CCC has supported a first phase of a project network with an ambition to facilitate that additionally 5 external ACs to become SMUAC members in 2020.
- Close collaboration with the Regional Economic Development Program III (RED III) implemented by GIZ in the three provinces of Banteay Meanchey, ODM and Preah Vihear.
- Contract farming agreements have been elaborated between 3 ACs and Amru Rice www.amrurice.com.kh with a set of quality standards and a premium AC price for aromatic rice. Total area 2019 is expected to reach at least 100 hectares - and increasing in 2020
- Several private companies seek cooperation and partnership with PACUs and ACs to increase volumes of commercial business activities, e.g. M company, Agri Buddy, Rice seed.

The EAC project build on existing capacity, inputs and equipment to achieve synergy with ongoing project in SR and ODM. Many ACs have been established; however, without strong foundations they remain comparatively weak. It is recognized by most CSOs and authorities that the progressive and phased approach used by ADDA and LNGOs, combined with close PDAFF cooperation and strict procedures has resulted in the well-grounded SMUAC and ACs (and SHGs). PDAFFs in ODM and SR as well as DACP are supporting the ADDA/LNGO methodology - commenting: *"It is rather easy to establish a PACUs (and ACs) and many other organisations have applied, but the ADDA/LNGO application for PACU in ODM is the only one supported, because experience has shown that cooperative organisations established by 'you' will built significant capacity"*. It is the intention of the EAC project to build on existing strengths of SMUAC, ACs and SHGs to reach further progress.

It is the intention to facilitate synergy with other projects and especially to encourage self-reliance and advocacy capacity of CSOs funded by other donors. It should be noted that the number of new development interventions in Cambodia have significantly declined during recent years. EAC intend to raise the profiles of target – and external - DROs as civil society actors to support a general cooperative movement in Cambodia. The aim is to reach higher level of positive impact and influence through their actions at local, provincial and national levels using relevant extended networks.

The target groups' relevance in view of the objective pursued and role in the intervention

The main target groups of EAC are described in table 1; currently comprising SMUAC & 15 ACs in SR, the PACU under establishment and 9 ACs in ODM. 20 ACs formed during other interventions are expected to apply for membership of the PACUs and at least 11 external ACs are expected to become members of the PACUs during the Action.

Final beneficiaries (Right-holders) are primarily members of ACs and SHGs – mainly female/poor farmers. Poor farmers request expanded AC member services to improve income and aggregate bargaining power; they lack representation in development processes and policy dialogs – especially at provincial and national levels. The project strives to increase awareness of poor communities on agricultural and rural development issues, basic rights, legal frameworks and policy processes, because such knowledge is necessary for a qualified policy dialog & influence on rural development.

The project is designed to (i) further develop services of civil society organisations, which significantly will improve livelihood of rural poor and (ii) facilitate democratic representation of poor farmers' in policy dialogs at all levels – including membership of a CACA at national level. Basic rights of rural poor are more likely to be acknowledged by duty bearers with proper representation. Further expansion and aggregation of ACs, capacity building of PACUs and LNGOS is a priority to empower DRO voice and influence at higher levels of dialog and decision-making processes.

The project indirectly targets local authorities: Commune and provincial councils, provincial governorate as well as staff from line departments at district and provincial levels (app. 100 persons) are engaged during trainings; they are expected to promote an enabling environment for dialogs.

Composition of target groups

At present ACs represent 5.505 households/members (83 % are female. App. 10 % belong to ID poor 1 or 2). Total number of CSO members is expected to reach app. 9.000 in 2022. The ACs are linked to app. 240 Self-Help Groups (SHGs) equalling a total of app. 3,500 persons in 13 districts, app. 50 communes and 250 villages in SR and ODM. EAC is based on target groups involved in previous or ongoing projects – EASY in SR and ACSO in ODM as well as new coming AC members (primary targets) of PACUs and new farmer members of ACs (secondary targets). EAC activities are initially aimed towards 2 PACUs and 24 ACs in SR and ODM, and indirectly towards 240 SHGs.

Partners' legitimacy vis-à-vis the target groups and champions of the target groups' cause

ADDA, LNGO and SMUAC are highly recognised by the target groups, which was reported in the final evaluation report of CISOM II (Davies & Bunheng, 2018) e.g. impact: *“Project staff, beneficiaries, and stakeholders see the overall impacts of the project including more rapid social development, higher levels of food security, lower financial risks and ability to expand business, improved negotiation and conflict resolution at both a group and household level, and a much-improved level of communication between community members and government authorities”, “High level of cooperation with authorities, including commune, district, provincial and national level”, “10 cases of land conflict raised and settled affecting over 1900 people; over 26 000 people involved in prioritizing issues for CIP during CISOM II”. “Civil society organizations have been able to intervene in multiple cases of conflict (e.g. land grabbing), including against companies. Local authorities, villagers, and the Department of Women’s Affairs have seen an improvement in the livelihoods of women, have seen women be increasingly involved in decision making, and have noted a decrease in the amount of domestic violence due to training, awareness and consultation. Beneficiaries feel more empowered, are aware of ‘bigger picture’ issues they can engage in, and can successfully write proposals for village and group needs. Water and health issues are also mainstreamed into the CIP, in addition to agriculture needs. For rights, in the case of domestic violence, 82% of groups with violence and raised the issue with commune councils were given advice to reduce it. 90% of groups are aware of their land rights, with 83% of those reporting issues receiving a commune intervention/solution”.*

SMUAC is increasingly recognized among farmers, which gives the union increased recognition and legitimacy. External stakeholders including MFIs recognise the SMUAC is a stable organisation to lend to. The cumulative effect is the ability to forge stronger business and advocacy ties, increase member confidence, and ultimately the ability to grow”, (Davies & Bunheng, 2018).

CSO members believe in their DROs and the target group have expressed and acknowledged legitimacy of the partners as champions of the target groups' cause throughout previous - and expressed their support to planned future EAC interventions.

Experience and track record of creating outputs/outcomes relevant to civil society

Livelihood of participating rural poor has significantly improved. Income from agriculture has more than doubled, because production quantity, quality and sustainability has improved over the years. Key points recorded by the external evaluation team is highlighted below (Davis & Bunheng, 2018):

“The impact of the project has led to a higher level of food security among group members, rapid social development, lower financial risks and ability to expand business, improved negotiation and conflict resolution at both a group and household level, higher levels of communication between community members and government authorities. Advocacy skills have meant that groups have analysed their problems, prioritized their needs, and approached local authorities to successfully gain a variety of resources, introducing electricity, schools, water ponds/wells, and mine clearing”.

