

Lao PDR

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Final External Evaluation and Capitalisation of
Experiences of the Lao Decide-Info Project

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Laos

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Abbreviations

CC	Central Committee of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party
CDE	Centre for Development and Environment
CEGGA	Citizen Engagement for Good Governance, Accountability and Rule of Law
CHF	Swiss Franc
CRVS	Civil registration, and vital statistic
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DALAM	Department of Agricultural Land Management
DEQP	Department of Environmental Quality Promotion
DoPLA	Department of Policy and Legal Affairs
DP	Development Partner
DPRC	Development Policy Research Center
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DWR	Department of Water Resources
ENUFF	Enhancing Nutrition of Upland Farming Families project
ESLRP	Enhancing Systematic Land Registration Project (Lao PDR)
EU	European Union
EVI	Economic Vulnerability Index
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
GoL	Government of the Lao PDR
HAI	Human Asset Index
ICT	Information and communication Technologies
IDE-JETRO	Institute of Developing Economies of the Japan External Trade Organization
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILS	Institute for Legislative Studies
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KfW	KfW Deutsche Entwicklungsbank
LANIC	Lao National Internet Center
LECS	Lao Expenditure Consumption Survey
LIWG	Land Information Working Group

LASS	Lao Academy for Social Science
LCIS	Land Concession Information System
LDC	Least Developed Country
LM-RED	Land Management and Rural Economic Development
LNMC	Lao National Mekong Committee
LPRP	Lao People's Revolutionary Party
LSB	Lao Statistics Bureau
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
MEM	Ministry of Energy and Mines
MLSW	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
MMR	Maternal Mortality Rate
MoE	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MoNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MoST	Ministry of Science and Technology
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
MPT	Ministry of Post and Telecommunication
MRC	Mekong River Commission
MSFNSAP	Multi-Sectoral Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan
NA	National Assembly
NAFRI	National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute
NAPPA	National Academy of Policies and Public Administration
NGD	National Geographic Department
NIER	National Institute for Economic Research
NIPH	National Institute of Public Health
NRA	National Regulatory Authority
NRERI	Natural Resources and Environment Research Institute
NRESWG	Natural Resources and Environment Sector Working Group
NSEDP	National Socio-Economic Development Plan
NUoL	National University of Laos

ODA	Official Development Assistance
PCD	Pollution Control Department
PRC	Policy Research Center
PRF	Poverty Reduction Fund
PTT	Policy Think Tank
QI	Quality Investment Assessment
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SSWG	Sub-sector working group
TABI	The Agro-Biodiversity Initiative
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TWG	technical working group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UXO	Unexploded ordnance
VASS	Vietnam Academy of Social Science
VELA	Vocational Education and Training Laos project

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Challenges, policies, Laws and regulations

- Large land areas are granted for commercial use by various sectoral institutions at the national and sub-national levels. Further on, Lao PDR has had insufficient experience in information and data sharing and evidence-supported planning. Consolidated, up-to-date, and reliable information on large-scale commercial land investments is urgently needed as a basis for the design of more sustainable national land management strategies and approaches.
- current 8th, and forthcoming 9th National Socio-economic Development Plan (NSED) are targeting to sustainable use of the natural resources and the environment. Legislation and laws related to environmental protection, environmental and socio-economic impact assessment (SEIA) are developed and then translated into formal procedures. The procedures will be used as an enforcing mechanism to keep investors concerning parties accountable. Parallel, the country is developing towards exit from LDC. The strategy is vital to establish a consistent transition strategy for building resilience towards external threats caused by major Foreign Direct Investments.
- The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) is the main government authority responsible for land administration, including gathering data on land use, including leases and concessions. Similarly, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry collect their own data
- Land Law has such as principles for land management, land strategies and land leases/concessions, responsibilities of officials and land inspection.
- Forest Law determines the principles, regulations and measurements of sustainable management of forest areas.

Methodologies of the evaluation and capitalization

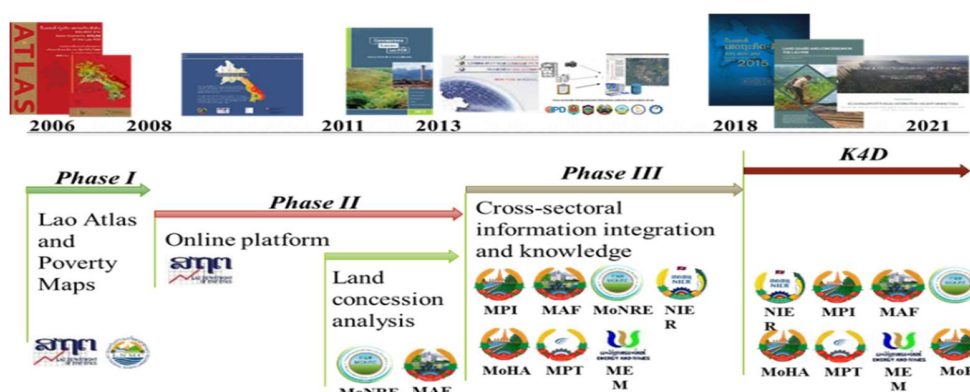
The objectives of the evaluation and capitalization can be found from page 11

Methodology used for data collection, analysis and capitalization.

- Because of COVID-19 most of the interviews were done using video calls
- Altogether 35 persons participated on the meetings and interviews.
- COVID – 19 restricted the travel to the province (Savannakhet). Nevertheless, two persons were interviewed by a video call (Department of Planning and Investment and from Provincial Office for Natural Resources and Environment)
- Interviews were based on key questions (OECD/CAD related and then individual organization, project etc. related questions)

Different phases of Lao DECIDE Info are shown in the Figure 1.

Figure 1 Lao DECIDE Info phases



Findings shortly (OECD criteria)

Criteria	Findings
Relevance	Project is still relevant to the government and its line Ministries and Departments. It is in line with Resolution of People's Party and enhancement of land management. It is in line with 8th and 9th NSEDP. Project supports sustainable green growth strategy by providing system to manage the concession areas. The project is co-operating with several other projects and NGOs (GECCA, SWISSCONTACT, SAFE). These mainly use the two platforms designed during the DECIDE Info phases. Project strongly focuses on land concessions in cooperation with MEM, MAF, MoF, MoNRE and MPI.
Coherence	The project is compatible with other SDC funded projects such as GECCA, TABI and MRLG. The project is linked to the WB/SDC funded ESLRP
Effectiveness	Project has introduced new system (LCIS) that enables cross-sectoral data sharing.
Efficiency	The project has managed to deliver the outputs cost-effectively using relatively small budget
Impact	The project has successfully by providing data that are relevant to the key Ministries
Sustainability	Partners have skills to run the system by themselves.

Conclusions:

- Most of the project activities are related to the LCIS, while Lao Decide Info platform gets less attention. The new Development Support platform has not been published
- K4D has distributed the budget between different organizations relatively well
- Research targets are too ambitious and have too large scope
- The project has done create effort in to promote women's participation

Recommendations:

- The new Development Support Platform should be released immediately
- The Scope of the research should be decreased only to cover investments on land and management of natural resources
- The project should prepare a comprehensive exit strategy

Capitalisation

The project has had considerable impact in the past 15 years (see Figure 1), particularly on the cross-sectoral cooperation and joint actions that have been the project's highlights.

Achievements

- As a result of years of work and capacity building, a comprehensive database and related platform (LCIS) have been established to manage the concession areas. Government organisations use the platform in reporting, planning and decision making at the national and sub-national levels.
- the project has initiated Quality Assessment of Investments (QI) and related monitoring. QI has improved the management of concession areas.
- The coordinating bodies are in place and functioning within and between the participating ministries and sub-national levels. Cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination system is set up and functioning.

- Training has been provided to national and sub-national government personnel countrywide on using the LCIS and Lao Decide online applications.
- The different phases have produced a variety of knowledge products (complete list in ANNEX D)

Challenges:

- Changes in the participating organizations (LSB, NGD, NUOL)
- Continuing re-organization of the GoL
- Slow expansion into the sub-national levels
- Low capacities of GoL organizations
- Turnover of personnel
- Lao Decide Info platform

Future directions

- The main ideas should be based on utilising the data and information collected during the four phases of the previous project and the subsequent updates to those.
- LCIS should be used to improve the visibility as a transparent tool (still not being fully open) to improve the management of concession areas.
- Further on, the system should clearly show the location where systematic land registration is done (using GIS data), including mapped customary lands to avoid conflicts between the public. This can be done with cooperation with WB funded ELSRP. Adding simplified cadastral data would further on improve the transparency and correctness of the system.
- The project should ensure that the impacts of the concession on local populations and the environment are less severe and more positive. Engagement with the stakeholders results in more sustainable and equitable growth, mitigating impacts of natural disasters and better resilience of local populations.
- As the expansion to the sub-national levels has been slow, the new project should be accelerating the extension to new provinces/districts. During K4D the project has extended to Savannakhet and possible to one or two other provinces. The piloting has created replicable working models to expand the project further. If the first 15 years have been preparing the national level activities, the next stage would be the sub-national.
- Future activities should ensure that the sub-national level authorities have the capacities and tools to ensure that commercial investments in lands are more climate-sensitive and socially responsible.
- The QI will continue to assess, interpret, and monitor multi-dimensional aspects of the quality of concessions. Further on, this requires an extended QI network mainly to the new provinces. The expansion would include training to the activity and especially on using the information and identifying corrective actions.
- Integrated spatial national information integrates datasets not previously available to climate sensitivity analysis, and forms thereby a solid basis for natural disaster preparedness and climate vulnerability analysis.
- With the sub-national work on land investments, land investments can offer planning guidance on sustainable and more climate-resilient local livelihoods.
- The project should be able to promote climate-resilient sustainable livelihoods, including climate change vulnerability and resilience analysis, by using the high-level integrated national information base to assess the vulnerability of local populations to natural disasters and climate changes, looking at the risk exposure, infrastructural resilience, and institutional capacities for the management of climate-related risks.
- The concrete actions are mentioned in chapter 5

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has supported the Lao DECIDE Info project since 2006 until its current fourth phase under the name of Knowledge for Development (K4D), covering July 2018 to December 2021. The project has funded by the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) and been implemented by the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) of the University of Bern, Switzerland, in partnership with the Government of Lao (GoL) participating institutions.

1.2 COUNTRY CONTEXT

The fundamental challenge is that large land areas are granted for commercial use by various sectoral institutions at the national and sub-national levels. Poor coordination makes it difficult for the Government to manage and control concessions, leading to a substantial loss in the tax-revenue collection and land conflicts between investors and the local population. Furthermore, the Government faces negotiation processes required to address the development priorities and parallel deal with the claims on natural resources from a wide range of stakeholders.

Further on, Lao PDR has had insufficient experience in information and data sharing and evidence-supported planning. Existing data is not used to its full potential due to inadequate access to data. Further on GoL has limited resources and capacities for analysing data. Adequate means or incentives for exchanging, transferring, and packaging knowledge to policy and decision makers is non-existing.

Thus, consolidated, up-to-date, and reliable information on large-scale commercial land investments is urgently needed as a basis for the design of more sustainable national land management strategies and approaches. Relevant data and information have been compiled via a national effort, but a continuous integration of such information from various administrative levels and thematic sectors remains a challenge.

The 8th National Socio-economic Development Plan (NSED) has targeted to sustain equitable and inclusive growth, human development and effectively protect and use the natural resources and the environment. The 9th NSED continues to restructure the country's economy for attaining a higher level by pursuing a quality, green, and sustainable growth direction. Legislation and laws related to environmental protection, environmental and socio-economic impact assessment (SEIA) are developed and then translated into formal procedures. The procedures will be used as an enforcing mechanism to keep investors and concerning parties accountable.

1.2.1 GRADUATION FROM THE LEAST DEVELOPMENT COUNTRIES

The GoL has set forth an agenda, formulated as a vision of the country, to be achieved through national strategies, policy reforms, and the strategic allocation of development investments. This frame envisions that by 2030 Lao PDR will be a developing country with middle-upper income. The 2025 Strategy builds upon and fleshes out this vision, elaborating targets toward its realisation and, in particular, graduation of LDC status by 2025. The strategy is vital to establish a consistent transition strategy for building resilience against possible external threats caused by major FDIs. On the other hand, by having several trade preferences, primarily agricultural export quota to China and the European Union's Generalized Scheme of Preferences (GSP), investors see it as a comparative advantage to increase investment in Lao PDR in the future. In this case, the demand on land for agricultural production targeting those markets will be high from the investors. Proper land legislative and land policy support for uniform land management is crucial.

1.3 GENDER FOCUS

Despite the country's economic growth development in the last decade, Lao PDR continues to face challenges in the economic and social integration of women and ethnic groups from rural areas. These

groups are at particular risk of being left behind during this period of rapid economic development. Around 60% of the population aged between 15 and 65 years old can potentially attract future investments. The 9th NSEDP focuses on investment in young workers with skills to create opportunities, particularly for disadvantaged women, ethnic and people with disabilities, to access the labour market. The 8th NSEDP target, followed by the 9th NSEDP, that at least 30% in the leadership position at the national level (Minister, DG, DDG), 20% at provincial, and 10% at the district level are held by women, ethnic people and people with disabilities.