ACs and PACUs take part in policy dialogs. They advocate on behalf of farmers/members on issues especially related to business activities e.g. secure better credit schemes, lower prices and better quality of agricultural inputs, better sales channels and higher selling prices on agricultural produce. Existing ACs offer improved credit schemes: Interest rates are comparatively low; collateral is not requested and the flexibility is higher. Repayment rates are high, delay can happen, but loan default rates² are comparatively low, i.e. SR: 0,24 %; ODM 0,00 % during 2018. ACs have built a fine reputation on management of micro credit schemes; however, a constant effort is necessary to maintain disciplined borrowers and to secure long-term success of the microfinance schemes, in their quest to eradicate poverty. The ACs have secured better income for members and ACs have earned a profit from business activities which is necessary to reach self-reliance and to expand cooperative services.

ADDA/LNGOs staff create outputs and outcomes relevant to the rural population, authorities at all levels and other concerned stakeholders, because interventions have established and developed well-functioning SHGs, ACs & PACUs influencing/catalysing problem solving in communities. Poor communities invite and consult with LNGOs and their staff: (i) They are invited to attend - and they are able to influence “agendas” at provincial level, (ii) Communities consult LNGOs for advice and help, (iii) Communities acknowledge that LNGO staff is catalysing successful CIP processes, (iv) They can assist during implementation of “soft” advocacy strategies – and they are able to reach concrete results, (v) They encourage rights based processes – even court cases. LNGO staff have become “teachers”.

3. Strategy and expected results

Immediate objectives and main success criteria’s of the intervention.

- June 2022, SMUAC and PACU in ODM have strengthened organisational capacity & services
 - June 2022, PACUs embrace at least 35 ACs and they operate in a democratic manner.
 - May 2021, aggregated projections for credit schemes, farm inputs demand and marketing of cooperative member production are elaborated
 - June 2022; 80 % of stakeholders at all levels understand accountability systems and feel confident when using cooperative services
 - June 2022, 25 ACs use PACUs services on computerised double entry bookkeeping
 - At least 60% of the PACU leaders are women
- By 2022, 30 out of 35 democratic Agricultural Cooperatives (ACs) operate viable and expanded cooperative businesses - in an accountable and transparent manner.
 - By 2022, at least 30 ACs have improved socio-economic performance compared to their results in the initial performance review
 - By 2022, 70 % of SHG members have joined an AC
 - By 2022, 75% of AC members are satisfied by the services/support delivered by their AC
 - By 2022, at least 60% of the AC members are women.
 - By June 2022, downward accountability includes direct involvement of members in participatory monitoring, the devolution of decision-making and budgetary transparency.
- June 2022, 240 SHGs, 35 ACs, 2 PACUs and 4 LNGOs are updated on agric. & rural development policy issues and they influence local and national decision making on rural development.

² The default rate is the percentage of all outstanding loans that a lender has written off after a prolonged period of missed payments. A loan is declared in default if payment is 360 days late.

- LNGOs, PACUs, ACs; and SHGs advocate for better income generation opportunities and legal rights of poor people at national, provincial, district, commune, and village level
- 1.000 priorities of the farmers have been integrated into CIPs and 45% are addressed each year.
- 5 suggestions / priorities are addressed by duty bearers at provincial and/or national level.

Table 3. Objectives, main expected outputs and main activities (A detailed LFA is elaborated).

O	Main expected outputs	Main activities
In pursuit of objective 1	By 2022, 2 PACUs have efficient internal leadership, management, structures, planning and monitoring procedures, protocols and have a broad and democratic membership base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainings of Trainers (ToT) • Training on PACU leadership and management • Encourage exchange of lessons learned and cooperation between 3-tier Democratic Rural Organisations in SR and ODM • Support PACU monthly and annual reporting's. Implement M&E regarding good PACU organisational and commercial behaviour • Assist democratic development of PACUs & membership expansion
	June 2022, 2 PACUs have improved capacity to facilitate: (i) cost efficient credit lines (ii) comparatively cheaper farm input supply, (iii) cost efficient marketing of AC member production, (iv) reliable accounting (upwards accountability as well as downwards) and (v) other relevant member services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PACU management aggregate credit demand projections and consolidate records on key credit rating parameters to improve collective credit bargaining power • Assist and coach PACU committees to aggregated projections for credit schemes, farm inputs demand and marketing of cooperative member production to improve collective bargaining power • Assist PACU committees to design and implement credit, farm input supply and marketing schemes suit members' needs and delivery/off-take processes are convenient • Encourage, train and coach AC members active participation involvement in PACUs accountability mechanisms.
	September 2020, 2 PACUs are registered members of the national CACA and they are actively expanding their AC member base/incorporating new members and network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elect PACU and AC representative members to attend the first founding general meeting to establish the CACA according to the bill, "Prakas" on establishment and registration of the CACA • Communication and promotion to increase membership basis • Plan and implement campaigns to recruit new PACU members • Assessment of AC "newcomers" in view of their PACU integration • Enrol ACs, fulfilling criteria to become members of the PACU
In pursuit of objective 2	By 2022, 30 of 35 ACs have efficient internal leadership, structures, procedures, protocols and they have a broad and democratic membership base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support ACs – members as well as non-members to identify strengths and weaknesses and facilitate appropriate management and strategic development to reach higher level of sustainability. • Assist the ACs in maintaining democratic principles and expand their membership basis • Support interactions between 2nd and 3rd tier DROs
	June 2022, 30 out of 35 ACs have reinforced and operate according to best practice for reliable accounting (upwards accountability & downwards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate active involvement of members in AC governance • Gradual adaptation of AC internal rules and structures when required (when new lessons are learned) • Encourage AC members active participation involvement in AC and PACU accountability mechanisms
	June 2011, 30 ACs are operating viable cooperative businesses increasing their self-reliance and member income; 30 ACs have consolidated and expanded appropriate services to support SHGs and other members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACs organise members consultative meetings to outline priorities and best practices to further develop/update ACs strategies and plans. • Business management training and coaching: Business planning and execution, finance, marketing and control • Support execution of promising opportunities - value chains/export • ACs support SHG management: bookkeeping, leadership and communication, conflict resolution • ACs support farmers' organisational and technical development.