1.4 RELATED LAWS, DECREES, AND REGULATIONS

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) is the main government authority responsible for land administration, including gathering data on land use, including leases and concessions. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry manages agricultural and forest land, while the Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM) is responsible for managing the areas used for hydropower plants and mining. The Ministry of Planning and Investment has a leading role in investment approval and land management mechanism for leasing or concession land following decree No. 0457/MPI dated the 27th of February 2019. Forest and Land laws

The Forestry Law (the 25th of July 2019) determines the basic principles, regulations, and measures on sustainable management, preservation, development, utilisation and inspection of forest resources, and contributing gradually to national socio-economic development. The main implication of the Law is that concessions are not allowed inside the 3 Forest Categories except production forest areas. The Law, therefore, involves persons from DoF/MAF to participate in the management of concession areas.

Due to the importance of land management for national benefits, the People's Party Central Committee (PPCC) has issued a resolution on land management and development No.026/CC dated 03/08/2017, based on which the Land Law, land-related legal and policy are amended and formulated. The new Land Law (Amended No.04, 2020) is substantially improved comparing to the 2003 Land Law in many ways. It composes of 188 Articles (87 in 2003) and is more informative and more precise. New points are improved and added, such as principles for land management, land strategies and land leases/concessions, responsibilities of officials and land inspection.

1.4.1 DECREES AND REGULATIONS RELATED TO PROMOTING SOUND AND TRANSPARENT INVESTMENTS

- Decree No. 135/PM on State Land Lease or Concession (5/2009). This Decree, consisting of 53 articles divided into eight Parts, regulates State Land Lease or Concession. Further on, the Decree determines the principles, procedures, and measures regarding granting of state land for lease or concession. It ensures uniform management and uses throughout the country to boost state land development, turn land into capital, and build income for the state budget.
- Prime Minister's Order on Improving Regulations and Coordinating Mechanism for Doing Business in Lao PDR, No. 02/PM, dated 01/02/2018, is a significant move to improve the business environment. Prime Ministers order helps to promote, attract and control private investments by strengthening the collaboration between all concerned government sectors;
- Prime Minister's Order on the Improvement of Services related to the Issuance of Investment and Business Licenses, No. 03/PM, dated the 21st of January 2020, helps to make the process of issuing business licenses more agile, transparent, and uniform in the promotion and management of investment;
- Establishing an online business registration system and merging the Tax Identification Number, enterprise code, and social security number into one number by improving the Enterprise Registration System (ESR) and Tax Registration Information System (Tax RIS) helps enhance the business climate.

1.5 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION

The external evaluation focus on the current phase - the Knowledge for Development(K4D) of the Lao DECIDE Info. The objectives are as follows:

- I. Assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the project in terms of achieving defined outcomes and results (OECD/DAC evaluation criteria);
- II. Provide detailed recommendations regarding possible directions for future orientations/interventions towards institutionalisation of cross-sectoral integrated planning and evidence-based decision-making in the Lao PDR. SDC is particularly interested to strengthen its portfolio under the domain “**Natural resources management and climate change**”

Capitalisation: The capitalisation is to synthesise findings from Lao DECIDE Info experiences throughout the four project’s phases to inform experience holders to what extent the experiences can be duplicated and/or adapted to create a greater impact. Experiences should be drawn from key interventions adopted by the Lao DECIDE Info project in relation to enabling cross-sectoral data sharing among GoL actors and fostering evidence-based decision making.

Process	
Reflection	Desk review: identification of experiences and challenges
	Individual learning/focus group discussions: support knowledge holders (SDC, CDE and NIER) to reflect on their experiences
Dialogue	Interviews/focus group discussions: lessons learned and good practices are validated with key actors/informants/beneficiaries
Consolidation	Analysis: results of experiences are analysed; lessons learned, best practices and recommendations for future interventions are outlined
Conclusion	Capitalised experiences are debriefed and validated with NIER, CDE and SDC

To ensure that the capitalisation is correctly recorded, a workshop was arranged to collect information about the partner organisation regarding the different phases of the project (Lao Decide Info I-III and K4D). The workshop was arranged on the 7th of July 2021.

The ToR for the evaluation can be found in ANNEX A

1.5.1 THE METHODOLOGY USED FOR DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND CAPITALISATION

The methods for the data collection included document analysis (the reviewed documents are listed in ANNEX B), semi-structured face-to-face meetings and video meetings (28 individuals or focus groups) and debriefing with SDC. Altogether about 35 persons participated in the meetings and interviews (interviewed persons are listed in ANNEX C). Because of the COVID-19 situation, most of the meetings have been arranged through Zoom meetings. Face-to-face meetings were possible in the National Institute of Economic Research (NIER), Department of Lands (DoL), and National Geography Department/Ministry of Home Affairs (NGD/MoHA). The latter meeting was also participated by the Survey and Mapping Company (State Enterprise) of MoHA.

The meetings and interviews planned for the Evaluation Mission materialised to a large extent. However, COVID-19 and travel restrictions between provinces and later requirements of two vaccinations made it impossible to conduct this trip scheduled for the week of the 23rd of June 2021. Nevertheless, two interviews made via zoom covered province organisations (Province Department of Planning and Investment (PDI) and Provincial office for the Management of Natural Resources and Environment (PoNRE). Furthermore, the ongoing pandemic has limited the visits to the organisations, which has made it difficult to assess the actual practical skills on using the LCIS or Lao Decide Info platforms.

The interviews were designed based on the “larger questions” to guide the semi-structured interviews better. Subsequently, because of the different nature and roles of the partner organisations, the questions were further enhanced and translated to the Lao language and sent in advance to the interviewees. Most of the interviews were conducted in the English language, but the Lao language was used from time to time by the National Consultant to ensure understanding.

The methodology of capitalisation has followed the same idea that the evaluation in general. During the interviews (individual, group, etc.), the informant was asked if the informant worked with previous phases or was familiar with the phases. The list of interviews (ANNEX C) includes information about the phase that the person/organised has participated in (LDI Phases I-III/K4D).

2 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The project has evolved through four phases to a comprehensive development and decision-making support system used for various purposes. All the phases are explained shortly below (All knowledge products of different phases are shown in ANNEX D). The below description of the project phases works as an introduction to the capitalisation Chapter 4 as well.

Phase-I - Atlas and Poverty maps (10/2006 – 6/2009). The objective of this first phase was to produce a new socio-economic atlas for Lao PDR. The first phase focused on exemplifying the translation of data into policy-relevant knowledge products by (1) developing maps of poverty in the Lao PDR; (2) mapping the detailed spatial patterns of the many aspects of the socio-economic characteristics of the Lao population; and (3) publishing a comprehensive National Socio-Economic Atlas. The main counterpart of the first phase was the Department of Statistics (currently: Lao Statistics Bureau) of MPI.

Phase-II – Online platform (7/2009-10/2013). The phase piloted sharing statistical information through the establishment of the Lao DECIDE Info (LDI) web platform <http://www.decide.la>. A unique portal for processing and accessing reliable, high-quality information. The growing interest in the platform was expressed in the Mid Term Review (2011) as it states, “An increased awareness about the importance and benefits of sharing data and information for socio-economic development planning among stakeholders can be felt”.

Phase-III: (11/2013 – 6/2018) sought to foster evidence-informed cross-sectoral integrated planning and decision-making in key ministries of the GoL by enhancing the adequate and timely availability and accessibility of development-relevant information and knowledge. The phase-III included a new sub-project called Land Concession Inventory (LCI). This sub-project aimed to update and refine the existing inventory of land concessions and set a system that allows the timely and continuous update of information related to the land concessions.

The Knowledge for Development (K4D) (1/2018-6/2021; extended to 12/2021). This phase builds upon the achievements of the initial three phases. Additionally, the K4D has added research as one component. During the last phase, the primary responsibility (GoL side) moved from the LSB/MPI to the NIER, which is considered an Independent Ministry level institute.

Additionally, the K4D project has started a pilot in Savannakhet province, which targets to test the usability of the Land Concession Information System (LCIS) at the province level. This piloting has included field data collection and data entry of land concession/lease areas. The Department of Planning and Investment coordinates the work in the province. The Savannakhet platform uses the same system design as at the National level but tailored to be used in one province.

3 KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

3.1 BACKGROUND

The project (K4D) has not been based on the theory of change but on the impact hypothesis. The hypothesis is following:

Through clarified mandates and processes, combined with the required technical means and capacities in place, the Government will be better equipped to engage in continuous data sharing and realise a regularly updated integrated national development information base.

A solid and up-to-date information basis at the hands of research institutions with the relevant capacities supports integrated analysis for well-informed and facts-based policy- and decision-making processes in the Government of the Lao PDR for the sustainable and equitable development of the country, smooth graduation from LDC status, and for reaching the NSEDP and SDG targets.

The evaluation has followed the log frame and indicators and translated to respond the OECD criteria when possible.

The logic frame and its indicators have not been updated since June 2020. CDE updated these indicators June 2020 but are not officially part of any report. Some comments have been added by the evaluators (ANNEX E).

All the findings are summarised in Assessment Grid for the OECD DAC Criteria (ANNEX F)

3.2 RELEVANCE

Key questions
Does the project objective still respond to the needs and priorities of the GoL and/or specific ministries/departments?
Do the core elements of the project (knowledge generation; institutionalisation/integration; evidence-based policymaking) adequately reflect the needs and priorities of GoL and/or specific ministries/departments?
Has the project been pro-actively addressing emerging demands and opportunities during the project implementation, adapting its objectives and approach to respond to changes in the country context and stakeholder landscape, including changing national priorities, institutional structures, legislative and policy updates?

3.2.1 PRIORITIES OF GOL, SPECIFIC DEPARTMENTS

The K4D project intervention is in line with the Resolution of the People's Party Central Committee (No.026/CC dated 03/08/2017) on enhancing land management (this resolution replaced the former draft Land Policy). The project supports the resolution as government partners actively share information and data on land deals across the ministerial level, which has improved the overall management of land concessions and made the organisations more confident about their work and data.

The project is still relevant and coherent with national development strategies and plans, including the 5-year NSEDP (8th and 9th). The K4D project document nicely draws the linkages between the 8th NSEDP and possible entry points to the key national development frameworks, which are still valid.

The 9th NSEDP follows the same trend. While most of the plan concentrates on economic and social recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, linkages to the current K4D project can be found. For example, one of the Green Growth Strategies is "to raise efficient, effective, and sustainable use of the nation's scarce natural resources for optimal benefits, particularly forestry, land, minerals, water, water sources, bio-

diversities among other key resources”¹. This project particularly supports the sustainable use of natural resources.

3.2.2 LAND CONCESSION INFORMATION SYSTEM

The project has become increasingly involved in data sharing, supporting the management of the land concessions. Distribution of land is relevant to core partner ministries mandates and responsibilities. The organisational mandates are: MEM (mining exploration and actual mining), MAF (agricultural and agroforestry), MoF (revenue collection), MPI (lease agreements), and MoNRE (land concessions, land titling; ESIAs, EIAs). According to the participating Ministries and their departments², the LCIS fits their requirements well.

The former deputy Minister for MAF, Mr Phouang Parisack Pravongviengkham, has extensive knowledge about the challenges around the concessions. He is also one of the initiators of the concession management system. According to him, during the last two decades, large areas have been made available for commercial plantations (agriculture and forest) without any further guidance has led to an uncontrolled concession system. Further on, he expressed that LCIS is relevant, well designed, and successfully implemented.

The data relating to the concession areas are systematically shared and used across five sectors, with concrete actions to improve the country's land governance. The maintenance of the data is still within the Ministries. Further on, the use of LCIS has been successfully piloted in Savannakhet province. The data and information needs, sources and gaps have been identified by partner agencies for planning and decision making. Identification has included the information that is needed (data related to concessions held by different Ministries), where the concessions areas are (geospatial data) and how to access them by relevant organisations (integration).

Technically K4D supports the idea of green direction³ (9th NSEDP) through better management of the land and forest areas by supporting the Prime Minister's Order on the Improvement of Services Related to the Issuance of Investment and Business Licenses (No. 3/PM 1/2020). The project has improved the system by initiating Quality Assessment of Investments (QI). QI has made issuing business licenses more dynamic, transparent, uniform, and available for other sectors. QI is also tasked to investigate the environmental and social aspects of the concerning villages. The assessment means that the work covers the related environment and social impact studies besides the information about the concession areas.

3.2.3 LAO DECIDE INFO

The relevance of this part of the project has decreased since K4D started. Some departments related to the project actively use the platform for their works and research (DoPLA/MAF, CAS/MAF, DALAM/MAF).

The plan to replace LDI with a new version (Development Support platform) has been ongoing since the end of 2020, but this has not yet happened. The latest version might increase the interest in the platform. CDE has measured the current user amounts for LDI. The user amounts are about over 100,000 annually, but unique (new users) only bit over 20,000 (estimations based on statistics from Jan-Jul' 21). Some organisations are still producing data to LDI (e.g. Center for Agricultural statistics under MAF planning and cooperation).