In pursuit of objective 3	By June 2022, the PACUs have significant ability to analyse and respond to AC context and supervise ACs on further cooperative development e.g. how to operate and maintain viable cooperative businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sessions and workshops on government policies that could serve/ benefits the farmers and their organisations Establish a mechanism to ensure that PACU are regularly updated about new development, regulation etc. in the sector Annually: Each AC introduce its current status and plans to PACUs, e.g. perceived constraints and opportunities of their members Assist PACU committees in analysing the ACs context and explore further cooperative development opportunities
	Committees of the PACUs and ACs have strengthened their knowledge on agricultural and rural development policies as well as governance frameworks, which is utilised in their direct dialog with relevant authorities at all levels to address the needs of the farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training of PACU committees, AC leaders, local line departments and Authorities representatives on rights, policy processes, agricultural and rural development issues, roles, opportunities and challenges of Farmers Organisations Train PACU and AC leaders on advocacy: How to develop advocacy strategic roadmaps, negotiation skills, mobilising media & influencers Priorities of men and women farmers - expressed during ACs and PACU consultative meetings are translated into advocacy road maps Facilitate communication/lobbying/agreement with the PDAFF/MAFF securing that PACUs/ACs/farmers benefit from policies and initiatives
	End of 2022, 225 out of 240 SHGs and 25 ACs are efficiently advocating/participating in policy dialogs at local levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Participatory Village Development Plans (PVDPs) Participation and follow-up of CIPs/CDPs and DIWs, Public forums Community Development Projects (CDPs): formulation, financing/ partnership building, implementation, operation and maintenance. Monitoring impact of advocacy actions to secure changes
	End of 2022, the PACUs and LNGOs are efficiently advocating/ participating in policy dialogs at provincial and national levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline and communicate prioritised needs of poor rights holders to duty bearers at high levels: e.g. high-ranking officials and influencers Lobby for a favourable environment to improve relevant value chains Advocate and lobby via the national CACA forums/workshops etc. Monitoring impact of advocacy actions and secure that change happens from the top to the root's levels.

EAC build on interventions and outputs of previous interventions: EASY, COCIS, and IWEP in SR since 2006; ACSO and CISOM in ODR since 2013.

The cooperation thus far has achieved satisfactory results

Income and food security have improved through sustainable agricultural production methodology, integrated pest management, production diversification, improved production quality & quantities. Farmers reach out for assistance from duty bearers and they are striving to overcome challenges.

Total gross income of families has increased significantly, while poverty has reduced in SR and ODM, which is clearly seen from table 4. Income of target beneficiaries in ODM has increased from 797 USD per year in 2012-2013, to 1792 USD per year in 2017/2018, while the number of ID poor 1 and 2 has reduced from 87% to 27% during the same period.

Table 4: Family income status 2013, 2015 and 2018 (Sinang and Kimleng, May 2018)

Family income status [%]	2013	2015	2018
	Baseline CISOM I	Impact ass. CISOM I	Impact ass. CISOM II
ID poor 1	41	21	9
ID poor 2	46	21	18
No ID	13	58	23
Medium	0	0	50

Previous projects were implemented with high level of cooperation with authorities, at commune, district, provincial and national levels; as well as high involvement of the PDAFF and PDWF, because they have experienced that the cooperative structures are beneficial to their regular commitments. PDAFF staff participating in EASY, ACSO and CISOM trainings have improved own capacity and they can easily mobilize relevant population for e.g. vaccination programs and respond to outbreaks of diseases, insects etc., through the network of DROs.

Comparatively strong democratic CSOs – SHGs, ACs and PACUs - have evolved during previous projects. *EASY has created strong ACs and a strong SMUAC. Committee members are democratically elected, and composed of young, dynamic leaders who are able to motivate members* (Davies & Bunheng 2019). Local authorities express that ADDA/LNGO established cooperatives are stronger than other cooperatives due to intensive on-the-ground support.

Stakeholders (including Commune Councils) see clear differences in communities with ACs and those that do not engage in development progress, community stability and community activeness, and see it as a tool to reduce debt (and as a consequence, be less tempted to carry out illegal activities to cover debts); communes work more effectively with ACs (Davies & Bunheng 2018).

Partner staff and Community Professionals (CPs) have built capacity and facilitated active participation of ACs, SHG members and other villagers during the CIP processes to make sure that identified needs, and priorities of rural poor people are highlighted and integrated into commune investments plans. Consequently, ACs, SHGs and partners are increasingly influencing local decision-making. A significant increase in representation of the poor during CIP processes during the projects are revealed in table 5. Interventions have improved livelihood and legal rights of more than 100.000 rural poor, which is acknowledged by duty bearers. Advocacy road maps have been developed and the “soft advocacy approach” used is considered both effective and appropriate – the methodology fits very well with the government policy to conduct public forums and CIPs.

Table 5. Representation of the poor target group, CIP integration of prioritized needs and realised proposals (EASY, CISOM and ACSO 2013/14 to 2018/19)

Prioritised needs, integrated & realised	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Siem Reap						
Number of prioritized needs of the poor submitted during the CIP processes	30	401	404	848	621	842
Number of proposals integrated in to investment plans by commune councils		95	308	653	422	659
Realized proposals (incl. external support)	28	79	211	207	231	291
SR Beneficiaries (families)	15.500	22.096	46.667	46.800	49.939	60.320
Oddar Meanchey						
Number of prioritised needs of the poor submitted during the CIP processes	337	401	518	594	773	(265) (Ongoing)
Number of proposals integrated into investment plans by Commune Councils	158	258	407	457	644	(197)
Realised proposals (incl. external support)	195	260	283	204	209	(35)
ODM Beneficiaries (families)	39.810	45.205	57.791	56.329	65.588	(5.711)
Total SR & ODM beneficiaries	55.310	67.301	104.458	103.129	115.527	

Numerous priorities and recommendations of rural poor were presented and discussed with relevant duty bearers – and local authorities have incorporated more than 1.000 proposals into CIP 2017/18.

CSOs have secured impact at local level and regional level, which is strongly indicated by the fact that the communes integrate a high – and ever increasing - number of priorities into the investment plans. However, funding at local level remains at a rather low level which affect the number of realised proposals (details available). Therefore, high level advocacy (national) is planned to increase allocations for local level investments. *“Advocacy of EASY is built directly into the project and ties in on several levels, including allowing direct participation at village and commune level in planning and prioritizing community needs, working with external stakeholders through the ACs for issues such as securing inputs (and in the longer term coordinating and securing business deals), and in the longer term engaging at a national level. This engagement not only supports individual farmers (by improving financing loans, inputs, and for some ACs, contract farming terms), but allows local authorities to be able to respond directly to needs of poor families.* (Davies & Bunheng, 2019).

SMUAC, ACs, READA, CIDO, RCEDO and KBA have successfully advocated for e.g. establishment of a national Cambodian Agricultural Cooperative Alliance to better understand and discuss rural development issues, better credit terms. Better credit terms are reached for AC and SMUAC in terms of loans issued without collateral from individual AC members and lower interest rate. MFI interest rates have reduced from 1,8-2,5 % per month to interest rates is between 0,95 and 1,3 % per month without collateral. One Japanese Micro Finance Institution (MFI): Idemitsu Saison Microfinance has issued AC loans (loans between 2,500 USD and 50,000 USD per AC – total app. 400.000 USD) on credit terms in line with terms negotiated by LNGOs, SMUAC and ACs.

Experiences from the work thus far been fed into the design of the new intervention

SMUAC and ACs in SR and ODM are rather well functioning. However, the 3rd tier CSO structures have been established and operative for less than 2 years. Further capacity building - including adaptation and transfer of knowledge from well-functioning CSOs – e.g. from SMUAC in SR to PACU in ODM - is planned, which will significantly improve PACU effectiveness and sustainability.

The advocacy road map developed by the strong LNGO partnership and the “soft advocacy approach” used is considered both effective and appropriate and it fits very well with the new government policy to conduct public forums. During EAC it is planned to closely monitor and facilitate that government policy materializes in better priorities at local as well as at provincial level. Consequently, EAC will strengthen monitoring and nudging of activities to secure implementation of prioritised needs of the poor - case by case – at local and at higher levels.

The project includes even stronger monitoring in order to improve advocacy impact, integration of advocacy as a formal organization strategy, further engagement of partners to link directly to provincial levels of government, strategic alliances with advocacy-minded NGOs, and stronger training/update of staff and communities in law and land rights. Strong support is anticipated from PDAFF – especially from the provincial offices for AC promotion - regarding PACU development. Furthermore, extensive use of advocacy and links to large donors/private companies to attract medium/large scale water projects is planned.

EAC is designed to gain momentum from the strong emphasis on development and empowerment of PACUs and ACs in Cambodia (“Agricultural Cooperative movement”), which is seen fundamental to achieve inclusive growth and sustainable development by the Ministry of Agriculture in Cambodia. EAC is aiming to strengthen PACU-management; extend farmer support, expand PACUs, increase AC capital and commercial sustainability; reinforce CSO advocacy and influence – which is in line with the main recommendations of the final project evaluation of EASY (Davies & Bunheng, 2019).

EAC pursue new objectives and take a different strategic approach

EAC interventions will empower democratic rural organisations established by the partners during the last 10 years and boost the evolvement of an independent “agricultural cooperative movement” in Cambodia. EAC is especially designed to (A) Enhance advocacy and representation of the poor at provincial and national level and (B) to empower internal organisational capacity of PACUs and ACs (including their linkage to SHGs) in order to strengthen DRO service deliveries: (i) cost efficient credit lines (ii) comparatively cheaper farm input supply, (iii) cost efficient marketing of AC member production, (iv) reliable accounting (upwards accountability as well as downwards) and (v) other relevant member services improving livelihood of the poor as well as self-reliance and sustainability of the CSOs. Furthermore, coordination and networking between the ACs and PACUs in ODM in SR is strengthened during the project period by the merging of previous separate project interventions in SR and ODM – including strong PACU cooperation; pooling bargaining power, service delivery, capacity building and common policy dialogs at all levels. Relevant findings from investigations of thresholds for evolution of Democratic Rural Organizations in Africa and Asia (Esbern et al. 2018)) has guided the strategic approach of EAC.

Interlinkage and balance between capacity development, advocacy and strategic deliveries **Capacity building**

The ADDA strategy is in line with CISUs development triangle where capacity, advocacy and

strategic delivery are linked and implemented in conjunction. Main strategy components of EAC are capacity building and strengthening of advocacy competences of 2 PACUs, 25 ACs and 4 LNGOs.

The partners will build capacity on PACU objectives, organisation, leadership and management, improved business models and how to establish national networks and alliances to take part in policy dialogs at all levels. LNGO staff and CSO committees requests further capacity building on these areas in order to advocate for prioritised requests/needs of the target groups and beneficiaries. Such skills will be used by all stakeholders in their future work – promoting further aggregation of CSOs, supporting more ambitious cooperative business activities and representation of farmers at higher-level policy dialogs.

Democratic representation of rural poor, leadership, proper management, accountability and sound business activities is fundamental to reach long-term sustainability of PACUs and ACs, because it is a prerequisite to cooperative development and it reflects ambitions of existing DROs. With a solid foundation – PACUs and ACs - are legitimate representatives of rural poor with ballast to exert significant pressure on “duty bearers” on framework conditions. However, LNGO support and technical assistance is necessary (local and international) and requested in order to reach ambitions.

Advocacy

ACs and SHGs undertake dialogs with local authorities and express prioritized need at village and commune levels. The processes - which are reasonable developed - have built valuable capacity and experience of Rural Democratic Organisations, which in turn has shown to local authorities that SHGs and ACs are very useful community development actors. Support will continue during EAC, with AC and SHG committees leading the advocacy processes with support from EAC legal advisors, DFs and CPs when coaching and adjustments are needed to solve challenges or amplify influence (During processes of Participatory Village Development Planning (PVDP), Community Development Projects (CDP), public forums, adjustments - or detailing advocacy roadmaps). The approach is very much in line with the strategy of the government - bringing development to the rural areas and allowing rural people to take active part in decision-making. This methodology is acknowledged and accepted by all main stakeholders e.g. LNGOs, ACs, SHGs, private sector as well as local authorities and provincial departments as an appropriate way to work with poor rural people to make sure that their voices and priorities are heard.

The EAC project is aiming to create stronger linkage and synergy between existing CSOs - ACs, PACUs, LNGOs - and national networks in order to join policy dialogs at higher levels of planning and decision-making. The PACUs are expected to summarise and influence duty bearers on common issues, which are most efficiently dealt with at provincial and/or national levels. Such issues may cover larger geographical implications (e.g. irrigation scheme, roads), they may involve provincial and national stakeholders (e.g.; land conflicts with Economic Land Concessions, military, processor/millers, importers and exporters); relate to provincial/national policies (e.g.; importation standards, informal taxes imposed locally etc.), regulations and laws. PACUs – and subsequently aggregations of PACUs (National Cambodian AC alliance - CACA) representing a larger number of farmers, resulting in a stronger voice.

PACU and AC committees are assisted to understand their rights, legal framework and policy processes. They will be further trained to analyse agricultural and rural development issues and understand the AC/PACU role and how to address these issues within the legal framework of Cambodia. They will further develop their advocacy skills such as strategic advocacy planning, communication and negotiation skills, how to mobilise media and other strong voices. ADDA/LNGOs will assist the PACUs and ACs to develop specific advocacy roadmaps in line with the priorities of their members – elaborate roadmaps that will guide them in their dialog with provincial and national duty bearers (private and governmental) - during meetings of the national AC alliance, conferences, workshops, network meetings, technical working groups etc. Additionally, mechanisms will be further developed in the communities/organisations to monitor the impact of advocacy at local, provincial and national levels striving to make sure that changes happen.