¹ The 9th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2021-2025)

² Interviews: Department of Planning and Finance, department of Legal and Policy Affairs (MAF); Department of Lands (MoNRE); Department of Agricultural Land Management (MAF); Division of Planning and Cooperation (DoF/MAF); State Assets Management Department (MOF); Special Economic Zones Office (MPI), Department of Mines management (MEM)

³ Green direction refers to productions and consumptions that are gradually less reliant on the resource sector, more environmentally friendly and accountable, having in place holistic land use and urban plans to reduce population density, mitigate and prevent air and water pollutions to enable green growth moving towards sustainability.

3.2.4 RESEARCH

The project stakeholders have identified critical national development issues and research gaps in a separate workshop. Identification has led to the establishment of five broad thematic research groups. These are a) Commercial investments in land, b) Regional integration through N-S and E-W corridors, c) Agricultural commercialisation, trade, and export, d) Natural resource and governance and e) Rural development and livelihoods. Twenty-five ideas, representing far too broad scope, were taken forward as research topics. The delays in the project have resulted that research is still ongoing, and it is not clear how many of those will be finalised by the end of this year. International and national consults (CDE staff or consults hired by CDE) support the groups making it difficult to assess the continuation after the project. Moreover, it is difficult to determine if these research ideas are converted to policies.

Strategic cooperation with NIER may be a good idea to connect the research to policy formulation as NIER represents the high government level research facility. The research, led by NIER/CDE, has included some other government Ministries such as the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOIC) and the National University of Laos (NUoL). The research has included social, natural, environmental science, poverty monitoring, sustainable development, and government policies.

3.2.5 DATA DISTRIBUTION

The project supports the National ICT strategy by using the government institutions to share the LDI data in cooperation with the eGovernment Centre (now part of the new Ministry of Technology and Communication), which is a good choice and data sharing corresponds to the Centre's mandate. With the existing IT infrastructure and high skilled personnel, the centre fits for this purpose. However, the contract between the project and eGovernment is pending due to the changes in the organisation. Additionally, LANIC under the same Ministry is responsible for the server solutions used for the hosting.

3.3 COHERENCE

Key question
To what extent is K4D coherent with GoL policies (8/9th NSEDP, LDC graduation, and SDGs) and other SDC projects implemented in Laos (MRLG, ESLR, TABI) and projects supported by other development partners in the same province (Savannakhet) and thematic field?

The project is coherent, not only with the 8th but also with the 9th National Socio-economic Development Plan (NSEDP). The project supports the effective use of the nation's natural resources, one of the main activities in both plans, by providing information on the concession areas.

The project is working actively with SDC co-funded funded Citizen Engagement, Accountability, and the Rule of Law (CEGGA) project. K4D role is to train the National Assembly (NA) members to use the LDI platform.

The project has a loose contact with MRLG as they both are working on land issues. MRLG concentrates on customary land uses and rights and operates mainly in Khammouane.

CSOs like SWISSCONTACT use LDI for designing and measuring (monitoring) the progress of its vocational training and employment project implemented in 4 provinces.

Additionally, the project has cooperated with Luxembourg-Development (LuxDev) in the Department of Rural Development and Co-operatives of MAF. The project is studying the political nature of rural development in the country. The project sees the LDI data as relevant for their purposes.

The project has cooperated with the SAFE Ecosystem project funded by the Global Environmental Fund (GEF) implemented in SVK. The SAFE project actively uses the LCIS (Savannakhet) to support local government decision making in environmental issues.

3.4 EFFECTIVENESS

Key questions
To what extent are the projects' main objectives (output, outcome) achieved?
What are the major factors which have influenced the achievement of the objectives?
To what extent has the project achieved its intended results related to transversal themes, i.e. gender equality and ethnicity inclusion?
To what extent has the project products contributed directly or indirectly towards policy change at national and subnational levels oriented towards sustainable development?
To what extent have the skills/competencies GoL staff have gained/developed from collaborating and implementing cross-sectoral data sharing and research enhanced the institution's performance?

3.4.1 LAO CONCESSION INFORMATION SYSTEM

Based on the interviews, government partners are confident with their acquired technical knowledge. Most of the information and knowledge has already been inside the organisation and used through their systems. The primary role of K4D has been to introduce a new system that enables the integration of data from government organisations. The cross-sectoral data sharing, at least between the LCIS participating partners, is proceeding smoothly.

Training to manage the day-to-day technical aspects of the LCIS platform has been provided to the Department of Lands (the management of server infrastructure and LCIS platform; 4 persons). Additionally, 19 technical staff have from MAF, MoNRE, MPI, MEM, and MoF have received initial training in the platform's usage.

However, the land data showing the locations of concessions areas are only shared between the participant organisations. The limited sharing is understandable as the data might be politically and economically sensible. Nevertheless, the analysis made for the publication called "Land Leases and Concession in the Lao PDR"⁴ gives a good understanding for the broader audiences of the concessions and their nature.

3.4.2 LAODECIDEINFO

This platform provides tools for national datasets of a broad range of data owners, producers, and sectors. The new replacing platform called "Development Support Platform" is based on commercial ESRI software. *There was a question that project needs to respond⁵: How the transferring from one platform to another platform is organized and is the new platform able linking to the Lao network.* How could we link the DoL with the one of LSB, MoF and e-Government? This platform will replace the LDI, which has been online for nearly ten years. LDI has been based on open-source software and older techniques.

The project is actively and constantly updating the content of the database and even negotiating with different entities (UXO/National Regulative Agency, Ministry of Health, ODA mapping etc.). The challenge of the platform is that it is not used extensively for decision-making, especially at the higher levels.

3.5 EFFICIENCY

The project has managed to deliver the results cost-effectively, as now the Government sees the importance and relevancy. The project with a small administrative budget for the local partners has been sufficient. The budget allocation has also increased the efficiency as the requests from partners are needs-based, and GoL does most parts (data collection) as their mandated daily tasks. As an example, while larger projects tend to concentrate the funding to one Ministry, K4D has distributed the funding across different partners in different Ministries. The budget distribution has also increased the ownership of the

⁴ Cornelia Hett et al. Field data 2014-2017

⁵ Final workshop 14th of July

organisations as they decide how the funds are used and what kind of external support is needed (e.g. for capacity building). Additionally, CDE has used the funds to actively support the project by providing guidance, capacity building and funds for equipment.