Duty-bearers

Governments and line departments:

The EAC project contribute to the obligations of local, provincial and national government authorities and fulfil major missions of these institutions e.g. improving livelihood of poor people, taking “voices of poor people” into account during investment planning processes, on legal issues as well as policy processes etc. Local authorities will be able to boost activities, achieve synergy in terms of agricultural production, empower cooperative business development, and respond to the needs expressed by the target beneficiaries.

PDAFF and other authorities in the province (E.g. PDWA, DPAC, DFID) and MAFF at national level are major stakeholders that may influence the project significantly. They will gain more knowledge and experience on community development work, ACs and PACUs from the project. Governmental duty bearers (authorities and line departments) improve overall image; because local people achieve better living condition and they become better organized and heard. A very close collaboration, communication and involvement of governmental authorities/staff at all levels is planned in order to share the outcome from success stories and events e.g. activities and results of PACUs, ACs and SHG, events and campaigns. Such an approach minimizes the risk of undermining their authority and power and it reduces any fear that the EAC project may draw attention to shortcomings of local authorities and government.

The governmental institutions have only limited capability to respond to an omnipresent need for development in the provinces due to lack of resources in terms of manpower and capital. LNGOs and ADDA are working very closely together with local authorities at all levels, because they represent a very important framework. Furthermore, local authorities possess some financial and legal capacity, which may be directed towards the needs of poor people (even higher degree).

PDAFF, PDPAC and PDWA are present members of the EASY and ACSO Steering Committees and they continue as EAC steering committee members.

Local authorities - including village chiefs, commune councils, district governors and provincial authorities - strongly support ADDA/LNGO interventions in SR and ODM. Authorities at all levels acknowledge and have complemented LNGOs and ADDA for working with the poor target groups and the positive impact of ongoing projects on poverty reduction and empowerment of women. They are looking forward to further support implementation of the EAC project (Support letters exist)

PDAFF, PDWA, and DPAC strongly support the EAC project and they will actively participate in the implementation of interventions. The project concept and interventions will become widely disseminated by the PDAFF, PDWA and MAFF participation, support and link EAC to their own programs. ACs and PACUs will benefit from the network and EAC contacts.

The private sector

The private sector is an important stakeholder of the project. The sector will benefit in terms of a more professional business cooperation resulting from better organisation of farmers, i.e. higher aggregated quantities, communicated/better quality standards and more professional bodies representing the farmers. Key stakeholders include financial institutions and importers/distributors of agricultural inputs since they provide financial services and farm inputs to ACs, and PACUs. Agricultural value-chain actors e.g. AMRU rice and similar millers are supportive, because EAC improve their interactions and business linkages with PACUs & ACs (existing as well as new DROs).

Strategic services linked to capacity building and advocacy

Strategic services are limited to 2 grants for the PACUs implementing “Business development packages”, replacement of outdated computers, motorcycles, studies, training inputs during ToT, technical trainings/demonstrations for ACs and PACUs, costs of provincial and national workshops, meetings and communication (media) and a limited number of technical training sessions for farmers. Third parties/external donors are expected to support Community Development Projects.

Two packages for PACU “Business development plans” is a strategic service of the project. Each

PACU have to elaborate detailed plans on how to further develop management, transparency, upwards and downwards accountability and sound business activities of their organisations and how to secure that the proposed management activities can continue after termination of the EAC project. The grants are app. 9.000 USD for each PACU. These packages may partly cover costs of a PACU manager, and/or costs of operating a double entry bookkeeping system (Quick Books) producing monthly and annual reports, e.g. Profit and Loss calculations, Balance sheets comparing realised figures versus planned costs for each ACs and the PACU. The PACUs are expected to offer services and “computerize those ACs”, requesting such services before 2022, e.g. maintain a double entry bookkeeping system of ACs and expand the database for comparisons between ACs. This is to prevent errors; to issue early warnings and to prepare ACs for annual audit. The well-functioning CISOM/ACSO and EASY competitive grants is inspiring the awarding procedure of the grants. A rather demanding - but fair - evaluation grid including criteria's regarding plans of the PACU committees, verbal and written presentations regarding AC vision, mission, strategy, services, management, organisation, accountability, ambitions and business plans is used for constructive dialogs/workshops with the PACU committees before a grant is released.

How priorities, plans and resources existing within the context are taken into account

The Sub-National Democratic Development (SNDD) and the Sub-National Administration (SNA) has provided more space for CSOs to facilitate dialogues amongst citizens, elected officials and government officials on development priorities and issues at local level. The Principles of Commune Participatory Planning and Commune Annual Investment Program are well known and have been intensively utilised by EAC partners during previous project interventions. *“However, given the hierarchy-conscious political and bureaucratic culture in Cambodia, facilitating such intermediations remains a challenging, but important intervention. Such support, although minimal at present, but has the potential for authentic community empowerment”* (Bandyopadhyay, K. K. and Khus, T. 2012). This quote highlights the very essence of what EAC is striving to achieve in terms of community empowerment and advocacy.

Risk factors and conceivable solutions aimed at mitigating the risks concerned.

Table 6. Risk factors, assumptions and mitigation measures

Risk	Type	Assumptions	Mitigation
Advocacy is not tolerated	Political	Authorities tolerate “soft advocacy approach” where dialog is favoured against confrontation. Dialogs on sensible issues e.g. land rights, human rights continue at local level - during forums and CIP	Appropriate planning and timing of sensible NGO; AC and PACU advocacy. SHGs, ACs, Unions and LNGOs use a “soft advocacy approach” where dialog is key and not confrontation
Governmental structures and/or management overrule an independent member elected leadership of ACs and Unions	Political	Democratically elected PACU and AC committees manage planning and execution of activities independently from governmental direct interference	Capacity building of members elected for AC and PACUs on leadership and management during the Action
Weak market linkage between seller and buyer. Selling impossible, or prices are very low	Economic	There is a continuous market and it is possible to establish acceptable market linkage	Before entering into contract farming an assessment will be made to ensure a feasible market for the products
No ownership among members for their 2 nd and 3 rd tier CSOs; they fear economic leakage, or elite capture, resulting in members and commercial partners losing faith in accountability CSOs, or commercial agreements	Organisational	Mechanisms are in place to protect against internal as well as external elite capture and corruption, i.e. clearly defined rights, responsibilities, mutual benefit, and transparency create trust and commitment in cooperative as well as commercial relationships	Downward accountability giving members a direct voice in the formulation and implementation of activities e.g. respond to member proposals, participatory monitoring of activities by members and active involvement of the members