The management of the concession areas is well coordinated amongst actors. It has reduced conflicts and is in line with investment laws, further on increased revenue collection. The investment licenses have been investigated, leading to the withdrawal of 438 projects that violated the Lao Investment Laws and Regulations. In Savannakhet, the coordination has solved almost 2,000 ha overlapping land concession areas held by 28 companies. Further on, collecting the information related to the concessions has led to additional revenue of 3,000 ha land used by the investors.

Steering / Advisory committee work has not been active during the last period of the project (K4D). The committee met at the beginning of the project and later in 2021. Anyway, it takes time to call up these meetings, and very often, the committee members have changed or/and are not the ones with the best knowledge on the issues. Further on, a midterm review (and report discussed and approved by SC) would have been enough to bring up the challenges faced by the project and increased efficiency.

As a result of the cascade approach in training, the partners can gradually conduct training without assistance from CDE. The training arranged by the partners reflects some degree of ownership and sustainability. Nevertheless, there are further requests for training.

The meetings of thematic groups have been organised frequently to share information about the research and data. All this improves the efficiency of long-term coordination and cooperation.

3.6 IMPACT

The overall K4D goal has been following “in the Lao PDR, policies are shaped by making use of the best available knowledge on the dynamics and the interplay of economic, social and ecological dimensions in support of equitable socio-economic development and ecological sustainability fostering the accountability of decision-makers”. This goal is partly valid as the GoL Departments decide about locations of the new concession areas based on LCIS. The views of the former Minister (MoNRE), deputy Minister (MAF) and other key project partners prove that the project responds to the country’s needs and positively impacts the management of the concession areas and, therefore, on the revenue collection. The goal has well reflected that through the data generated on land concessions, the Government can take decisive actions, even cancelling the licenses, against investors who violated the Lao Investment Laws and Regulations. The project has also upgraded not only the technologies but the staff capacities and skills. Currently, most of them can manage the whole process from data collection to data entry into databases.

CDE with the partner organisations has been successfully putting research results forward. If they are not explicitly implemented as policies, they have been added to discussions within Ministries and their Departments (ANNEX G).

A significant network among key government partners has been established and institutionalised for quality data sharing. This integration has been proved to be one of the project’s key achievements and is of high relevance for policy and decision-makers at various levels.

3.7 SUSTAINABILITY

NIER, MAF and MoNRE are interested in taking over the activities but are also concerned about the GoL budget. There is doubt if the activities and continuous sharing can be included in the GoL budget. The system has increased the tax revenues. Suppose the system is continuously used and increases the tax revenues (finance aspect) and parallel improves the environmental and social aspects of public satisfaction. In that case, the Government might consider investing more in the LCIS on its own.

For the Development Support Platform, The University of Bern has promised to support the base software (ArcGIS licenses) several years after the project. GoL will own these licenses. The software licenses will not guarantee sustainability but will help to extend and perhaps institutionalise the use.

With LCIS, the coordination mechanism is currently institutionalised and embedded into the government partners' system with reliable technical and managerial skills. **However, it still needs to have legislative support to the use of the database of each sectoral ministry to avoid or reduce the complexity in the area identification**⁶.

Currently, the research scope is too large to be fully sustained by the GoL. The lack self-defined research plan that fit the country needs is missing.

The research to policy is currently under NIER responsibility. The restructuring process by merging NIER with Lao Academy for Social Sciences (LASS) is ongoing. Still, the main mandate and momentum of the institution would remain and will continue to provide analytical socio-economic evidence for policy and decision-makers. Since the phase 3 of the Lao Info research results done by NERI (under MPI) were used in the poverty reduction policy and poverty assessment. Aside of that the research result must see as a stock taking for further research activities. It is also difficult to see the research to policy in a cross-cutting research thematic⁷. A multi-disciplinary research approach used allows several key research institutions and researchers to work together. This is a significant milestone developed by the K4D. It will increase cooperation and coordination for conducting complex research issues in the future. Research results must be published in the National Journal which bring great benefit to the country instead of in the International Journal⁸.

The two strong persons of MAF (Deputy Minister) and MoNRE (Minister) have moved to other tasks, and it is not clear how the project is steered forwards. According to H.E. Mr. Sommad Pholsena⁹, he expressed two things essential for sustainability: 1) Real relevance to the Ministries and Departments and 2) Ownership. According to him, LCIS has met these requirements.

The infrastructure and human resources for data sharing are well placed in DoL and E-Government Centre/LANIC, which is vital for continuing to harvest results and further develop after the project termination. **Capacity of sub-national staff must pay attention to ensure that the data is timely updated**¹⁰.

3.8 GENDER AND ETHNICITY

The project encourages women's involvement and focuses on supporting the capacity building of early-career female employees. The project collaborates with government agencies to identify and recruit female government staff within their respective institutions. Female advisors are recruited to positively influence other female government partners and seek feedback from women involved in project implementation regarding project conditions that facilitate or inhibit their full and effective participation. However, constraints for stronger participation of women are manifold but more pronounced in some work areas than in others. NIER has a substantial body of female researchers with a disciplinary focus on social and economic aspects. At the same time, there are only a few female researchers in agricultural and environmental research institutions. For work in data compilation and integration, female government staff have been intensely involved in the past while work was done at the offices in Vientiane. In contrast to the work outside of Vientiane, some offices were much more conservative and restrictive in allowing female staff to participate in fieldwork than others.

Several women hold high positions on the partnering agencies, such as in DoL where two female staff lead the two field survey units; Deputy Director of the e-Government Centre; Director General of NGD, to mention few.

⁶ Final workshop 14th of July 2020

⁷ Final workshop 14th of July 2020

⁸ Final workshop 14th of July 2020

⁹ Former Minister of MoNRE. Current Vice-president of National Assembly

¹⁰ The Final Workshop 14th of July 2020

3.9 CONCLUSIONS

- Project activities support LCIS. Less concentration is paid on LDI. The support to LCIS has increased as the platform has been found useful and relevant for participating Ministries. LCIS is also taking most of the resources provided by CDE. The use of LDI is currently in the hands of few. Some (interviewed) government organisations use it. The more significant beneficiaries are donor-funded projects. The developed new “Development Support” platform has not been released (delayed since 2020). A new version with a proper awareness campaign could increase the visibility and usage of the platform;
- K4D, with a small administrative budget (distributed between different organisations), has done relatively well. The funding has been allocated to where it is needed;
- The research targets are too ambitious and cover topics that are not directly relevant to the project and currently to the LCIS. It is difficult to assess the impact of the research on other areas except those related to LCIS (connected to the land and natural resources);
- Additionally, a multi-institutional set-up with cross-sectoral collaboration and planning requires an open attitude that GoL has not been accustomed. Significant change of mentalities and practices has been achieved but are in a fragile stage and not sustained. Further on, cross-sectoral collaboration, whether it is platform or research, needs a higher-level push.
- The project is currently coordinating with land management related MLRG (customary land rights) and cooperating with ESLRP (systematic land registration).
- The project has paid great effort to promote women’s participation, but constraints remain at some participating ministries. Some female staff hold higher positions. In contrast, a small number of them are working in the field at the sub-national levels.

3.10 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.10.1 IMMEDIATE RECOMMENDATIONS (REMAINING K4D)

- The release of the “Development support platform” should happen immediately. After the release, a wider awareness campaign should be arranged to reach as many as possible to get proper feedback before the project ends. The platform should be distributed and trained to local non-profit associations e.g. INGOs, Gender and Development Association, Lao Land Information Working Group and many provincial Non-Profit-Associations active at the project targeted provincial levels. The number of the user, including organisations, should be recorded more accurately. The distribution challenges, including the software change and licenses; distribution (eGovernment, LANIC preparedness), should be part of the exit plan to ensure that the platform is shared in the future.
- The scope of the research should be decreased to a minimum of five research topics and only concentrating on investments (on land) and the management of natural resources and the environment. Further on, research results should be disseminated widely to the public and policy uptake through various forms such as seminars, policy dialogue, abstract, policy brief paper, media, etc. The research results should also be provided in compact (shorter) briefing notes using the same format for all of them.
- The project could use the momentum or success gained with LCIS to become a model to other similar cooperation between Ministries;
- The project should prepare a comprehensive exit plan including possible government contributions (resources and budgets);

- Establish stronger links to upcoming systematic land registration project ESLR (SDC, World Bank). Stronger ties would increase transparency by showing the GoL (through LCIS) personnel where (location) the systematic land registration is going on.
- A system or mechanism developed to ensure quality data compiling, and data entry into the platforms of partner agencies would increase reliability and transparency. **It is important that each partner agency must manage its own data and ensure of having sufficient staff to run the system**¹¹

4 CAPITALISATION

The project has had considerable impact in the past 15 years (see Chapter 2: Project Phases), particularly on the cross-sectoral cooperation and joint actions that have been the project's highlights.

The Lao DECIDE Info/K4D (LDI/7K4D) projects have aimed to enhance access to the development of relevant data, information, and knowledge. Further on, they have encouraged the cross-sectoral exchange of information; develop capacities in the governmental system for adequate information analysis and develop knowledge products for policy and been practice oriented towards the needs and demands of actors at different levels.

The project started from census data with one Ministry and department. Then moved to offer the first nationwide information on the spatial distribution of poverty and other critical socio-economic aspects into a visual form with detailed village-level spatial and statistical data. The data and analysis were distributed to wider audiences through a public online platform (LaoDecideInfo). Further on, the project's essential focus on concession areas helped it expand to other ministries relevant Ministries. Each phase has been built upon the elements presented in the previous phase(s).

Compiled Achievements:

- As a result of years of work and capacity building, a comprehensive database and related platform (LCIS) have been established to manage the concession areas. Government organisations use the platform in reporting, planning and decision making at the national and sub-national levels. The main factor in the success is that the platform corresponds to the needs of the organisations. Additionally, the project has initiated Quality Assessment of Investments (QI) and related monitoring. QI has improved the management of concession areas. Collecting the basic data is already built into the organisations. The main project achievement has been the distribution of the different organisational data sets.
- The coordinating bodies are in place and functioning within and between the participating ministries and sub-national levels. Cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination system is set up and functioning.
- Training has been provided to national and sub-national government personnel countrywide on using the LCIS and Lao Decide online applications. Planners and users can quickly access crucial information without going through the traditional procedure of seeking official permission to access and use information and data, which has been traditionally time-consuming. The project has been successful in building up the capacities of GoL. The Government officially approves handouts for data analysing. Some activities like data entry and analysing, sharing amongst participating agencies are already sustained.

¹¹ Final workshop 14th of July 2020

- The different phases have produced a variety of knowledge products (complete list in ANNEX D)

Challenges during the project phases:

- **Change in the participating organisations.** Some interviewed partners active in the previous phases have been disconnected fully or partially from the later stages. The first and most important organisation is LSB (MPI; Phase I-III). LSB has argued before and during the interview that a cross-sectoral project needs a skilled external coordinator to perform full-time and intensive coordination to sustain the activity. This request was not approved by the project (in Phase III) as the coordination would not have been sustained by LSB. **National University of Laos (NUOL)**, which participated in the first phase, has been left out. The project had a plan to add “integrated spatial analysis” to the curriculum (higher-level studies), which would have been introducing the LDI already at the University. The course was not added as it required approval from the Ministry of Education and Sports. **NGD (MoHA)**, which participated in Phase III by providing accurate geospatial data to the LDI platform) has been invited only to the project kick-off meeting. In the case of NGD, the reasons are mainly internal as the DG (who was responsible for the activity) has retired without proper handover to the new one.
- **Continuing re-organisation of the GoL Ministries** has caused unnecessary delays to the implementation. The new Ministry of Technology and Communication is currently built up from parts before belonging to the Ministry of Science and Technology and Ministry of the Post and Telecommunications. Part of the skilled staff of the e-government Centre moved to Lao National Internet Centre (LANIC). The change had slightly impacted the work done in K4D as the key organisation before was eGovernment. Because of the changes, new contracts between eGovernment/LANIC needed to be approved, which was time-consuming. Further on, according to (MoHA), the re-organisation of the GoL will continue. At least, some Departments of MAF and MoHA will be affected.
- **Slow expansion to sub/national levels.** Expansion to sub-national levels has been a challenge. The third phase covered mapping of the village boundaries and fieldwork on QI (data collection from nine out of eighteen provinces). The project has not been able to extend to sub/national levels as planned. The delays caused by the slow start of the K4D followed by the COVID-19, the project has been only able to cover one province as a pilot.
- **The capacities of Government organisations.** The platforms are highly sophisticated applications. It needs to have high good IT infrastructure to support the data entry and data storage. The basic use does not need advanced IT skills, but the maintenance needs. During the phase ... Some organisations still have low IT skills based on the interviews and have requested additional training. PONRE/SVK had to recruit three IT staff for data management as they do not have those capacities. There is a risk of losing momentum after the project is concluded if the corresponding organisations do not have an appropriate capacity-building strategy and budget to arrange additional training for the permanent staff.
- **Turnover of the personnel.** Trained persons are moved to new positions or overloaded with their permanent job, leaving the activities to persons unaware of the work. Worrying are also the higher-level changes in the departments, mainly at the Director-General (DG) level. New persons stepping into these positions usually have their ideas without any handover. Further on, because of their responsibility to the Minister/Ministry, these new DGs avoid making decisions on projects due to a lack of familiarity with it. These replacements have already affected several phases of LDI, including K4D.