Risk	Type	Assumptions	Mitigation
Weak upward - but especially downward accountability hampering the evolution of ACs and PACUs	Organisational	Inclusive participation and downward accountability processes are operating. Participation and accountability systems are successfully revitalised and stakeholders at all levels understand them and feel confident in using them	Support from LNGOs to ensure (i) High level of transparency of information & members being actively involved in keeping track of activities and (ii) Links to microcredit banks strengthen upward accountability
Reluctance of SMUAC to spend their limited financial resources on hiring professional staff, and in part to the psychological barrier of uneducated farmers managing well-educated employees	Organisational	Balance between the management requirements for the ACs and PACUs – in particular the SRMUAC - and the capacity and skills of its members and leaders	Capacity building of members elected for AC and PACU committees on division of roles between leadership and professional management. Promote delivery of concrete results from manager employment
Lack of leadership support in SHG's, ACs and PACU	Social	Leaders of SHG's, ACs & PACU are motivated and committed to overcome challenges and pursue goals of their CSOs.	Committee leaders are compensated by small member payments and high "esteem" in the community.

EAC is likely to lead to the objectives defined, including the role as catalyst

Core strategy of ADDA and partners' is to expand outcome and impact of previous project interventions i.e. to support and consolidate impact of PACUs; existing as well as "new" ACs applying for PACU membership. Well proven knowledge and methodology is used to: (i) Improve capacity, accountability and self-reliance of PACUs and ACs to aggregate and boost member services (ii) Create alliances/networks to improve representation of poor farmers in policy dialogs, (iii) Train on human and legal rights and the ability to access and analyse information, (iv) Promote a conducive environment for right holders to advocate for their interests towards duty bearers at all levels of policy dialogs, and (v) Widespread sustainable agricultural technical/production issues, marketing, cooperate business activities. The DRO concept is well proven and requested by external stakeholders in Cambodia, which make it very likely that expected results materialise and ensure that South partners and DROs attain skills and capacity supporting their constituencies.

Methodology

The first objective of the Action is to strengthened organisational capacity & services of the two democratically functioning Provincial Agricultural Cooperative Unions (PACUs) in SR and ODM. LNGO staff, CPs, selected AC and PACU committee members (2 from each cooperative organisation) are initially trained on 2 and 3 tier democratic rural organisations, cooperative development, business planning and cooperative business execution as well as advocacy during a one-week training seminar - Training of Trainers (ToT).

Capacity building during the Action is executed by staff from ADDA, LNGOs, PDAFF, MAFF and stakeholders from the private sector. Training curriculums are designed to reach PACU objectives in line with the demand of their AC members; e.g. increase member benefits in terms of access to credit, lower input prices, or higher selling prices, expand PACU membership base; make progress towards financial and managerial self-reliance and sustainability; inspire members to participate in governance and maintain their equity stake in the organization; improve self-esteem, economic and social well-being of their members.

The Action is supporting delivery of appropriate PACU services to their members – which is initiated by elaboration of a "Business Development Plans" (BDP) by each PACU. PACUs are encouraged to develop plans which will expand business activities, AC services, accountability, long term self-reliance and advocacy. Support may be granted following the procedure: (i) Call for business development proposals, (ii) Proposals are evaluated against an evaluation grid by an evaluation

committee, (iii) Proposals/plans are adjusted following recommendations and dialogs on Actions (iv) Approved BDPs are executed by PACUs utilising their own resources, the grant and EAC trainers.

Regular coaching and on-the-job training of PACU committees and members by LNGO coordinators and facilitators are organised to secure active PACU member participation during election of leadership, keeping leaders accountable and contributing actively to deciding the content and activities of their organization. Training by project business and advocacy advisors is designed to expand membership basis of the PACUs to reach “economy of scale” and subsequently to improve representation of the poor (AC members) in policy dialogs with public and private duty bearers.

Training sessions and coaching of the PACU committees and employed staff (a financial and administration officer and probably an employed SMUAC manager in SR) by business advisors and subject matter specialists is planned to improve methods and PACU capacity to (i) aggregate credit and farm input demand projections, as well as farm output projections in order to (ii) consolidate records improving collective bargaining power of PACUs. Frequent sharing of ideas, experience and lessons learned are planned between the PACU committees in SR and ODM - as well as sharing with other successful DROs - to reach best practice for the PACUs.

The LNGO directors, legal advisor and PC will guide and assist PACUs to apply for membership of the Cambodian Agricultural Cooperative Alliance (CACA) at national level, assist during election of PACU representatives and subsequently facilitate active membership of the CACA.

Total activity costs related to objective 1 is app. 828 kDKK. Main contributions to PACU capacity building include training and guidance by LNGO Subject Matter Specialists and ADDA international staff on (i) internal leadership and management (including division of roles between committee members and hired staff), (ii) cost efficient credit lines (iii) comparatively cheaper farm input supply chains, (iv) cost efficient marketing of AC member production (including contract farming) and (v) accountability. Training on downwards and upwards accountability, including double entry bookkeeping (using quick book), financial supervision and monitoring are regularly carried out by highly experienced LNGO staff. LNGO district coordinators, district facilitators and CPs will coach and follow up on PACU strategic plans, actions and progress. Reference to annex 2 “Budget Notes”.

The second objective is to enhance capacity of existing 24 plus 11 external ACs to operate viable cooperative businesses and deliver appropriate services to their members (agricultural and business training, credit lines etc.)

ACs are further developed (Reference to table 1). Planning and learning loops (lessons learned and reflections are used to revise strategy and actions of each AC) are basic methodology used by committees and CPs to support efficient AC planning and follow-up, internal leadership, procedures, democratic development, and the ability to operate viable cooperative businesses. This include effectiveness of financial procedures, transparency of records, regular reporting's and meetings (Monthly and annual reporting's for e.g. Annuals General Assemblies). The Action is aiming to further expand the number of AC farmer members and encourage an active AC membership of PACUs.

It is expected that net annual profit of ACs and AC own capital increases during the project period. Training and close up coaching of ACs is provided to secure that planning and execution of cooperative businesses is developed in line with AC competences/capacity – taking into account technical and financial capacity of each AC, local context and emerging opportunities. Existing activities are boosted and new opportunities are explored (e.g. contract farming, private/public partnerships, value-chain approach). The project will support studies and assist ACs to develop improved business models in partnership with MAFF/PDA and in line with best cooperative business practices.

AC performance and development rely on the capacity of their members. ACs intends to improve performance of SHGs and individual farmers. Dissemination of information by the ACs to farmer communities is planned to raise awareness and motivate mobilisation on specific agricultural or rural development policies. These interventions are reaching more than 10.000 farmer households, skills

are transferred from ACs to app. 240 SHGs (managerial, technical skills, intermediation) and the establishment of systematic business and financial linkages (including SHGs collection/distribution; credit lines for SHG businesses and/or individual microbusinesses of farmers). ACs will progressively replace services previously provided by project support to SHGs. ACs will provide such services in pace with improvement of their own capacity.

Total activity cost of objective 2 is 792 kDKK. Main contributions to PACU capacity building include training and guidance by LNGO Subject Matter Specialists and ADDA international staff on (i) internal leadership, management and socio-economic performance. Training is designed to reinforce upwards as well as downwards accountability, including member involvement, double entry bookkeeping (using quick book), financial supervision and monitoring. Training is carried out by highly experienced LNGO staff, whereas monthly closure of accounts is supervised by local CPs. LNGO district coordinators, district facilitators and CPs will coach and follow up on business plans and progress. Reference to “Budget Notes”

Advocacy and voice provide fine opportunities for established democratic rural organisations to address socio-economic issues influencing livelihood in ODM and SR – in line with the **third objective**: June 2022, 240 SHGs, 35 ACs, 2 PACUs and 4 LNGOs are updated on agricultural and rural development policy issues and they influence local and national decision making on rural development. The PACU committee members are updated and trained on AC context (Agricultural national policies, AC status, plans and challenges, training needs assessments), they are coached on how to select and execute AC training and services according to needs, and how to mobilise and develop skills and put in place cost-recovery models for delivery of training and services.

ACs and SHGs take part in advocacy and they are engaged in policy dialogs at local level (ref. to CIP principles and the two-level advocacy roadmaps). Their engagement in village development planning, participation in commune investment planning processes and public forums as well as implementation of community development projects will continue during the Action with some support from LNGO staff – especially support by the legal advisor, local facilitators, coordinators and CPs. ACs and PACU leaders will be further trained by LNGOs to represent their members during policy dialogs at higher levels addressing issues and challenges commonly met by farmers - which require adaptation/changes in agricultural and rural development national policy framework or investment strategies.

Both PACUs and ACs are expected to become members of the Cambodian Agricultural Cooperative Alliance (CACA) which will be the supreme organ of Agricultural cooperatives facilitated by MAFF, where dialogs on prioritised needs/issues are promoted between CACA members and duty bearers.

LNGOs will join national alliances to participate in national dialogs representing views, arguments and priorities of poor farmers. This requires a deep knowledge and a good understanding of basic rights, legal frameworks and policy processes, agricultural and rural development issues and roles of DROs. PACU and AC committee members as well as LNGO executive staff will be trained by local specialists as well as ADDA international staff. They will build further analytical and strategic planning capacity. LNGO executive staff are strongly encouraged to utilise provincial and national networks for policy dialogs at provincial and national levels to influence decisions regarding rural development.

Total activity cost of objective 3 is 900 kDKK. ADDA international staff, directors of LNGOs, project coordinators and the legal advisor will support field staff of READA, CIDO, RCEDO and KBA on methodology, analysis and elaboration of prioritised issues and specific roadmaps for advocacy at provincial and national levels. Training sessions are planned to secure that roadmaps and advocacy skills are elaborated/-updated in close cooperation with ACs and PACU committees. Skills, knowledge and strategy is used to gain influence on cooperative business and rural development.

Women’s and men’s equal participation

All trainings will be suitable for both male and female participants. However, the strategy of EAC is explicitly and deliberately gender biased, due to an already existing target group from previous

projects, where women have been in focus. Women represent more than 80% of SHG members and 83% of AC members are women. Lessons learned during previous projects reveals that women who gain confidence and leadership experience within SHGs often go on to become members of village development committees and other local CSOs. It is the aim of EAC to further strengthen involvement of poor woman and men in ACs, the PACUs and their active participation in policy dialogs. It is expected that poor farmers improve their social status and livelihood from their membership of SHGs, ACs and the.

The target groups influence the implementation of the intervention

Experience and recommendations regarding project implementation are systematically collected from ACs, the PACUs as well as SHGs and communicated to the EAC project coordination unit. Project implementation plans are adjusted to reach best implementation practice and impact. Consequently, the target group directly influence implementation and contribute to adjust and improve project methods and interventions. The SMUAC board director is member of the Project coordination unit and PSC - representing the target group - and will directly influence overall direction of the project and implementation.

Previous **ADDA projects have shown significant outreach and great catalysing** effect to the families, neighbours and friends of the primary target groups. It is estimated that more 100,000 individuals will increase knowledge on Cooperative Development, PACUs, and they will benefit from improved income, influence community development, and/or improve legal status by the end of EAC. DRO business planning concepts and tools are widely distributed by stakeholders e.g. through the Ideomitsu bank & PDAFF.

Refined strategy – catalyst role, advocacy and long-term sustainability improved

The EAC strategy is refined to (i) develop PACUs and existing as wells as “external” ACs into stronger self-reliant Democratic Rural Organisations (ii) improve cooperative business services and income of poor people, (ii) revitalise upwards as well as downwards accountability (iii) actively take part in the community planning process and (iv) strengthen networking and advocacy at provincial and national levels. EAC further build LNGO capacity and in-depth experience on development of commercially viable ACs and PACUs who addresses prioritised needs of their members with capacity to influence decision making and national agricultural policies:

- Capacity of PACUs is significantly strengthened i.e.: (i) ownership by ACs members is encouraged; (ii) financial and managerial self-reliance and sustainability improved; and (iii) democratic election of leaders and social accountability mechanisms reinforced
- PACUs include and upgrade capacity of “external” ACs, which will catalyse further cooperative development – catalysing a cooperative movement in Cambodia
- Close collaboration between SR and ODM interventions increases total number of DRO members, volumes, bargaining power, exchange of knowledge and influence. An AC member base of 9.000 farmers in ODM and SR is foreseen in June 2022. 10 new ACs become member of the PACUs (expected app. 2000 members) and existing 24 ACs attract additionally 2500 members.

Systematising and using experiences, including planned external evaluations

Detailed monthly, quarterly and annual activity plans interlinked with expenditures and overall project plans are elaborated, discussed and implemented following approval by the Project Coordination Unit and ADDA. Progress against plans are updated and reported monthly, quarterly and annually.

Dissemination of experiences will be done systematically throughout the project period. An evaluation report will document positive and negative experiences by the end of the project of the project. Furthermore, an internal impact assessment will be prepared by the end, and these findings will be available for the final report. The final report will be available to ADDA, READA, CIDO, RCEDO, KBA, SMUAC, PDAFF and other interested stakeholders. Project partners of ADDA will definitely use the experiences in present and future projects addressing DROs.