- **Lao Decide Info.** The former platform was already introduced in the early stages of the project. It was developed to distribute online socio-economic related data and analysis. As the platform was the highlight and the only data-sharing platform, there was a solid push to introduce the platform to wider audiences. Even a user survey (Phase-II) was conducted during phase II. the survey pointed out that the platform should be more user-friendly. Later on, the idea of establishing another platform to manage the concessions areas has shadowed the progress in Lao Decide Info.

Conclusions:

- **Socio-economic base data.** LSB should be linked again to the project as it is mandated to conduct the vital population and housing census. NGD/MoHA would be an important partner to prepare the data covering the sub-national (Province/District/village) levels;
- The trained persons should provide training plans to ensure that the activities are kept alive even the positions change;
- The future project(s) should prepare for the changes in the GoL structure;
- **Platforms.** While LDI platform did not manage to cover wider audiences, LCIS, with its smaller scope and areas related to the investments, managed to institutionalise itself to be used in key government organisations. Its usefulness and relevance explain the success of the LCIS.

5 FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

The prerequisite must be that the ongoing activities are completed, institutionalised, used actively, and further recognised by the Government. This is done during the remaining period of K4D. Partner organisations are expected to update key datasets on the public platform independently by the end of K4D project, and that the national level institutions can coordinate among the relevant institutions.

At the sub-national levels, the project will continue in the initial pilot provinces to collect data related to the concessions. It will continue to identify different concessions, collect information about them and add them to LCIS at different administrative levels. The data collection will happen based on established workflows and guidelines for continuous monitoring of the concession areas.

The main future ideas should be based on utilising the data and information collected during the four phases of the previous project and the subsequent updates to those. LCIS should be used to improve the visibility as a transparent tool (still not being fully open) to improve the management of concession areas. Awareness here means that the general public knows LCIS as a transparent and reliable system behind the concession management. Further on, the system should clearly show the location where systematic land registration is done (using GIS data), including mapped customary lands to avoid conflicts between the public. This can be done with cooperation with WB funded ELSRP. Adding simplified cadastral data would further on improve the transparency and correctness of the system.

The project should ensure that the impacts of the concession on local populations and the environment are less severe and more positive. Engagement with the stakeholders results in more sustainable and equitable growth, mitigating impacts of natural disasters and better resilience of local populations.

As the expansion to the sub-national levels has been slow, the new project should be accelerating the extension to new provinces/districts. During K4D the project has extended to Savannakhet and possible to one or two other provinces. The piloting has created replicable working models to expand the project further. If the first 15 years have been preparing the national level activities, the next stage would be the sub-national.

Climate change impacts on land are increasing, and competition for less affected lands will increase. Smart investments in land can decrease the climate-sensitivity of such areas. Future activities should ensure that the sub-national level authorities have **the capacities and tools to ensure that commercial investments**

in lands are more climate-sensitive and socially responsible. In practice, this means that the QI will continue to assess, interpret, and monitor multi-dimensional aspects of the quality of concessions. Further on, this requires an extended QI network mainly to the new provinces. The expansion would include training to the activity and especially on using the information and identifying corrective actions. Further on, the assessment could encourage investors to implement their activities following the obligations defined in the agreements and following the 2016 revised Investment Promotion Law.

To ensure the QI and secure optimal benefits for the national socio-economic development, the concerned sectors and local administrations must continue to undertake field inspections. The inspection could enforce and encourage investors to implement their activities following the obligations defined in the agreements and following the 2016 revised Investment Promotion Law.

The above mentioned would translate to concrete activities by:

Piloting engagement on positive action on concessions at province level:

- Assessing, interpreting, and monitoring multi-dimensional aspects of quality of concessions:
 - o Building on QI work, training on usage of information and identification of actions
 - o Local adaptation of assessment and monitoring method
- Continuous integration of information and monitoring of concessions
 - o Work with province and district authorities to establish and strengthen workflows and respective capacities for continuous integration of relevant information on land concessions into LCIS
 - o Develop capacities to analyse integrated concession data for continuous monitoring of implementations

As there are concession areas that are either environmentally unfit or socially unjust, the project should create guidance for the corrective actions, which mainly targets to improve the management of the concession areas, but in rare cases, cancel them. Management of concessions would also require national and sub-national level understanding and identification of non-performing investment projects. This need for support in this has been expressed several times by MoNRE and MAF.

Above could be activity covering following:

- Piloting corrective/ positive actions of local GoL with companies
 - o Piloting of actions for improving specific aspects of quality of investment
 - o Identification of policy options
 - o

Integrated spatial national information integrates datasets not previously available to climate sensitivity analysis, and forms thereby a solid basis for natural disaster preparedness and climate vulnerability analysis. With the sub-national work on land investments, land investments can offer planning guidance on sustainable and more climate-resilient local livelihoods. The project should be able to promote climate-resilient sustainable livelihoods, including climate change vulnerability and resilience analysis, by using the high-level integrated national information base to assess the vulnerability of local populations to natural disasters and climate changes, looking at the risk exposure, infrastructural resilience, and institutional capacities for the management of climate-related risks.

These would translate to activities such as

Climate-resilient sustainable livelihoods:

- Comprehensive valuation of lands and its services for better resource use planning and more just compensations
 - o Expressing environmental services and natural capital in monetary values, which will make it easier to represent environmental services in planning and compensation works.
- Climate change vulnerability and resilience analysis
 - o Using the high-resolution integrated national information base to assess the vulnerability of local populations to natural disasters and climate changes, looking at risk exposure, infrastructural resilience, and institutional capacities for management of climate-related risks.

- Development of climate risk assessment and management tools based on cross-sectoral information base and vulnerability analysis.
- Targeted policy advisory (poverty, vulnerability, migration, land tenure security, land values, and compensations, in face of climate change)
 - Through integrated development analysis in key areas (poverty, vulnerability, migration, land and forest governance), important knowledge gaps will be filled, which will support evidence-informed policy advisory and engagement.
 -

The information should be based on existing platforms and other data and include the following:

- The Development Support Platform – covering the central level and then provincial level platforms. The platform will support the vulnerability analysis, assess areas under poverty, analyse the land and forest cover, land suitability etc.;
- LCIS including information about the land registration (areas under ESLRP). The data relating to the land registering data does not have to come from the existing digital registration system but summarised information (areas under the SLR), areas mapped as customary land and other areas;
- QI – as a continuous tool to assess the quality of the concessions;