A workshop will be conducted as one of the final activities, where Cambodian stakeholders will be invited for the purpose of sharing the results of the project. It is anticipated that the positive results will engage them to work with the same issues: poor, rural people, gender, community development and civil society. Dissemination of success stories will be one of the main sources of information showing to a wide audience that the interventions of EAC are making a difference in people's lives. Dissemination of success stories will be designed to address and activate poor people, local authorities and key stakeholders. It is our expectation that the experience on best practice is going to be intensively used and shared among direct beneficiaries, other poor villagers and authorities.

The experience of the ACs and PACUs will feed back into EAC network of stakeholders thus also contributing to dissemination of best practices, new approaches and methods. The ADDA expatriate project coordinator will be the overall responsible for systematising the experiences. In practice this will be executed in close cooperation with the LNGO partners.

A final evaluation will be carried out 6 months before termination of EAC project. The results of the evaluation will be compared to the findings of the baseline study. The aim is to obtain an impartial analysis of the EAC in terms of its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. This is to learn from the results and to incorporate the learning as feedback into future planning processes and the exit strategy of EAC. An external consultant residing in Cambodia will be assigned for this task. The evaluation will be organized by ADDA; findings and recommendations will include results related to project and results related to the partnership. An evaluation seminar with the implementing partner and "aspiring EAC partners" will be established. An evaluation report will be prepared.

4. Phase-out and sustainability

All general operations of well-functioning ACs and PACUs - exceeding three years of experience - will continue, because they continue to rely on own human and economic resources when the intervention period expires. The Action does not support routine general operations of ACs or PACUs, when they have been operating for more than 3 years and are rated: "Performing above average", which characterise the first 11 ACs established in Siem Reap and 8 ACs in ODM. General operations are defined as "daily repetitive tasks that keep the AC/PACU activities and business on-going"; such as general accounting, core member and customer services (Monthly meetings, Annual Assemblies', routine member and customer interactions). The Action is only supporting further capacity building and upgrading. New AC members of PACUs are supported by the EAC project until they are "Performing above average". The catalytic cooperative development process may slow down after the intervention period, but daily cooperative operations will continue.

The 2 existing PACUs and 24 ACs are organised in a self-reliant and sustainable manner – e.g. total projected income 2019 is app. 160.000 USD (table 1). Only young ACs and the PACU in ODM may need guidance from LNGOs and PDAFF to sustain their organisations and activities. LNGOs continues to offer assistance to the PACU on management and advocacy issues.

An even stronger linkage is established between the PACUs, ACs & SHGs, which will minimise need for direct support to SHGs from LNGO staff and CPs. Required services in terms of organisation, management and financial guidance will increasingly be delivered by - or channelled through - the PACUs and ACs. PDAFF, LNGO staff and CPs will build capacity to organise connections using only limited resources. All LNGOs have income from other sources, and are not solely dependent on Danish contributions. They could sustain before the project and will also be able to do so after the project period. EAC promotes income generation through sustainable agriculture practices e.g. conservation tillage, utilisation of organic resources, eliminating slash and burn traditions etc.

EAC is envisaged to lead to lasting improvements for the target groups

SHGs are based on cooperation among rural poor, democratic principles and self-help. ACs and the PACUs are based on this foundation – democratic civil society organisations where rural poor develop knowledge and skills. They will be able to realise higher goals in terms of income

generation, improved livelihood and social security of families (a rights-based approach improving social security, networks and better economy).

ACs, PACUs and SHGs will build further organisational capacity, improve business activities, income generation and significantly strengthen their position as civil society actors. They will not be economically dependent of the project during implementation, but rely on their own income and resources. Improved capacity of CSOs will **increase income and livelihood** of members and **give rural poor “an even stronger voice”**.

PACUs, ACs and SHGs – especially new and weak ACs - are further supported and strengthened during the project. Management and business activities will improve by PACU interaction and support in the future. This will increase income of rural poor during and after the project. Well-established and lasting linkages between DROs, knowledge and continuous self-propelled development of competences will be part of their working habits after termination of the EAC project.

READA and LNGOs in ODM will improve organisational capacity, training competences, project management and advocacy skills, ready for their future work. LNGOs will represent beneficiaries / members in dialogs regarding agricultural and rural development policies and they will become more influential during provincial and national dialogs, which will continue to benefit rural communities. LNGOs master's advocacy on behalf of vulnerable farmers without putting its own organisation and its members/beneficiaries at risk. (Ref. context, problem analysis, risks).

Strengthening of partners' and other actors' capacity continues after EAC expires

ACs and the PACUs are legal entities, registered by the Ministry of Agriculture who are entitled to institutional support. The existence of a reasonably well developed national legal framework defines the objectives of the ACs and PACUs and guarantee rights and obligations of the members and their organisations. Rights encompasses institutional support, e.g. it is the obligation of the MAFF and PDAFF to promote and support the development of ACs and PACUs. Rich institutional support was experienced during previous projects, because all Cooperative organisations/structures established ADDA and implementing LNGO partners are highly recognised by PDAFF, MAFF and local authorities.

If the PACUs, ACs or SHGs should encounter new opportunities or problems after the project period, LNGO staff and CPs are available to reach opportunities and overcome challenges. CPs are local change agents operating at village level and they will continue activities and facilitation of change in their local communities after project completion on a fee-basis. They are charging a fee directly to well-functioning PACUs, ACs and SHGs for their services (reference to criteria's above).

Consciousness related to value of organisational/management capacity, services and costs of relevant services will be evident during implementation of the EAC project, e.g. the PACUs will hire – and pay part time fees for - Subject Matter Specialists, DFs and/or CPs to implement the “Business development plans” (ref. to page 23).

Experience has revealed that best performing ACs and SMUAC increasingly demand services of more specialised staff e.g. SMSs, DFs; and they are willing to pay for these services (app. 15 % of annual AC profit is reserved for training, and hiring of external staff for administration and business development). The PACU will propose and offer their services, (services of qualified staff/-consultants) for a fee, and thus structure and professionalise the systems initiated in previous projects: e.g. users of CPs e.g. SHGs and ACs, were encouraged to compensate CPs for their time spent on services rendered to their customers.

5. Planned intervention-related information work in Denmark

Project-related information work is planned in Denmark to create awareness and attract donors for CDP projects. Articles will be published in ADDA's newsletter and ADDA's member magazine (News & Views) to continuously update on the progress and status of the project. These articles will also be published on ADDA's website (www.adda.dk), and on ADDA's Facebook page (ADDA currently have approximately 11.000 followers). Bodil Pallesen carries out the information work.

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